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## Carl Brent Swisher

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## CARL BRENT SWISHER

Although it is commonplace today for academicians to slip in and out of public service, Dr. Carl Brent Swisher was, perhaps, a pioneer, and certainly an esteemed exemplar of this practice. After obtaining his doctoral degree in political science at the Brookings Institute and teaching for five years at Columbia University, Dr. Swisher served as a Special Assistant to the Attorney General of the United States from 1935 to 1937, and was a co-author of a valuable history of the development of the Department of Justice. His interest in current governmental affairs continued unabated on his leaving that post to take up a teaching assignment at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. When in 1951 Theodore R. McKeldin, Governor of Maryland, appointed a commission to conduct an intensive study of the state's system of administrative agencies and to make recommendations with a view to effecting modernization and improvements, the commission's first task was to find the most qualified person to undertake the important task of research, upon which the success of the undertaking would largely depend. Wherever the commission turned for advice, the response was the same: "Get Swisher." He was called upon and he accepted the arduous and delicate responsibility.

It was in my capacity as chairman of the Commission on the Administrative Organization of the State that I first had an opportunity to observe at close range this deservedly notable constitutional historian, political science professor, and public servant. Like his highly acclaimed biographies of Chief Justices Taney and Field, as well as his monumental works on American constitutional history, his work for the commission was first-rate. Although he was not trained for the legal profession, he exhibited a profound knowledge of the law and legal methods and was rightly regarded as an authority. Everything he did was characterized by painstakingly thorough research, an equally careful and concise statement of his findings, and consistently good judgment. A rather reserved, modest man, Dr. Swisher spoke only infrequently at our meetings in defense of his voluminous written memoranda, but what he said was uniformly treated with the greatest respect, for all recognized that his words combined deep scholarship with a sound sense of practicality. That he continued to join these qualities to the end of his life is clearly evidenced by the following Article.

*Simon E. Sobeloff\**

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\* Circuit Judge, Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit.