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## The Paul H. Appleby Papers at Syracuse

Gladys L. Baker

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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

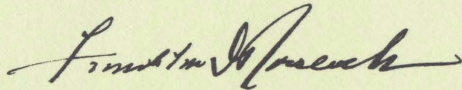
January 29, 1944.

Dear Paul:

I am glad your resignation, effective at the close of business Monday, January thirty-first, tendered in your letter of January twenty-first does not entail your retirement from the public service. I accept it, therefore, effective as of the date indicated.

You have done such good work as Under Secretary of Agriculture that I have the fullest confidence you will meet every requirement of your new responsibilities as Assistant Director of the Bureau of the Budget.

Very sincerely yours,



Honorable Paul H. Appleby,  
Under Secretary of Agriculture,  
Washington, D. C.

Letter to Paul H. Appleby from President Roosevelt on the occasion of Appleby's resignation as Under Secretary of Agriculture to accept the post of Assistant Director of the Bureau of the Budget. From Syracuse University Archives.

# THE COURIER

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Paul Appleby with Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace, 1933 or 1934. Appleby was Assistant to the Secretary from 1933 to 1940. From Syracuse University Archives.

# *The Paul H. Appleby Papers at Syracuse*

by Gladys L. Baker

The Paul H. Appleby papers in the Syracuse University Archives, a unit in the George Arents Research Library, offer the scholar insight into the achievements and quality of a man who made contributions to the fields of government and public administration as a government administrator, a theorist, a writer, and a teacher of public administration. When Paul Appleby resigned from the position of Assistant Director of the Bureau of the Budget in 1944, President Franklin D. Roosevelt wrote:

You have long been an important part of the Washington scene and have demonstrated your versatility through the efficiency with which you have discharged the duties of one important post after another . . . latterly those of Assistant Director of the Bureau of the Budget.<sup>1</sup>

Harold D. Smith, Director of the Bureau of the Budget, attempting to persuade Appleby to return to the same position, wrote that President Truman had said "you tell him that I want him back in the Government, that it will not only be helpful to you, but it will be helpful to me as President."<sup>2</sup> Two days later, Budget Director Smith wrote Appleby assuring him of the President's enthusiasm about his selection and urged him to take this position rather than the position of president of a university which was considered an alternative. Smith wrote:

I think you would make a swell university president. I have some reservations, however, as to whether you would like that kind of job too well for a long-time pull. But I am really

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*Dr. Baker is Head of the Historical Research Section of the Economic and Statistical Analysis Division, Economic Research Service, United States Department of Agriculture. She first pursued research in the Appleby Papers in Syracuse University Archives for her article titled "And to Act for the Secretary: Paul H. Appleby and the Department of Agriculture, 1933-1940," in Agricultural History, Vol. XLV, No. 4, October 1971. Her most recent book, of which she is co-author, is The Department of Agriculture, published by Praeger Press in 1972.*

<sup>1</sup>Franklin D. Roosevelt to Paul Appleby, November 17, 1944. From Syracuse University Archives.

<sup>2</sup>Harold D. Smith to Paul Appleby, August 18, 1945. From Syracuse University Archives.

concerned that your influence would be greatly limited. . . . I feel keenly that you can do much more for humanity in some other position. Here is roughly my thinking.

If you come back to the Bureau of the Budget as assistant director – as I hope you will – I would want you to stay at least a year and would prefer a longer time. Then if I step out, you could take my place although I do not consider that this would be much of a promotion. . . . At any rate, you know how important the job here is, and my feeling is that it will become more important rather than less.

That is one possibility. The other relates to the whole international picture. I feel that with your experience and with the depth and breadth of your thinking about world problems, instead of your going in for educating youth – which is a noble thing – you should devote your efforts to making a more immediate contribution to the international [sic]. As you know very well, there are not too many adults in this country who have the background to make such contributions. That is the tragedy of our present situation.<sup>3</sup>

The position of Assistant Director of the Bureau of the Budget was only one of the major government positions Appleby held before becoming Dean of the Maxwell Graduate School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University.

Most of the Appleby papers in Syracuse University Archives cover the period from 1945-56. They include correspondence concerning the joint project of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and the Maxwell School on public administration policies within the United Nations. The records also include correspondence related to the Albany Programs, a graduate program in public administration jointly administered by New York University and Syracuse University during 1949-50. Before the collection relating to the Maxwell School can be used, permission must be secured from the Dean of the Maxwell School, Alan K. Campbell.

