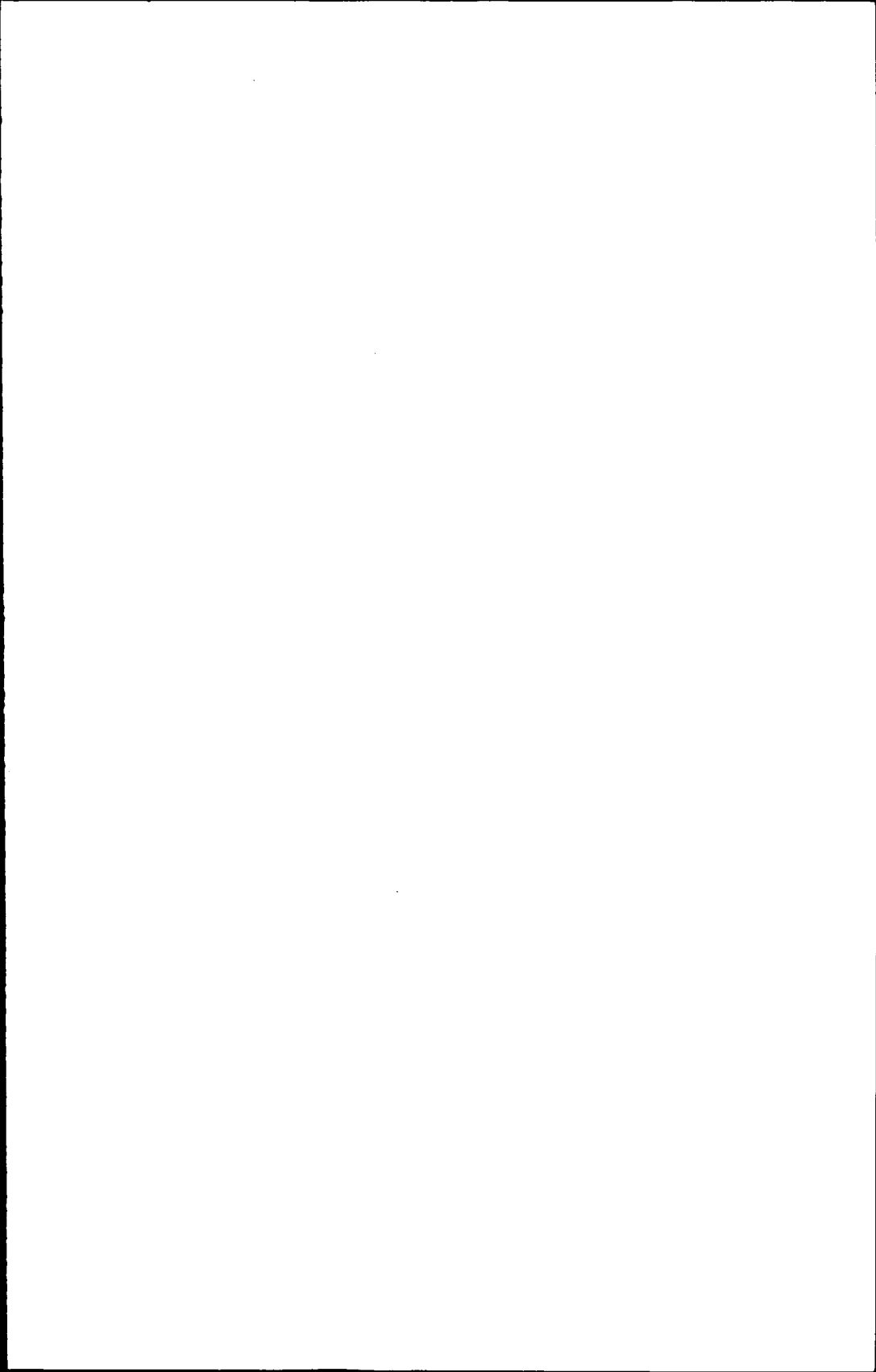


PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
FIFTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE  
OF  
AGRICULTURAL ECONOMISTS





MACDONALD COLLEGE, QUEBEC

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## PREFACE

THE writing of a Preface to this volume of the *Proceedings of the Fifth International Conference of Agricultural Economists* provides a welcome opportunity of acknowledging some of the many debts owing to those who contributed in a variety of ways to the success of the Conference at Macdonald College, Canada, in August 1938.

This meeting, the second on the North-American continent and the first in Canada, attracted the largest attendance yet. Over 500 members and visitors were present during the week, and in all 23 countries were represented. Macdonald College, the fifty-year-old endowment of Sir Wm. Macdonald, was an admirable choice. The buildings conveniently grouped, and the wide campus with its lawns and shrubbery, golf course, tennis courts, swimming pools, pitches for baseball and cricket, and with the river flowing in front, not only made easy the accommodation of so large a company but provided an ideal environment. The Conference is deeply indebted to the authorities of Macdonald College and McGill University for placing the College at our disposal, and to the Registrar and the staff of the College who spared no effort to meet the many and varied demands placed upon them. A special word of thanks is due to the Macdonald College Troop of Boy Scouts for their keen attention to our needs and for their diligent service during the whole week.

