

# Merwin K. Hart papers, 1929-1962

## Overview of the Collection

<b>Creator</b>	Hart, Merwin Kimball, 1881-1962
<b>Title</b>	<a href="#">Merwin K. Hart papers</a>
<b>Dates</b>	1929-1962 (inclusive) 1929 1962
<b>Quantity</b>	8.5 linear feet, (9 containers)
<b>Collection Number</b>	Coll 121
<b>Summary</b>	Merwin K. Hart (1881-1962) was a lawyer and political figure who founded the New York State Economic Council. The collection contains records from the National Economic Council.
<b>Repository</b>	<a href="#">University of Oregon Libraries, Special Collections and University Archives.</a> UO Libraries--SCUA 1299 University of Oregon Eugene OR 97403-1299 Telephone: 541-346-3068 <a href="mailto:spcarref@uoregon.edu">spcarref@uoregon.edu</a>
<b>Access Restrictions</b>	Collection is open to the public. Collection must be used in Special Collections and University Archives Reading Room. Collection or parts of collection may be stored offsite. Please contact Special Collections and University Archives in advance of your visit to allow for transportation time.
<b>Additional Reference Guides</b>	Paper finding aid with additional information available in Special Collections & University Archives.  <a href="#">See the Current Collection Guide for detailed description and requesting options.</a>
<b>Languages</b>	English
<b>Sponsor</b>	Funding for encoding this finding aid was provided through a grant awarded by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

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## Historical Note

Merwin K. Hart was born in 1881 in Utica, New York and educated at Harvard University from which he was graduated in 1904. He read law and was admitted to the New York bar in 1911. In 1914, he formed the Utica Mutual Workmen's Compensation Insurance Company, later the Utica Mutual Insurance Company.

After service in World War I, Hart became increasingly concerned about the problems of government spending and taxation. With James W. Gerard, Hart planned and held the New York State-wide Economic Congress in April, 1929 in order to discuss and search for solutions to those problems. The 1929 economic congress appointed the Committee of Twenty-Five that reorganized in 1931 as the New York State Economic Council with Hart as its president. It was dedicated to the twin goals of lowering

taxes and reducing government spending. In 1943, the name was changed to the National Economic Council and actively promoted conservatism in politics and economics.

Although Hart and Franklin Roosevelt were Harvard schoolmates and acquaintances, the two were often great distances apart. Hart, in spite of his service on the Governor's Budget Advisory Commission under Roosevelt, worked in opposition to Roosevelt and his programs.

Hart was also a member of Robert Welch's John Birch Society and served as the head of the New York City Branch until his death in 1962.

## Content Description

The Merwin K. Hart Papers consist almost entirely of records of the National Economic Council, its predecessor, the New York State Economic Council, and the spinoff organizations such as the Committee for the Revival of Private Enterprise of which Hart was also the head. The records include information on meetings, publications, addresses, correspondence, statements to Congressional committees, position papers, internal committee files, and reports of Hart's European trips. Of special interest are the files the House Select Committee on Lobbying Activities (the Buchanan Committee) which investigated the National Economic Council in 1950.

The files also include records of the Educational Advisory Committee, which prepared reports on the school systems of Little Falls, New York, and Niagara Falls, New York, as well as reports on social science textbooks (particularly those by Harold Rugg) and on an economics textbook written by Lorie Tarshis.

Major correspondents include Flamen Ball, John B. Bently, William F. Buckley, Jr., Martin Dies, Frank E. Gannett, James H. Gipson, Robert LeFevre, Manuel Maestro, Benjamin Minifie, J. Earl Schaefer, Samuel M. Shoemaker, Robert A. Taft, J. Howard Pew, A. K. Chesterton, George W. Robnett, and Gerald L. K. Smith.

## Administrative Information

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## Detailed Description of the Collection

### Description

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[Guide to the Merwin K. Hart Papers](#)

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## Names and Subjects

### Subject Terms :

Communism in education  
Conservatism--Economic aspects  
Conservatism--United States  
Economic councils

**Personal Names :**

Ball, Flamen  
Bently, John B.  
Chesterton, A. K. (Arthur Kenneth)  
Dies, Martin, 1900-1972  
Gannett, Frank E. (Frank Ernest), 1876-1957  
Gipson, James H.  
Goethe, C. M. (Charles Matthias), 1875-1966  
LeFevre, Robert, 1911-  
Maestro, Manuel  
Pew, J. Howard (John Howard), 1882-1971  
Robnett, George W. (George Washington), 1890-1970  
Schaefer, J. Earl  
Shoemaker, Samuel M. (Samuel Moor), 1893-1963  
Taft, Robert A. (Robert Alphonso), 1889-1953

**Corporate Names :**

John Birch Society  
National Economic Council (U.S.)  
United States. Congress. House. Select Committee on Lobbying Activities

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