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*Sugar and Its Wartime Controls, 1941-47.* By EARL B. WILSON. v. I-IV. Statistical Press, Inc., New York, 1948.

*The Sugar Industry and the Federal Government. A Thirty Year Record (1917-47).* By JOSHUA BERNHARDT. Sugar Statistics Service, Washington, D. C., 1948. 344 pages.

*International Control of Sugar, 1918-41.* By B. C. SWERLING. (Commodity Policy Studies 7) Stanford University Press, Stanford, Calif., 1949. 69 pages.

**D**EVELOPMENT of controls over each segment of the sugar industry during the war is discussed chronologically in half of the first volume of Wilson's work, and each wartime problem of the industry is analyzed. The remainder of that volume and the other three are devoted to documentary exhibits: purchase contracts, governmental orders, congressional hearings, sugar legislation, and basic statistics.

The text is concise, comprehensive, and incisive. Wilson judges the value of most of the programs from the viewpoint of their objectives, often presents alternative programs which he believes would have been better, and outlines in detail the controversies involved in the development of many of the programs.

Some of his more important conclusions follow. The problem in regard to sugar in the early years of the war was essentially one of shipping; in the later years it was one of production. Prices were held at the lowest level too long, for the value of the savings to consumers at high levels of prosperity was questionable when higher prices would have been more encouraging to producers than the uncertain and delayed CCC programs. Great increases in production in Cuba returned a substantial profit, but the bulk of its crop was sold to us at a reasonable price. Many of the programs to encourage the production of domestic beets were of the category of too-little and too-late; domestic beet processors were worse off than any other branch in the industry in the 1943-45 period because of apparent lack of interest in their problems at official policy levels. Sugar rationing, despite its shortcomings, was the most successful of the food-rationing programs and, unlike rationing of other foods, was not removed until adequate supplies were available. Equitable distribution of sugar throughout the country was one of the outstanding achievements of the OPA—made possible through the wholehearted cooperation of the entire sugar industry which was subject to more rigid controls than any other industry.

This evaluation of the sugar controls is a frank and readable statement by one who worked tirelessly in their development and administration, trying to avoid the pitfalls that developed in World War I. When evaluating Wilson's criticism of the programs, a reader must not lose sight of the fact that these controls were but one aspect of the over-all economic controls that operated during the war; that these programs competed with others, and, at times, some ran counter to the social objectives of economic policy. But Wilson's work is an excellent presentation of one aspect of wartime economic controls, and an important contribution to the literature on governmental economic policy.

Dr. Bernhardt's book is divided into four parts: (1) Governmental Control, World War I; (2) The High Tariff Period (1920-34); (3) The Sugar Programs of the Roosevelt Administration; and (4) Control of Sugar During World War II. The material in the first part is a digest of an earlier book and a reprint of an article that appeared in an economic journal. Reprints of reports of Federal agencies and official testimony presented to congressional committees make up most of the rest of the material.

One of the chief values of this book is that it gives the reader historical perspective in appraising the wartime and present sugar controls. The continuity of Federal controls under earlier legislation—the Jones Costigan Act of 1934 and the Sugar Act of 1937—facilitated the mobilization of the industry from prewar to full war status. This compilation of official documents is of great value, but it is difficult reading. Short summaries of the periods of control would have added much to the usefulness of the volume.

This "elder statesman" of Government controls in the sugar industry tells the reviewer he considers this book the first of several. In the others he will offer critical analyses of the controls.

In his pamphlet, Swerling analyzes the economic aspects of world sugar production, reviews Cuba's unilateral attempts at international control in

the 1919-30 period, reviews the International Sugar Agreements of 1931 and 1937, and analyzes the common factors in the international sugar agreements.

Swerling concludes that the International Agreement of 1931 was faulty in concept since it failed to include importer countries, and in action since the quotas adopted were too high and inflexible. These errors were largely corrected in the 1937 agreement, but tardy ratification by member countries and the outbreak of the war prevented desired results. He maintains that international sugar agreements have been mostly free of the faults common to other commodity agreements. Consumer interests have not been ignored, and quotas have served less to freeze obsolete trade channels than to perpetuate international intercourse. He believes these agreements to have

been necessary to fortify the most efficient producing areas against excesses of nationalistic policy.

Present conditions of an impending surplus of sugar call for careful investigation by an international study group, Swerling maintains, to evolve a program to modify the nationalistic policies that have plagued the industry. Yet sadly but realistically he concludes "from past performances one may be justifiably pessimistic about the prospects for prompt corrective or preventive action. Agreements have typically been arrived at only after the sugar problem has reached crisis proportions. Once postwar sugar surpluses become a reality, a new international agreement would be a minor encumbrance upon a world sugar industry to which economic liberalism has long since become a stranger."

*Maxwell I. Klayman*

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### Selected Recent Research Publications in Agricultural Economics Issued by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics and Cooperatively by the State Colleges <sup>1</sup>

ALEXANDER, FRANK D., and NELSON, LOWRY. RURAL SOCIAL ORGANIZATION IN GOODHUE COUNTY, MINNESOTA. Minn. Agr. Expt. Sta. Bul. 401, 85 pp., illus. February 1949. [Printed]

One of a series of studies carried out in counties selected to represent the major type-of-farming areas in the United States. Goodhue County is one of the five dairy counties selected. The authors conclude that community life is increasingly integrated around village-centers; that formal organizations are increasing because of need for group action; that ethnic groupings have survived in churches but are relatively unimportant in secular organizations; that a broad participation base characterizes the county's social organizations; and that the county has moved far along the road toward formalized and secondary group life.

MESICK, DAVID O., and BRODELL, ALBERT P. FARM MACHINERY. 5 pp. Bur. Agr. Econ. Mar. 15, 1949.

According to a sample interview survey made by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics in April 1948, farm inventories of most types of farm machinery were at an all-time high about May 1, 1948. An exception—grain binders are replacing combines. Mechanization is greatest in the Corn Belt and Iowa leads the Nation in this respect.

SENF, CATHERINE. THE FARM ACCIDENT SITUATION IN 1948. 8 pp., illus. National Safety Council, Chicago, Ill. (Department of Agriculture cooperating) [1949]. [Printed].

<sup>1</sup> Printed reports are indicated as such. All others are processed. State publications may be obtained from the issuing agencies of the respective States.

Estimates contained in this article are based on three sample surveys conducted by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. 35,892 interviews were made with farmers and a total of 1,927 accidents were reported.

SLUSHER, M. W., and MULLINS, TROY. MECHANIZATION OF THE RICE HARVEST. Ark. Agr. Expt. Sta. Rept. Ser. 11, 30 pp., illus. August 1948.

A progress report dealing with methods of harvesting rice which is a part of a larger study of mechanization of rice and its implications in Arkansas. Combine and binder methods are compared as to labor and power used, principal equipment required, average use, costs of owning and operating, and total harvesting costs. (BAE cooperating; RMA report)

UNITED STATES BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS. MEN'S PREFERENCES AMONG SELECTED CLOTHING ITEMS. PRELIMINARY SUMMARY REPORT. 16 pp. March 1949.

A summary of major findings as to the relative preference expressed by male consumers for the various competing fibers—cotton, wool, rayon, nylon, and their mixtures—in certain selected articles of clothing. Also shown are the beliefs men say they have regarding the advantages and disadvantages of each of the competing fibers in these garments. (RMA report)

UNITED STATES BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS. POTATO PREFERENCES AMONG RESTAURANT AND HOTEL BUYERS. U. S. Dept. Agr. Misc. Pub. 682, 92 pp., illus. April 1949.