

Processed by: EWH
Date: 7/18/94

EISENHOWER WHITE HOUSE

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(OH-508)

86 pgs.

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Joint Interview:

Andrew J. Goodpaster - Staff Secretary to the President, 1954-61

Ann C. Whitman - Personal Secretary to the President, 1953-61

Raymond J. Saulnier - Consultant to the Council of Economic Advisors (CEA), 1953-55; member of CEA, 1955-56; chairman of CEA, 1956-61

Elmer B. Staats - Deputy Director, Bureau of the Budget, 1950-53 and 1958-66; Executive Director, Operations Coordinating Board, National Security Council, 1953-58; Comptroller General of the United States, 1966-81

Arthur F. Burns - Chairman, Council of Economic Advisers, 1953-56; President, National Bureau for Economic Research, 1957-67

Gordon Gray - Assistant Secretary of Defense of International Security Affairs, 1955-57; Director, Office of Defense Mobilization, 1957-58; Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, 1958-61

DESCRIPTION: This is an informal group interview that begins with a document (dated July 8, 1953) from C.D. Jackson [speechwriter for and consultant to the President, 1952-58] that was circulated at the White House. Subject: Eisenhower's kind of leadership and the lack of understanding some of his staff had of it.

[Robert] Bobby Cutler, [John] Foster Dulles, and the Solarium Project (a study of 3 main lines of foreign and security policy: rollback, containment, or drawing the line); people involved; procedure and report; determination of policy to follow; Goodpaster's and Saulnier's disagreement with Jackson on Eisenhower's lack of initiative in leadership; discussion of Eisenhower's desire for good staff work (i.e. to produce special proposals for debate/discussion concerning various policies in order to provide President with options to choose from); example of staff work leading to Eisenhower's decisions; Dulles and the NSC; George Humphrey's comments and the 1958 budget; analysis of Eisenhower's leadership in economic policy problems; questioning Douglas Kinnard's accuracy of information; Eisenhower and decision-making in ad hoc situations; NSC procedures; the decision-making process generally; the importance of economic issues in making decisions; Eisenhower as an administrator; the roles of the Cabinet and the NSC; criticism of the group method; the changes made by the Kennedy administration; problem areas for NSC (role of nuclear weapons and troop reduction in Europe); comments on how Eisenhower spent his days; Eisenhower's involvement with issues; formation of the Committee on Price Stability for Growth (the Nixon Committee) and the Committee on Government Actions Affecting Costs and Prices; the Advisory Board on Economic Growth and Stability (ABEGS) (including purpose, format, expanded membership); Eisenhower's involvement in economic issues during Sherman Adams' and [Wilton B.] Persons' tenures; difference in relationships of Eisenhower-Dulles and Eisenhower-Christian Herter (including patterns of relationship; the Khrushchev and Castro visits); role of C.D. Jackson (including personality; friction with Dulles); Eisenhower's deference to Dulles' expertise; basic

differences in Eisenhower's and Dulles' philosophies (including attitudes, the People-to-People program, C.D. Jackson's meetings with Dulles); Eisenhower's handling of Congressional affairs (including Eisenhower's methods, people involved, effectiveness of the legislative leaders' meetings); Eisenhower's personality and popularity; Eisenhower's staff system (including effectiveness of, individuals involved, Eisenhower's stance on tough policy issues, access to Eisenhower, Sherman Adams' methods, Eisenhower's executive ability, the two Vice Presidents proposal); Eisenhower's precision of mind (illustrated by story of meeting of Charles Wilson, the Chiefs of Staff, and Eisenhower); lessons learned from the Eisenhower Presidency (discussion including need for strong, competent personnel; necessity for working out problems cooperatively; importance of control of information flow and clear communication; need for flexibility in machinery of administrative systems; small vs. large presidential staffs); functions of the committees on economic affairs; complexities of the Presidential-Federal Reserve Board relationship; Eisenhower's coordination of staff efforts (including techniques for dealing with situations, resolution of conflicts, need for "idea" men like C.D. Jackson and Nelson Rockefeller); argument for keeping White House staffs and committees small in size (discussion including task accomplishment, degrees of access to the President, changes in White House staffs following Eisenhower administration; the Eisenhower staff).

[Dwight D. Eisenhower Library Oral History, interview by Hugh Heclo and Anna Nelson, June 11, 1980]