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ON AGRICULTURAL POLICY 1926-1938

By
JOSEPH S. DAVIS



**FOOD RESEARCH INSTITUTE
STANFORD UNIVERSITY, CALIFORNIA**

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FOREWORD

For twenty years I have been studying economic and political aspects of food and agriculture in their national and international bearings. Amidst this work, I have been called upon to speak and write on agricultural problems, proposals, programs, and policies. The appeals have come from diverse individuals, groups, and associations, usually to deal with specific topics of immediate interest and broad significance. My responses have taken a variety of forms—addresses, brief discussions, book reviews, articles, and portions of books. It is mainly of such products that this book is made up.

Despairing of finding time to write a systematic treatise on agricultural policy, I offer instead this organized selection from my scattered writings. Each chapter (an ill-fitting term used for lack of a better) is dated, and may well be read with the date in mind. The first four are introduced, as their group title indicates, as contributions toward “perspectives” on the whole subject. The others constitute a series of analyses and commentaries, grouped according to successive stages in the evolution of American agricultural policy since the middle 1920’s. Most of the issues dealt with are still of current importance.

The editorial changes consist mostly of deletions to reduce the amount of duplication and the burden of footnotes. I have made no attempt to bring statistics up to date, and have avoided the temptation to cut or revise where my vision or judgment has altered. Readers who may wish to follow ideas through two or more chapters, or to make cross-comparisons, will find the index helpful.

The sources from which hitherto published portions are drawn are indicated at the beginning of each chapter. For permission to reprint copyrighted materials I am indebted

to the following organizations and individuals: American Economic Association, American Farm Economic Association, American Institute of Cooperation, American Statistical Association, Brookings Institution, California Bankers' Association, Canadian Society of Technical Agriculturists, George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., *Harvard Business Review*, Harvard University Press, Institute of Pacific Relations, Pacific Coast Economic Association, Stanford University Press, University of Minnesota Press, University of Southern California, and Victor Gollancz, Ltd.; and Arthur H. Cole, Norman E. Himes, W. L. Holland, and E. G. Nourse.

For devoted, efficient help in preparing most of the original manuscripts, I owe much to my successive secretaries—Katharine Merriam (Greisinger), Ennis C. Blake, and Elizabeth Brand Taylor; and Mrs. Taylor has shared the burdens in connection with the book itself. Two of my colleagues, M. K. Bennett and Karl Brandt, have generously given time and energy to essential decisions on matters of selection, arrangement, and detail. I cannot specify my obligations to scores of others who, through many years, have contributed directly or indirectly to the evolution of the work and thought here represented.

J. S. D.

December 1938

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