The International Conference of Agricultural Economists is an unofficial organization in the sense that it is not financed by Governments, nor do its members attend as the official spokesmen of their Governments. The scientific and non-political character of the Conference is one of its most valuable features and one which the Council has always sought to preserve. Nevertheless, the sympathy and material assistance available from their Governments are essential for the attendance of many members, and I should like to acknowledge our deep indebtedness to all those Governments which at a time of international tension made it possible for their nationals to attend and take part in the Conference in Canada. Particular thanks are due to the Dominion Government of Canada for its interest and support of the Conference from the outset, and to the Provincial Government of Quebec for the assistance and facilities given for the tour in Quebec and in other ways. The members and visitors at the

Conference were the guests of the Quebec Government at an official banquet at Macdonald College, attended by M. Dessault, Minister of Agriculture for Quebec.

As at previous Conferences, the tours before and after the Conference were invaluable as a means of seeing at first hand the background and problems of agriculture in the country in which the Conference was held. In the week preceding, a party of members enjoyed a varied tour of parts of the province of Quebec. The work of arranging this tour fell on M. H. C. Bois, *Coopérative Fédérée de Québec*, and M. J. T. Lamontagne, Department of Agriculture, Quebec. M. Lamontagne fulfilled the arduous duties of conducting the tour. In the week following the Conference a party of members travelled through the province of Ontario, Canada, and New York State, U.S.A. The arrangements for this tour were in the hands of Mr. C. W. Riley, Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph, Ont., Dr. V. D. Hart, Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y., and Mr. Charles A. Taylor, Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y. Mr. Riley acted as conductor to the party.

Another tour lasting three weeks was arranged for those members who wished to see western Canada and something of farming problems in the middle-west of the U.S.A. Their journey included visits to Ottawa and Toronto and then to Winnipeg, Regina, Saskatoon, and Calgary in the prairie provinces. Following a short visit to Banff and Lake Louise the party returned to Winnipeg and from there proceeded to the University of Minnesota, the University of Wisconsin, Chicago, and the University of Illinois. The work of organizing the tour in western Canada was undertaken by Major H. G. L. Strange, Winnipeg, and Dr. H. C. Grant, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg. In the U.S.A. arrangements were made by the Universities which were visited; at St. Paul, Minnesota, by Professor O. B. Jesness and members of the department of agricultural economics; at Madison, Wisconsin, by Professor Asher Hobson and members of the department of agricultural economics; and at Chicago and Urbana, Illinois, by Professor H. C. M. Case and members of the department of agricultural economics.

The proceedings of the Conference were conducted in English, German, and French and were facilitated by the use of a head-phone system of simultaneous relay in all three languages. The Conference was again indebted to Dr. Max Rolfes for all the German translation and relay. The French translation was prepared by interpreters placed at the disposal of the Conference by the Quebec Department of Agriculture, and the relay was done by M. J. T. Lamontagne.

The record of the speeches printed in this volume was obtained by electrical recording by the Telecord system.

A conference of this magnitude is not carried through without months of work and anxiety beforehand on the part of the voluntary organizers, nor without strenuous exertion during the time of the meeting. The bulk of the work inevitably falls upon the members of the country which is acting host, and the Conference is deeply indebted to its Canadian members who in so many ways contributed to its success. The task of co-ordinating these various services and the final responsibility and anxiety, in addition to much personal labour, were laid heavily upon Dr. J. E. Lattimer, chairman of the Canadian Committee, Dr. J. F. Booth, chairman of the Finance Committee, and Dr. J. Coke, the Canadian secretary, assisted by Dr. J. B. Rutherford of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics and Mr. T. G. Major of the Dominion Commercial Intelligence Service. The highest tribute to the manner in which they completed their great task was the smooth working of all the machinery of the Fifth Conference. This was due to the detailed attention and efficient organization for which the Canadian Committee was responsible.

The preparatory work for the programme of the Conference was done by the hon. secretary, Mr. J. R. Currie, and the staff of his office at Dartington Hall, and the editing of the *Proceedings* has been the work of Mr. J. P. Maxton and Mr. James Grant, Oxford.

Before its next meeting the Conference will have completed the first ten years of its existence. When the Conference first met in England in 1929 the chief thought in the minds of its promoters was to provide an opportunity for research experts in the field of agricultural economics to meet and discuss the technical problems of their work. Other more general discussions were not neglected at that time, as the *Proceedings of the First Conference* show, nor have later meetings neglected the discussion of technical questions, as the account of the six technical group meetings at the Fifth Conference indicates. The changing circumstances of those ten years have, however, imposed alterations in the scope and the responsibility of agricultural economics that were difficult to foresee ten years ago. The growing public concern with nutrition and with standards of living in general is forcing all nations into attempting to find and establish not only a sound economic foundation for their agriculture but a new orientation to all the problems of rural and urban life and society in general. The day-to-day uncertainties of trade in agricultural products between one nation and another have thrust upon the attention of agricultural economists problems which are common



to all nations and which are of vital international significance. The growth of the International Conference of Agricultural Economists and the gradual development of its programmes have reflected this wider demand for a better understanding of the degree of dependence of nations on one another, for opportunities of learning from each other, and for solutions which are not mutually antagonistic but which will serve to promote closer inter-relations and a more realistic approach to the needs of man and of his world. The International Conference is trying to maintain not just a common meeting-place and programme but a tradition of frank, scientific discussion of subjects—which by their nature have a significance that is political and often national—and an informal atmosphere of international good-fellowship, which are most valuable in fulfilling the functions of the Conference. In many cases, too, the Conference has begun to act as a kind of exchange for the promotion of friendly contacts among agricultural economists over an increasingly large part of the world.

