

**THE WHITE HOUSE**  
**WASHINGTON**

August 2, 1941

MEMORANDUM FOR

HON. MARRINER ECCLES

I went over the question of the sixth member for F. R. B. just before leaving and find it almost impossible to replace either Evans or M. L. Wilson in the places they now occupy. The other available man is Appleby. He has been a splendid Administrator, he knows the agricultural situation and, finally, I am very certain that you will like him when you come to know him.

Frankly, I think this is in every way the best choice I can make. Therefore, I am having the papers prepared for his nomination and hope this is agreeable to you.

F. D. R.



July 18, 1941.

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Chester:

Would you let me have, in the strictest confidence of course, your opinion of and such information as you have in regard to Rudolph M. Evans who, as you know, is Administrator of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration? I would particularly like to get your slant on his general outlook and qualifications in case he is put forward as a representative of agriculture on the Board.

I have an acquaintance with him and a favorable impression in regard to his personality. The only factual information I have of his background is the enclosed data from "Who's Who". It is my understanding that Wallace brought him here and that he is much closer to Wallace than M. L. Wilson.

I would appreciate it if you would write me as fully and candidly as possible to give me your opinion of Evans, and I will of course treat it as absolutely confidential and for my own personal information.

With kind personal regards,

Sincerely yours,

Mr. Chester C. Davis, President,  
Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis,  
St. Louis, Missouri.

enclosure

ET:b



BUCKHORN LODGE  
BAR LAZY J RANCH  
PARSHALL, COLO.

Friday - July 25<sup>th</sup>  
1941

Dear Marrison -

I'll write more fully later about  
"Spike" Evans. He is fine in every respect,  
well-trained, cooperative, intelligent; makes  
a good appearance & a good speech; has the  
confidence of farmers generally. In my  
opinion he would work into a very useful  
place on the Board. This is not a "gairing"  
personality; in general, he would be a  
peacemaker on the Board. Back of this,  
is the fact that he has been interested in  
farm financing, and the Fed. Res. System,  
and has been a business-like farm  
operator. Personally, I should be very  
happy to see him on the Board.

Cool & restful here. Trout are  
pretty wise but I fooled a few yesterday.  
Back on the job Aug. 1. Helen joins  
with love to you & Marrison -  
Sincerely,

Chet Davis

Form F. R. 511

TO \_\_\_\_\_  
FROM \_\_\_\_\_

REMARKS:

**Mr. Evans' correct title is:**

**Agricultural Adjustment and  
Conservation Administrator.**

CHAIRMAN'S OFFICE

August 2, 1941.

Memorandum to Chairman Eccles:

Paul H. Appleby was born in Green County, Missouri, September 13, 1891, and graduated with an A.B. degree from Iowa College in Grinnell in 1913. From then on to 1933 he appears to have been engaged exclusively in newspaper work. He was a publisher of weekly newspapers in Montana, Minnesota and Iowa from 1914 to 1920; he was editor of the Iowa Magazine at Waterloo, Iowa, from 1920 to 1924; he was an editorial writer for the Des Moines Register and Tribune from 1924 to 1928; and he was a publisher of weekly newspapers in Virginia from 1928 to 1933. He then came to Washington as Executive Assistant to the Secretary of Agriculture and has been in that Department ever since, being now Under Secretary of Agriculture.

This being Saturday I have been unable to get in touch with anyone with whom I could talk in confidence about him but there is nothing in his record to identify him in any way with agriculture as such except as it might have been gained through his contacts as a newspaper man and since 1933 as an administrator in the Department of Agriculture. His record from the standpoint of identity with a knowledge of agriculture cannot be compared with that of A. G. Black who appears to have spent all his life since he graduated in work of an agricultural nature, being by profession an agricultural economist.

When I succeed in getting in touch with someone who

can give me further information I will pass it on to you.

*Om*

August 2, 1941.

Dear Mr. President:

In view of my conversation with you a few days ago and also my conversation with Vice President Wallace and Secretary Wickard regarding the appointment of the agricultural member of the FRB, your memorandum just received came as a shock to me. I do not know very much about Appleby, but what I have heard from Chester Davis and others who know him causes me to have great misgivings.

The job of working with a large board and getting results is a very difficult one at best and to have a member appointed who might be difficult to work with would add greatly to my problems, particularly in the period which lies immediately ahead in which smooth working organization is so essential. This appointment is very important to me since I have to work so constantly with the Board Members.

In view of the foregoing, I would like to request that you defer final action on this appointment until you return from your trip and I can have an opportunity to advise with you after checking further into the matter.

Very respectfully,

M. S. Eccles,  
Chairman.

The President,  
The White House.

August 6, 1941.

