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JACK N. LEWIS



Jack Lewis graduated B.Ec. from the University of Sydney in 1942 and subsequently earned an MPA from Harvard (1953) and an Honorary D.Ec. from the University of New England (1970).

After war service Jack joined the BAE in December 1945 and ultimately occupied the position of Assistant Director in 1956 when he transferred to the Department of Trade to take up the position of Assistant Secretary in the Policy Secretariat.

During 1952 and 1953 he spent 18 months as Commonwealth Fund Fellow in the Graduate School of Public Administration at Harvard University. During 1956 and 1957 he was a Member of the FAO Working Group for Agricultural Price Support and Stabilisation Measures.

In July 1957 Jack became Foundation Professor of Agricultural Economics and Dean of the Faculty of Agricultural Economics at the University of New England. He was largely responsible for the development of the Faculty into the internationally recognised research and teaching centre that it is today. During his tenure there, Jack occupied several international advisory and consultancy positions. One of these, with the Harvard Development Advisory Service, took him to Pakistan in 1969 where his talents in Indian cuisine were nurtured.

During 1963-64 he was Visiting Professor and Fulbright Research Scholar at the University of Illinois, Urbana. Throughout the 1970s, Jack was Director of Long-Range Planning at the International Wool Secretariat in London.

He has numerous papers and books to his credit. Perhaps those most widely known in Australia and drawing strongest comment include: 'Is the concept of the home maintenance area outmoded?', *Australian Journal of Agricultural Economics*, 7(2), 97-106, 1963; 'Milking the Australian economy', *Current Affairs Bulletin*, 39(13), 1967; 'The French plan—blueprint for world trade without tears', *Review of Marketing and Agricultural Economics*, 30(3), 143-54, 1962; and 'Floor prices and wool promotion: some further hidden costs', *Review of Marketing and Agricultural Economics*, 47(2), 131-9, 1979.

A book authored jointly in 1967 with J. C. Headley titled *The Pesticide Problem: An Economic Approach to Public Policy* was a pioneering work in the field. This subject was to receive much more intensive public debate in the 1970s and 1980s.

Jack engaged in public debate of most of the post-war rural policy issues including:

- land settlement;
- water conservation;
- price support and stabilisation, particularly wool;
- rural credit;
- agricultural adjustment; and
- commodity promotion.

In these debates Jack's outstanding capacity as a generalist stood out. Whilst respecting 'numbers men' and appreciative of their contribution, it was the insight deriving from experience with policy and command of economic theory that distinguished the Lewis approach.

Consistent logic of argument, clarity of exposition and elegance of style are features of his writings and, for those privileged to be his pupils, of his lectures. His dry and gentle humour has lifted many an economic debate.

He has published his papers where they would have greatest effect. He has sought academic excellence but is self-effacing with respect to academic status. As his friend Warren Musgrave has put it, Jack Lewis is a trenchant critic and most urbane of men.

He was President of the Society in 1960. It is a pleasure to recognise his contribution to the profession with Honorary Life Membership.