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INSTITUTE NEWS

Wallace Lecturer Sidey Recounts "The Greatest Story Never Told"

The ability of the American farmer to produce "an abundance of food the likes of which the world had never seen or imagined" is "the greatest story never told," according to Hugh Sidey, who presented the 1998 Henry A. Wallace Annual Lecture in March. Sidey, Contributing Editor of *Time* Magazine and author of its column, "The Presidency," was born in Adair County, Iowa, where Henry A. Wallace was born.

His lecture, entitled "The Greatest Story Never Told: The Food Miracle in America," referred to a current generation "in their 40's who have only vague ideas of where food comes from and how it gets to them....That great cultural foundation of plentiful food at prices that anyone can afford is as taken for granted in our time as the air we breathe."

Reviewing the era of Henry Wallace, Sidey referred to the "good things happening in the world" then that Wallace had put in motion. "Almost every week the family newspaper had stories about new terraces being built, tree shelters being planted, farm ponds dug," he said. "The electric lines stretched farther and farther into the county, and the 4-H clubs became a young army. When I fly across the country these days and I see the glint of thousands of farm ponds in the setting sun, when I glimpse the graceful designs of crops in contours and the enduring shelterbelts that march from Canada to the Gulf,

I think that these are the fingerprints of Henry Wallace put down on our land over the last 65 years, a stunning legacy from an uncommon man." But today the population of Adair County is roughly half of what it was when Henry Wallace was born there, and the farms are twice or three times as large, Sidey said.

"We could use another Henry Wallace, or maybe many Henry Wallaces, and not necessarily those who experiment with new crops and have technical skills in growing and marketing food," Sidey said. "The time calls for men and women who understand this is a quietly crucial moment for our exuberant, well-fed nation. Decisions made now will as in Wallace's day echo through the next 65 years. Henry Wallace above all else understood the crisis of his time—spiritual as well as physical—and the need for bold action to use and preserve this greatest of all resources—our land and those people who tend it."

Wallace Institute Elects New Offices, Installs Johnson

The Wallace Institute Board of Directors has elected new officers for the coming year, re-elected three members, and installed one new member. The newly installed member is Paul Johnson, former Chief of the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service and now a farmer in Iowa. The new President is Cornelia Butler Flora, Director, North Central Region Center for Rural Development, Iowa State University; Vice President is Dr. Frederick

Magdoff, Professor, Department of Plant and Soil Science, University of Vermont; Secretary is Christine (Cass) Peterson, owner/operator, Flickerville Mountain Farm and Groundhog Ranch; and Treasurer is Jose Montenegro, Director, Rural Development Center, Salinas, California.

Members re-elected for a second term were Dr. Frederick Kirschenmann, manager, Kirschenmann Family Farms; Frederick Magdoff; and James Stephenson, Executive Director, Pamlico-Tar River Foundation, North Carolina. The Board also conducted a major discussion of the findings of a report prepared by Robert Gray of Resource Management Consultants that is part of the Institute's long-range planning process currently underway.

Whole Farm Planning Report Surveys Nine Activities

Whole Farm Planning: A Survey of North American Experiments, a new report just released by the Wallace Institute, examines nine whole farm planning activities in the United States and Canada. The survey and analysis concluded that because whole farm planning has not attracted a uniform constituency, it cannot be a simple, straightforward exercise.

The report also identifies several areas for improvement in most of the whole farm planning programs surveyed. The full report is \$10 from the Wallace Institute, 9200 Edmonston Road, #117, Greenbelt, MD 20770; (301) 441-8777; e-mail hawiaa@access.digex.net.