My dear Mr. President:

I greatly appreciate your deferring action on the appointment of Mr. Appleby until I may have an opportunity to advise further with you.

When I talked to Secretary Wickard about Mr. Evans or Mr. Wilson on the Wednesday before you left, he said that either one of the two men would be a very good choice. He did not then mention, nor had he ever before mentioned Mr. Appleby to me. He asked me, however, to defer doing anything until he could think the matter over and talk to me the following Monday. In the interim, he apparently suggested to you that Mr. Appleby was the best choice and that neither Mr. Evans nor Mr. Wilson were available. That was hardly cricket.

I was interested in learning from Henry Morgenthau this morning that Secretary Wickard had asked him several months ago to recommend to you the appointment of Mr. Appleby. From my conversation with Henry as well as from other evidence, I have reason to feel that Secretary Wickard has for some time thought Mr. Appleby had outlived his usefulness in the Department of Agriculture and has been trying to find some other place for him.

It is my considered opinion from information I have that Mr. Appleby has been a discordant element in Agriculture and I, therefore, feel that he might be a discordant element on the Board. I do not see that he would bring any strength to the Board with the agricultural groups and Congress. Quite otherwise. He does not stand well, as the agricultural member of the Board should, with the majority of the important farm organizations, or with many of the agricultural members of Congress.

Henry Morgenthau feels just as I do about Appleby's appointment to the Board. We would both like to see Bill Myers appointed, if he can be secured. If not, then I would like to see you reconsider Mr. Evans who, next to Mr. Appleby, would be Secretary Wickard's choice, as he has said to me.

I hope you will not feel that I am presumptuous in writing you so frankly about this matter, but I am intensely interested in helping you get the best possible man for this position and to avoid an appointment which is for more than twelve years and which we both might regret. The future of the Federal Reserve System means too much to me not to speak my mind to you with reference to this appointment.

Very respectfully,

The President,  
The White House.



From a confidential, personal letter of Chester Davis which he wrote on August 4 on hearing of the possibility of Appleby's appointment:

"He would not be a satisfactory agricultural representative on the Board either from the standpoint of the agricultural groups or from that of the Board.

"Nothing in his history ever identified him in the slightest degree with agriculture until Secretary Wallace brought him to Washington from Radford, Virginia, as Assistant to the Secretary in 1933. Ordinarily a man who spent eight years in the Secretary's Office might be expected to establish close relationship, based on mutual trust and confidence, with the important organizations in the field of agriculture. This, with very minor exceptions, Paul has not done. I include among those who do not have confidence in him or his ability to represent agriculture all of the national farm and cooperative organizations and the state agricultural colleges and Extension organizations. An exception should be made in the case of some elements in the National Farmers Union headed by Bill Thatcher, with whom Paul has worked fairly closely. I believe that the Secretary of Agriculture and many of his close associates have been wanting for some time to get Appleby out of the Department. Early last March Henry Wallace told Harry Hopkins and me that he had at last concluded that Paul had outlived his usefulness in the Department of Agriculture and would have to be shifted to some other job. He felt strongly that Paul's hard work and financial circumstances made it important that some good place be found for him. I agree with this with only this reservation -- I do not believe it is fair either to the Administration or to Agriculture that he be named to an important position as agriculture's representative or spokesman.

"From close observation in the Department of Agriculture and outside it is my opinion that it is common knowledge that friction and discord have attended his activities. I believe he promotes factions and works through them so much that his being in an organization does not promote harmony and coordinated action."

"I feel certain that from any investigation you make you will conclude (1) that the Department of Agriculture wants to move him out because he has been and is a discordant element; and (2) that he would bring weakness rather than strength to the Board in its relation with agricultural groups."

August 19, 1941.

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

My dear Mr. President:

As I expect to leave for the West at the end of the week to be gone for several weeks, I would greatly appreciate it if, before leaving, I could talk to you for a moment or two in your office or over the telephone in regard to the agricultural vacancy on the Board. If this is not convenient, I hope the matter can be left open until such time as you may be able to see me on my return.

Since I took the liberty of writing to you a second time about Appleby while you were on your recent cruise, I have looked into the situation still further. I have no personal feeling whatever about Appleby, but I am now convinced that his selection would be unpopular with the representative agricultural organizations, excepting the more radical factions of the Farmers' Union, and with those agricultural representatives in Congress with whom we have to work. Judging by his record, the antagonisms he has stirred up, and the fact that Wickard is anxious to get rid of him by unloading him on us, I can only conclude that his appointment would be inadvisable from the standpoint of the Reserve System's relationship with agriculture.

Respectfully yours,

The Honorable  
The President of the United States,  
The White House.

ET:b