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A Concept of Organization

A.H. Cornell

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concerning the chances that these uncertain events will occur. Part II, labeled "Assessment of Preferences and Probabilities," presents the basic methods which can be applied to quantify preferences and probabilities. This section includes one chapter on the subject of preference curves and decisionmakers' attitudes toward risks and four chapters on the concept and characteristics of probabilities and probability distributions. The final section, "Sampling and Simulation," deals with selected special problems that the author believes would be of particular interest to the businessman or decisionmaker.

This textbook is, in the reviewer's opinion, an excellent introduction to the general area of decisionmaking under uncertainty. It is well organized, lucidly written, and has been tested in the classroom for several years. If one is prepared to devote the time and effort required systematically to work through this text, he will be rewarded with a much better understanding of the nature of decision problems and equipped with a methodology by means of which he can analyze such problems. Although oriented primarily toward decision problems confronting the businessman, the subject matter could well be equally applicable to the decision problems confronting the naval officer. This book is highly recommended to the serious student of management science.

T.H. WILLIAMS
James V. Forrestal Chair of
Military Management

Torgersen, Paul E. *A Concept of Organization*. New York: American Book-Van Nostrand-Reinhold, 1969. 173p.

Author Paul E. Torgersen prefaces his excellent little book with the words, "the purpose of this text is the development and orderly presentation of a concept of organization—a concept based on the work of Chester I. Barn-

ard." And indeed he has come up with an orderly, clear, and concise development of a single concept of organization. Although he has professed to be following Barnard's example, the text obviously contains far more than the original Barnard theory. For example, it includes a more detailed and specific treatment of communications and more emphasis on the role of the manager in the organization. The result is a very readable, fully packed but relatively short book which summarizes well the collective results of organizational and managerial hypotheses of the past several years. Torgersen draws the basic and lasting ideas from many recognized authorities in developing the "Barnard concept, and in doing so encapsulates a wealth of recognized organizational and management theory and practice which has evolved. He begins with the nature of cooperative systems and individual and cooperative activity and builds upon these to discuss the structure of cooperative activity, including a clear presentation of the "unit," the "complex," and the "informal" organization. He then treats five basic constituents of an organization, specifically, its objectives, communications, the willingness and ability to serve, authority and delegation, and the decision-making process, and then concludes with a separate section on the role of management and the dimensions of leadership. This reviewer is prompted to recall the many sources from which these principal parts of the total organizational problem have been drawn and suggests that, if carefully read and absorbed, Torgersen's little book is a valuable, cohesive summary of the best. It is considered to be of interest to anyone concerned with this important field which today pervades all daily lives and work and of special moment to students and practitioners of organization and management.

A.H. CORNELL, CAPT, U.S. Navy