The records in the Syracuse University Archives on the period of Appleby's public service are high in quality but few in quantity. They are a very small proportion of the 66 boxes of Appleby records. The bulk of the collection, 50 boxes, relates to Paul Appleby's third career, when he was an educator and teacher of public administration in his capacity as Dean of the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs from 1947 through 1955.

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<sup>3</sup>Harold D. Smith to Paul Appleby, August 20, 1945. From Syracuse University Archives.

This article is concerned with Appleby's period of government service because of the insight given in the records to Paul Appleby's character and development and because the development and the insight gained in this period prepared him for the position of leadership at Syracuse University. Appleby's first career as a journalist is also mentioned because it led, by chance, to his experience in government service.

Paul Appleby's entrance into public life was, he explained to friends, like being struck by a bolt of lightning. His first career had been in journalism. Appleby's father, a Congregational minister, had been a journalist before entering the ministry. When Paul was eight years old, his father presented him with a printing press. The next year Paul began printing a paper for boys which he called *The Chum*, with the subtitle "everybody needs a chum." *The Chum* reached a circulation of 2,000 before he had to give it up because of the cost of printing and mailing.

Appleby served on the editorial board and as editor of the college paper at Grinnell College where he received his B.A. degree in 1913. After working for a short time on a fruit farm in the State of Washington, he began publishing weekly newspapers in Montana, Minnesota, and Iowa. He was editor of the *Iowa Magazine* at Waterloo, Iowa from 1920-1924 and was an editorial writer for the *Des Moines Register and Tribune* from 1924 to 1926. In 1926, he returned to running his own paper. He moved to Radford, Virginia and purchased two weeklies, the *News Journal* in Radford and the *News Messenger* in Christiansburg.

Early in March of 1933, Paul Appleby became special assistant to Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace. He found himself launched in this new career as a result of the friendships he developed with Wallace and Wallace's close associates while living in Des Moines. Appleby, who accepted the job on a trial basis, wrote a letter to Donald Murphy, editor of *Wallaces Farmer*, about 10 days after arriving in Washington, in which he revealed his essential modesty, his idealism, his willingness to take chances for new intellectual adventure, and his insight. Excerpts from his letter follow:

As to the money: a good friend and leading local Democrat lent me \$100 cash when I was coming. . . . I haven't asked when pay day comes, but from now on I can manage. I'm not going to bother about money during whatever period I'm wanted here, and I believe this will be possible for me altho a little difficult for the family. . . .

So far as my own situation is concerned, I'm not thinking about it except insofar as it may serve Henry's purposes. It involves a curious mixture of being somebody and being nobody. The department contains a huge quantity of brains, and H.A. and his close advisers are of course an extraordinary group. I'm five

years behind where I once was (which was far from being abreast) in knowing what was in H.A.'s mind; it is important that I catch up as far as possible, and my equipment is limited. In certain particulars I'm already sure that I can serve well; in others I feel stupid. In general administrative affairs I believe I'll catch on. In the technical and specialized lines I dunno. . . . If I can feel that H.A. and Tugwell are pleased I believe I can do the job. So far the departmental reactions are splendid. . . . My diplomacy has seemed to come easily these first ten days, surprisingly. As you say, loyalty to H.A. will be influential. On the other hand, habit is terribly strong. I think an extended tenure will either make or break me. At 41 it is odd to be considering experience, yet from the standpoint of a life the experience is worth while. And beyond that, the opportunity to give one's self completely, even in a relatively minor post is priceless.<sup>4</sup>

Other personal letters written to Donald R. Murphy in the Syracuse University Archives give insight into administrative problems of the Department of Agriculture during the turbulent New Deal years, and the role played by Paul Appleby. These need to be supplemented by Appleby's Oral History which is on file in the Syracuse University Library and in the Oral History Office of Columbia University. Appleby served as Assistant to the Secretary from 1933 to 1940, a position in which he assumed major responsibility for advising Secretary Wallace and for following through to see that the Secretary's decisions were carried out. The administration of the Department under the leadership of Secretary Wallace, assisted by Appleby and others at the Secretarial level, was considered outstanding in 1937 by staff members of President Roosevelt's Committee on Administrative Management. In a staff memorandum to the Committee, Joseph P. Harris made the following statement with reference to staff studies: "The Department of Agriculture was recognized as undoubtedly the outstanding executive department from the standpoint of administrative management."

