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Date: 01/23/06

MCCABE

MCCABE, EDWARD A.

OH 536

135 pp.

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Associate Special Counsel and Administrative Assistant to the President, 1956-61

DESCRIPTION: Interview #1: Childhood in Ireland; father's immigration to Philadelphia; father's return to Ireland to bring entire family to U.S.; attending parochial school in Philadelphia; life in poor immigrant neighborhood; high school; Latin the most influential high school course; business school; taking civil service exam in 1936; move to Washington, D.C. to work at Treasury Department; evening classes at American University; desire to go to law school; evening classes at Columbus University Junior College and day job for post office; drafted in Army in 1941; assignment to Counterintelligence Corps (CIC); investigative work for CIC; Officer Candidate School; assigned as intelligence officer to Chemical Warfare Service at Edgewood Arsenal, Maryland; discharge from Army; law school; work as staff assistant to Senator Joe Ball; developing interest in governmental affairs; work as assistant for Ball and Robert A. Taft during development of Taft-Hartley Law; executive assistant for the Joint Committee on Labor and Management Relations; job as legislative counsel for U.S. Chamber of Commerce; in-house counsel for American Hotel Association; counsel to House Committee on Education and Labor.

Interview #2: Sentiment among Taft supporters towards Eisenhower; back to Capitol Hill in 1953 as general counsel for Education and Labor Committee; revision of Taft-Hartley; Federal aid to education and question of segregation; need for lawyer familiar with Congressional processes to assist special counsel to the White House, Gerald Morgan; job as associate special counsel; investigative work relating to legislative matters; later job as administrative assistant to the President; structure and function of White House staff; areas of specialty among staff members; Landrum-Griffin Law; labor and racketeering hearings; defeat of Kennedy-Ives bill in 1958; Eisenhower's interest in labor reform; President's success in labor reform legislation and Pentagon reorganization; 1959 Congress and McCabe's role in promoting labor reform; Landrum-Griffin assembled in White House from previously proposed legislation; choosing sponsors for the bill; Eisenhower's speech on labor; public response to the speech; vote in Congress on the bill; attempts by organized labor to remove McCabe from working on labor bill; working on Landrum-Griffin bill; denial that the bill was punitive toward labor unions; dichotomy between labor leadership and labor union members; major sticking points of the bill; votes for and against the bill.

Interview #3: Personalities of other White House staff members; Bryce Harlow; need for staffers with humility and awareness of how system works; organization of Eisenhower staff; Jack Z. Anderson; Clyde Wheeler; [Wilton B.] Jerry Persons; Sherman Adams.

Interview #4: Charles Halleck of Indiana; working with Halleck on labor legislation; recognition of Halleck's abilities by other Congressmen; Eisenhower's opinion of Halleck; Halleck's control in the House; unsubstantiated rumors regarding drinking; the President's political savvy;

Halleck's regard for Eisenhower; Everett Dirksen's opinion of Eisenhower; Dirksen's tendency to over-analyze a situation; different ways Dirksen and Halleck approached the administration; visiting Eisenhower at Gettysburg after he left the White House; Barry Goldwater; meetings at Gettysburg with Eisenhower, Nixon, and Goldwater; similarities and differences between Goldwater and Eisenhower; Eisenhower's refusal to state his choice for Republican nominee in 1964 prior to the convention.

[Dwight D. Eisenhower Library Oral History Project, interviews by Maclyn P. Burg and Thomas Soapes; July 1, 1975; March 2, 1977; October 7, 1977; June 22, 1978]