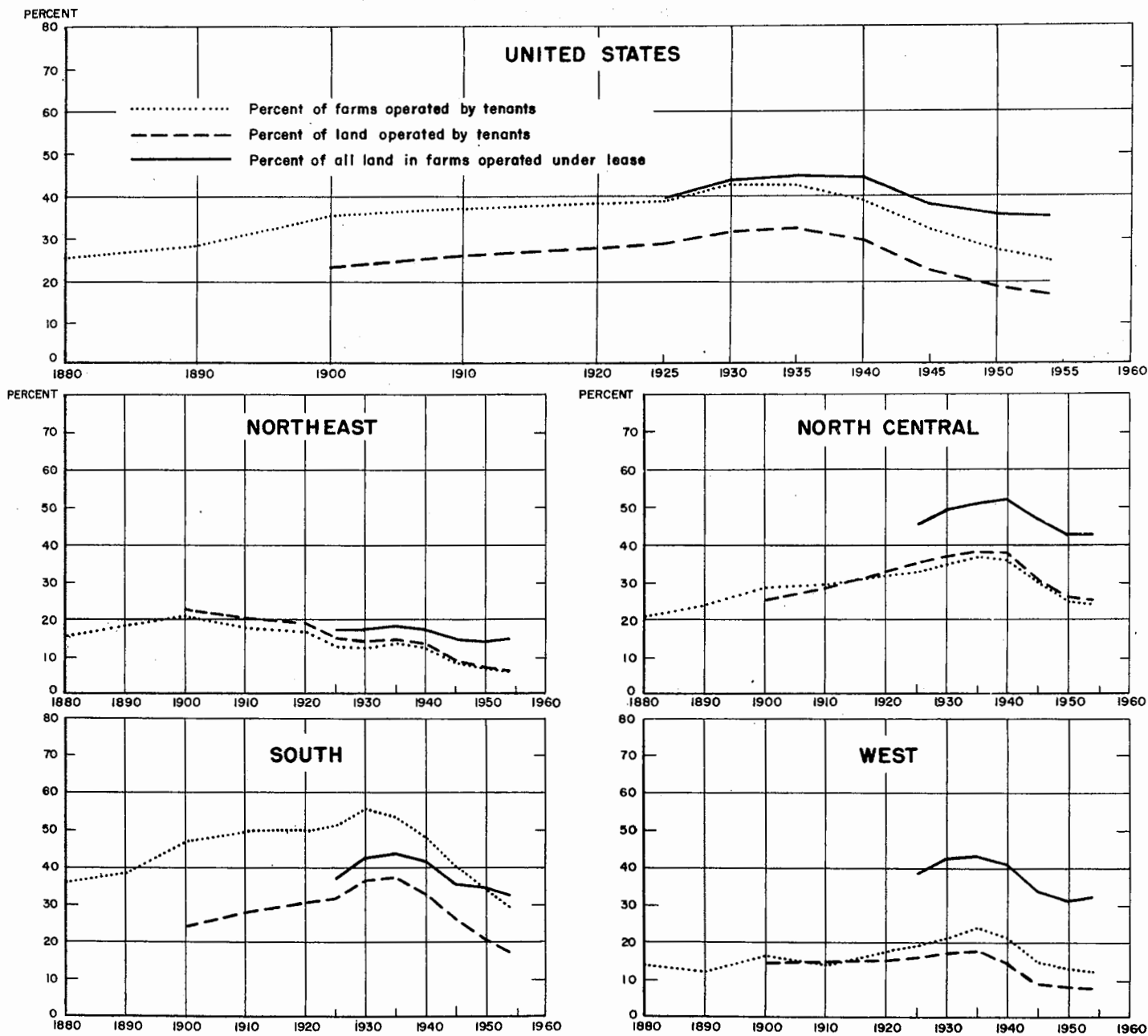


PERCENT OF FARMS AND FARM LAND OPERATED BY TENANTS, AND PERCENT OF TOTAL FARM LAND UNDER LEASE, FOR THE UNITED STATES AND REGIONS: 1880-1954



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Figure 7.

Changes in land under lease.—In 1954, land operated under some form of tenancy arrangement approximated 400 million acres, or about 35 percent of the total farm acreage. Slightly more than one-half of the 400 million acres were operated by part owners and the remainder by tenants. This was the first time that land leased by part owners exceeded that operated by tenants. The 190 million total for tenants in 1954 includes a relatively small acreage (less than 9½ million acres) operated by sharecroppers in the South.

A decreasing proportion of the land in farms has been under lease (used in its broadest sense) since 1935, when nearly 45 percent of all farmland was in this category. The proportion of the farm area operated by tenants increased steadily from the turn of this century through 1935, at which point tenants operated 31.9 percent of the farmland. Thereafter, in each successive Census both a smaller acreage and a smaller percentage of the farmland have been in the control of tenants. By 1954

this percentage was down to 16.4. On the other hand, leased land operated by part owners has steadily increased since 1935 both in absolute acreage and in proportion to the total acreage for all farm operators. The percentage leased by part owners in 1935 was 12.7 and by 1954 it exceeded 18 percent.

A considerable amount of capital is required by a farm operator who gives or contemplates giving his full attention to farm production. With a given amount of capital and available credit, he has some choice as to the amount of land he will farm. He may become a tenant or an operating owner. In order to use an ever-increasing amount of labor-saving, expensive equipment to a fuller capacity, he may elect to be a tenant with more land; whereas, if he elects to be an owner, he may enlarge his farming operations by becoming a part owner. Thus, for several Censuses, farms of both part owners and tenants have been increasing in

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