The Department's reputation as the outstanding example of brilliant administration can be credited in large measure to Appleby's ability to organize and follow through thousands of transactions in line with the Secretary's major policy decisions. His ability to help the Secretary organize and pull together the various Department agencies into a unified team was in itself a major contribution to Department policy as well as administration.

The records available at Syracuse, particularly the personal letters to Murphy, are important to an understanding of Paul Appleby's role and some of the problems, administrative and political, encountered during this period. They are not available in the National Archives. Because of the small number of records at Syracuse on this period, they need to be supplemented by the

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<sup>4</sup>Paul Appleby to Donald R. Murphy, n.d. From Syracuse University Archives.





Paul Appleby, center, in 1941, after he became Under Secretary of Agriculture, with Secretary Claude Wickard, left, and Assistant Secretary Grover Hill. From Syracuse University Archives.

much larger collection of Department of Agriculture records at the National Archives.

During the period of serving as executive assistant to Secretary Wallace, Appleby had immersed himself in learning about public administration. He soon found that some of the textbook theories of public administration current at the time did not fit with his experience and began developing his own theories, but did not publish his first book on the subject until 1945 when he was for a brief period Vice President and General Manager of the Queen City Broadcasting Company of Seattle, Washington. The book *Big Democracy* contended that administration could not be separated from policy, that political relations, policy and administration are so intertwined as to constitute an indivisible whole which is the operation of government.

In the meantime, Paul Appleby had succeeded Claude R. Wickard as Under Secretary of Agriculture on September 5, 1940. Wickard became Secretary of Agriculture. During this period, Appleby had a number of high level special assignments including: Chairman of the International Wheat Council; Special Adviser to the Administrator, Office of Lend-Lease Administration; and United States member of the United Nations Interim Commission on Food and Agriculture. Scattered records are available on this period in the Syracuse University Archives.

Appleby left the Department of Agriculture in 1944 to become Assistant Director of the Bureau of the Budget, where he served until 1947 except for a short period when he was with the Queen City Broadcasting Company in Seattle. His service in the Federal government ended in 1947 and he began a new career at the age of 56. As Dean of the Maxwell Graduate School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Appleby had time to re-examine the field of public administration and to draw upon his own experience to illustrate his theories of government and public administration. During this period, he published two books, *Policy and Administration* in 1949 and *Morality and Administration in Democratic Government* in 1952, and many articles. Appleby's fourth book, *Public Administration for a Welfare State*, was published in 1961 in connection with his work as consultant to the government of India during 1952, 1954, 1956, and 1960-61.

He left Syracuse in 1955 to serve as Budget Director for the State of New York until 1957 when he retired. After retirement he continued to work in his chosen field of government, making another trip to India, publishing *Citizens as Sovereigns*, and writing articles on government and administration for the journals.

The Appleby papers at Syracuse include material on Appleby's visits to India as a consultant. A photocopy of the unofficial debate in the Indian Parliament over the Appleby report to the Nehru government, as well as comments in the press, are also included. Material on Public Administration Cases which Appleby had sponsored with a group of like-minded professors

to show how important decisions in government were actually made is also at the Syracuse University Library.

The collection of Appleby papers in the Archives at Syracuse is primarily concerned with Appleby's ideas and philosophy, but a number of personal letters also provide insight into his character and his experience in high administrative positions. These reveal Appleby's interest throughout his life in new experiences, new learning, and new ideas.



With Nehru in India. Appleby was a consultant to the government of India during the 1950s and early 1960s. From Syracuse University Archives.

## CLASS OF 1912 IS DONOR OF IMPORTANT INDEX

Library Associates wishes to acknowledge a significant gift of the Class of 1912 to Syracuse University Libraries, the eight-volume *Index to the Human Relations Area Files*. An interpretive brochure on the HRAF describes it as

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Syracuse University Libraries is greatly indebted to the Class of 1912 for this most important reference work, and is very appreciative of their generous gift.

