



A NOTE FROM THE EDITORS

On January 1, 2000, the Henry A. Wallace Institute for Alternative Agriculture became the Henry A. Wallace Center for Agricultural & Environmental Policy at Winrock International. To publicly recognize the character and significance of this merger, a reception was held in Washington, DC, on May 4th.

The featured speaker at this event, former Iowa Senator John C. Culver, used the occasion to explain and link the legacy

of Henry A. Wallace, and the Wallace family, to the current work of the Center and Winrock International. Senator Culver and colleague John Hyde are co-authors of the recently published biography, *American Dreamer: The Life of Henry A. Wallace*.

To help our readers understand these historical and contemporary connections, we present here the full text of Senator Culver's remarks. Our thanks to Senator

Culver for providing these insights at this moment of institutional change, challenge, and opportunity.

We also wish to thank Mrs. Jean Wallace Douglas, Henry A. Wallace's daughter, Honorary President of the former Henry A. Wallace Institute, and long-time supporter of the Center, for her steadfast faith in our work. The support of Mrs. Douglas' family is also gratefully acknowledged.

The Wallace family vision and today's agricultural challenges

On the centennial of Henry Agard Wallace's birth in 1888, it was recognized and memorialized in the U.S. Congress that the three generations of the Wallace family constituted the first family in the history of American agriculture.

Head of this remarkable clan was the first Henry Wallace, a progressive minister, crusading journalist, and proponent of scientific farming. He was known affectionately as "Uncle Henry" by thousands of midwestern readers of the family farm journal, the *Wallaces' Farmer*. The publication summed up its philosophy in six words on the cover of every issue: "Good Farming, Clear Thinking, Right Living."

In 1986, following the election of William McKinley, Uncle Henry declined an opportunity to be named Secretary of Agriculture and proposed his friend Tama Jim Wilson, who went on to serve 16 years in that capacity, the longest service by a Cabinet Secretary in U.S. history. Tama Jim was often referred to as "Wallace's Secretary" because the family so influenced national agricultural and conservation policies throughout his long tenure. Uncle Henry's son, H.C. Wallace, recalled the day he asked his father why he had not

pursued the chance to become Secretary of Agriculture. "No Wallace has ever held an office higher than Justice of the Peace," he said, "and I didn't want to mar the family record."

Uncle Henry Wallace gained national recognition when President Theodore Roosevelt named him a member of The Country Life Commission, a panel of distinguished agricultural leaders, to examine rural conditions and recommend reforms.

"The goal," Uncle Henry wrote in the final report of the Commission in 1908, "is a new and permanent rural civilization. Upon the development of this distinctly rural civilization rests ultimately the ability, by methods of farming requiring the highest intelligence, to continue to feed and clothe the hungry nations; to supply the city and metropolis with fresh food, clean bodies and clear brains that can endure the strain of modern urban life; and to preserve a race of men in the open country that, in the future as in the past, will be the stay and strength of the nation in time of war, and its guiding and controlling spirit in time of peace."

Uncle Henry was a fervent believer that the purpose of life on earth was to honor

God by service to your fellow man and that no cause was more worthy in that regard than agriculture.

Uncle Henry's son H.C. Wallace and grandson Henry A. Wallace in turn loyally embraced this family philosophy.

H.C. Wallace was named Secretary of Agriculture in 1921 by President Harding. He struggled to obtain federal farm relief for farmers caught in the post-World War I depression, but his efforts were consistently stymied by the opposition of his fellow cabinet member, Commerce Secretary Herbert Hoover, and by vetoes from his own Republican President.

In terms of the tenacity with which H.C. Wallace fought for the cause of agriculture and conservation, an admirer said, "Harry Wallace was a natural-born gamecock. He was red-headed on his head and in his soul." At the time of his death at 58, he had nearly finished a book entitled *Our Debt and Duty to the Farmer*. His son, who completed the work, blamed his early death on the stress and strain of his fight with the Republican Party.

In a tribute to his father in the family paper, Henry A. Wallace stated: "The fight for agricultural quality will go on . . . [and]