



CHARLES HAROLD FISHER

Dr. Charles H. "Hap" Fisher was born in Hiawatha, West Virginia on November 20th, 1906. His family moved to Salem, Virginia when Hap was a small boy, where Hap grew up and went to school. In high school Hap played football, basketball, and ran track, he also edited the school year book, and played banjo in a dance band. Hap graduated from Roanoke College with a B.S. in Chemistry in 1928. He earned his M.S. (in 1929) and Ph.D. (in 1932) degrees from the University of Illinois, working with the well-known organic chemist Professor R.C. Fuson. He taught for three years at Harvard, then worked for the Bureau of Mines in Pittsburgh researching the production of liquid fuels by the hydrogenation of coal for five years. He moved to the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 1940, where he worked for the next 32 years. In Philadelphia he was head of the Organic Acids Section, and then head of the Carbohydrate Division until 1950, when he moved to New Orleans. Fisher was the director of the USDA's Southern Utilization Research Lab, with headquarters in New Orleans and six satellite laboratories in Texas, Louisiana, Florida, and North Carolina. During his 22 years there, the laboratories became internationally known for their research on the chemistry of cotton, cotton seed, peanuts, sugar cane, pine gum, and many other materials.

Early in his career, Fisher pioneered the development of new plastics, synthetic rubbers, and synthetic fuels. Today, he is recognized as a farsighted leader of research in the improved utilization of farm crops.

Fisher, with his wife Elizabeth Snyder Fisher, enjoyed many cruises (including seven around the world) and visits to many countries, including Norway, Egypt, Thailand, Cambodia, Australia, New Zealand, China, Japan, Viet Nam, Nepal, Israel, Greece, Kenya, South Africa, Mexico, and several cities in South America.

Fisher's biographies are in several biographical books, including *"Who's Who in America"*, *"Who's Who in the World"*, *"England's Outstanding Scientists of the 21st Century"*, *"International Who's Who of Intellectuals, 1981"*, and *"Profiles of Eminent American Chemists, 1986"*. He is quoted in *"Who's Who in the World"* saying, "I have worked hard as a physical scientist and research administrator because research is fun and offers the best way of benefitting humankind."

Hap Fisher Liked Eisenhower's statement about wars:

"Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed. The world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children . . . This is not a way of life at all, in any true sense. Under the cloud of threatening war, it is humanity hanging from an iron cross."

--- From a speech by President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1953, at the end of the Korean War

Briefly stated, the future of science, and indeed that of man, will depend primarily on how science and its offspring, technology, are used.

Today's *second* most important problem: To achieve and assure the proper and wise use of galloping and powerful science.

Today's *most important* problem: To develop more leaders and citizens of high quality having the knowledge, wisdom, prudence, morality, and compassion needed to use sophisticated science for man's good.

So what does the future hold? "I believe that as in the past, competent leaders who use intelligently our massive and growing pool of knowledge will be our best resource for overcoming problems and continuing our march toward and improved civilization. Our role is to go to school, get an education, live a worthwhile life and just try to make the world a better place."

At age 103, Hap Fisher, wrote the following to summarize his life:

"I was born wealthy in 1906, not in material wealth, but in blessings, much more important. I had caring parents who gave me good genes and a good philosophy for life. They helped me get a good education and taught me that time is valuable and should be used to do good and make the world a better place for living.

I selected science and research as my profession because I was convinced doing research - providing new and valuable information would be an excellent way to benefit humankind.

I like to think my research, described in more than 200 publications and 72 patents, has contributed, even if only slightly, to the march toward a better world.

I have greatly enjoyed my efforts and labors toward creating a better world. I wish I could have the privilege and pleasure of doing more."

Therefore, Hap Fisher has set up the scholarship fund in conjunction with the Cabell Brand Center, to encourage students to pursue their profession in excellence and still work in society for the common good.

## Appendix I:

**Recommended Reading from Hap Fisher.** Mr. Fisher has subscribed and reads regularly all of the following publications.

- AARP Bulletin
- American Scientist, Sigma Xi
- Bloomberg Business Week
- Chemical Engineering Progress (by American Institute of Chemical Engineers)
- Chemical Heritage
- Chemical Heritage
- Harvard Health Letter
- Harvard Heart Letter
- Harvard Men's Health Letter
- Health After 50: Johns Hopkins Medical Letter
- Illinois Alumni Association Magazine
- Inform, American Oil Chemist Society
- Invention & Technology
- Journal American Association Textile Chemists & Colorists
- Journal of American Oil Chemist Society
- Journal of Chemical & Engineering Data
- MIT's Technology Review
- NARFE Bulletin (for active & retired Federal Employees)
- National Geographic Traveler Magazine
- Newsweek
- Nutrition Action Health Letter
- Oil Price Information Service
- Prevention Magazine
- Readers Digest
- Salem Times-Register
- Science News
- Scientific American
- Smithsonian Magazine
- The American Scholar, Phi Beta Kappa
- The Economist
- The Key Reporter, Phi Beta Kappa
- The Kiplinger Letters
- The Roanoke Times
- The Wall Street Journal
- The Washington Spectator
- The Week
- Time Magazine
- Tufts University Health & Nutrition Letter
- University of California Wellness Letter
- US News & World Report
- WIRED