The Sixth Conference will be held in Hungary at the end of August 1941.

L. K. ELMHIRST.

*President.*

## CONTENTS

Editor's Note	xiii
Addresses of Welcome:	
<i>Chairman</i>	DR. J. E. LATTIMER 1
<i>Representing McGill University</i>	DR. J. J. O'NEILL 1
<i>Macdonald College</i>	PROFESSOR R. SUMMERBY 2
<i>Canadian Department of Agriculture</i>	DR. H. BARTON 5
<i>Province of Quebec</i>	M. HENRI C. BOIS 7
<i>Canadian Agricultural Economics Society</i>	DR. J. F. BOOTH 9
<i>United States Council</i>	PROFESSOR H. C. M. CASE 10
	DR. J. E. LATTIMER 13
Reply by the President	L. K. ELMHIRST 14
Opening Address by the President	L. K. ELMHIRST 20

### THE SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF ECONOMIC PROGRESS IN PRESENT-DAY

#### AGRICULTURE

First Opening Paper	J. F. BOOTH 27
Second Opening Paper	M. L. WILSON 41
Discussion	KONRAD MEYER 56
	A. W. ASHBY 68
	J. D. BLACK 77
	C. A. DAWSON 90
	H. NIEHAUS 92
	E. C. YOUNG 97
	ROLAND D. CRAIG 102
	L. C. GRAY 110
	CARL E. LADD 115

### LAND TENURE AND THE SOCIAL CONTROL OF THE USE OF LAND

First Opening Paper	C. VON DIETZE 118
Second Opening Paper	HENRY C. TAYLOR 140
Discussion	ANDREW STEWART 149
	J. D. BLACK 155
	L. H. BEAN 158
	L. C. GRAY 159
	V. P. TIMOSHENKO 160
	H. C. M. CASE 168
	E. LANG 175
	S. HIGGINBOTTOM 178
	B. H. HIBBARD 181
	IMRE SZLADITS 184
	H. M. CONACHER 186

Discussion ( <i>continued</i> )	M. EZEKIEL	188
	G. S. WEHRWEIN	191
	H. C. TAYLOR (in reply)	194
FARM LABOUR AND SOCIAL STANDARDS		
First Opening Paper	F. W. VON BÜLOW	196
Second Opening Paper	J. F. DUNCAN	205
Discussion	W. SEEDORF	214
	A. H. BROWN	221
	LUDWIG LÖHR	227
	LOWRY NELSON	229
	MERCER G. EVANS	234
	G. STOCKMANN	239
	F. WINDIRSCH	242
	S. HIGGINBOTTOM	244
	C. Y. SHEPHERD	246
	PAVEL P. EGOROFF	250
	J. F. DUNCAN (in reply)	251
INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN RELATION TO AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT		
First Opening Paper	G. MINDERHOUD	256
Second Opening Paper	HENRY A. WALLACE	264
Discussion	ASHER HOBSON	277
	OLIVER MASTER	282
	G. MACKINROTH	288
	OTTO PFLEIDERER	294
	A. W. ASHBY	297
	J. F. DUNCAN	301
	ANDREW STEWART	304
	S. SCHMIDT	305
	G. MINDERHOUD (in reply)	307
	H. A. WALLACE (in reply)	307
SEIGNIORIAL TENURE IN CANADA	C. GAGNÉ	316
SOME ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF AGRICULTURE IN ARGENTINA		
	PAUL O. NYHUS	325
RECENT CHANGES IN NEW ZEALAND'S ECONOMIC POLICY		
	A. H. COCKAYNE	336
AGRICULTURAL CO-OPERATION IN CANADA	A. E. RICHARDS	357
THE MEXICAN AGRARIAN REFORM		
	RAMON FERNANDEZ Y FERNANDEZ	368
NATIONAL AND LOCAL TAXATION IN RURAL AREAS		
	B. H. HIBBARD	378

*Contents*

xi

SOME REMARKS ON THE LAND TENURE OF THE WESTERN SLAVS	
	S. SCHMIDT 387
RECENT AGRICULTURAL EXPERIENCE IN EIRE	J. JOHNSTON 393
MINUTES OF SECTIONAL GROUP MEETINGS	401
PHOTOGRAPH WITH KEY	406
REGISTER OF MEMBERS AND VISITORS PRESENT AT THE CONFERENCE AT MACDONALD COLLEGE, QUEBEC	408
THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMISTS, ITS HISTORY, CONSTITUTION, AND LIST OF MEMBERS	414
INDEX	434