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CLAY

CLAY, GEN. LUCIUS D. (OH-56) 114 pgs. w/ Index

PRCQ

Military associate of General Eisenhower, 1945-59; active in the Eisenhower campaign and Cabinet selection, 1951-53.

DESCRIPTION: INTERVIEW #1: Earliest associations with Eisenhower (the 20's, the Philippines, the War Department, World War II, the Korean War period); close friendship between Clay--Eisenhower families; first connection with campaign to nominate Eisenhower (fall, 1951, meeting with Gov. Thomas E. Dewey); Henry Cabot Lodge, manager of nomination movement; early conferences with Eisenhower; getting Eisenhower's commitment to run (spring, 1952); Herbert Brownell, campaign strategist for nomination fight; Eisenhower's reluctance to undergo a campaign; Eisenhower's reasons for resigning his commission as General of the Army; Clay's conversations with Eisenhower in England about the nomination; merging of two groups supporting Eisenhower (Kansas group: Harry Darby and Sen. Frank Carlson; Eastern group: Dewey, Russell Sprague, Brownell, Lodge, Sen. James H. Duff); fund raising for nomination drive; Eisenhower's receptivity to idea of nomination as it developed during 1952; influence of Madison Square Garden rally in shaping Eisenhower's decision; Eisenhower's quick acceptance of Brownell as campaign strategist; the Taft movement and its attendant difficulties; early development of Eisenhower's political skills (his experiences in Philippines, as aide to Gen. MacArthur in War Dept., as Allied Commander, WWII); Clay's governmental experiences (military engineering projects in US and Philippines, War Dept., Office of War Mobilization, Deputy Military Governor in Europe); the Clay--Eisenhower relationship in the Philippines; Eisenhower's leadership methods; Eisenhower's social interests; Eisenhower's business friends; Eisenhower's attitude toward technology and research; troops' reactions to Eisenhower during and after the war; war heroes and reputations; Gen. MacArthur's temperament; the Eisenhower personality and dealing with WWII leaders (military and civilian): Montgomery, Patton, de Gaulle, Marshall, Churchill, et. al.; Brownell's organization and management at the Republican National Convention; Citizens for Eisenhower (incl. Clay's work with and rationale for organizing the group).

INTERVIEW #2: Events following the nomination (meeting with Taft; campaign trips to the South); Brownell's and Clay's role in Cabinet selections (incl. comments about Joseph Dodge, Director of Budget; John Foster Dulles, Secretary of State; Governor Dewey; Eisenhower's first meeting with Dulles; early work with Joseph Dodge in contract renegotiating; Lewis W. Douglas; George M. Humphrey, Secretary of Treasury; Charles E. Wilson, Secretary of Defense; Eisenhower's attitude toward using businessmen in Cabinet; Clay's business experiences following WWII; Sidney Weinberg; contacting potential Cabinet secretaries; acquiring names for consideration; Ezra Taft Benson, Secretary of Agriculture; working for geopolitical balance; Gov. Earl Warren's interest in the Supreme Court; Gov. Douglas McKay, Secretary of Interior; Sinclair Weeks, Secretary of Commerce; problems involved with getting right persons in jobs;

Wilson's selection of Army, Navy, and Air secretaries; Oveta Culp Hobby, HEW Secretary); White House staff recruitments and other appointments; Clay's contacts with Eisenhower during the turnover period; removal of wage and price controls; rationale for selection of Martin Durkin as Secretary of Labor and subsequent problems; Eisenhower's perception of the labor movement; Eisenhower's wartime contacts with prominent labor leaders; influence of Philip Young (Civil Service head) on appointments; Clay's later role as an unofficial advisor to Eisenhower; importance of the Eisenhower stag dinners; Eisenhower's "questioning attitude" as a method for eliciting information; Charles Wilson's performance as Secretary of Defense (incl. Eisenhower's approval, media relations); public confidence in Eisenhower (incl. the Suez crisis, the invasion of Hungary, and re-election); Clay's disinterest in a government position; Clay's lack of involvement in appointments other than Cabinet posts; Eisenhower's decision-making process; role of Milton Eisenhower in the Eisenhower Administration; role of Sherman Adams; influence of Cabinet members Dulles, Humphrey, and Brownell; Eisenhower's friendship with Humphrey; Humphrey's influence on Presidential policies; Eisenhower's attitude toward the scientific community; Clay's comments on scientists who attempt expertise in fields outside science (incl. J. Robert Oppenheimer and Bertrand Russell) and on military men who criticize the government and their superiors (incl. Gen. James M. Gavin and Gen. Maxwell Taylor); Eisenhower's philosophy regarding the use of the Cabinet; Eisenhower as an administrator; Clay's chairmanship of the Committee to Develop an Interstate Highway Program (incl. major factors in developing a program, Eisenhower's interest in such a system, future problems growing out of program, importance of outdoor recreation to planning members of committee); Clay's continuing relationship with Eisenhower (incl. decision to run for a second term, Presidential health problems and the questions raised by them, Eisenhower's growth into the Presidency).
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[Columbia University Oral History Project interviews by Ed Edwin, Feb. 20 and March 16, 1967]