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MERRIAM

MERRIAM, ROBERT

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PRCQ (M)

Assistant Director, 1955-58, and Deputy Director, 1958, Bureau of the Budget; Deputy Assistant to the President for Inter-departmental Affairs, 1958-61.

DESCRIPTION: Interview #1: Education; working for the American Society of Planning Engineers; Paul Douglas; working for the Division of Defense Housing Coordination; serving as an infantry officer with the 176th Infantry Regiment; assigned as combat historian; attached to the 7th Armored Division at the beginning of the Battle of the Bulge; wrote book on Battle of the Bulge; met DDE while writing the book; how a combat historian works; use of interviews immediately after an engagement; memories of the Battle of the Bulge; interviews more useful than after action reports; interviewed German generals including Skorzeny; interview account of the 150 German soldiers who sent to the battle dressed as Americans; post-war work for the Metropolitan Housing Council in Chicago; elected as Chicago alderman in 1947; ran for mayor against Richard Daley and lost; public housing; crime in Chicago; involvement in the 1952 Presidential campaign; DDE's attitude towards politics; DDE and the 1960 election campaign; acquiring the ship *Hope*; importance of the legislative leaders meetings; taking the job of assistant director of the Bureau of the Budget; Dixon-Yates controversy; the work of the Bureau of the Budget; government reorganization; Sherman Adams controversy; functioning as White House specialist on intergovernmental affairs; executive activities and government organization.

Interview #2: Working as a political advisor to DDE in legislative leaders meetings; coordinating the advisory role with his job at the Bureau of the Budget; DDE and international affairs; difficulty with Congress in 1958; agricultural assistance; negotiating priorities with Republican legislators; 1960 campaign platform decisions; Nelson Rockefeller and Charles Percy involved in putting together the platform; Congress and the 1958 defense budget; DDE's attitude toward science education in 1957; working with Congress; quotes from DDE on various subjects; Committee on National Goals and Charles Percy; Committee on Metropolitan Problems; Advisory Committee on Intergovernmental Relations; Presidential transition; comparison of Eisenhower and Nixon Administrations; design of the 49- and 50-star flags; John S.D. Eisenhower; analysis of the Eisenhower Administration.

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[Columbia University Oral History Project, interviews by John T. Mason, Jr., January 13 and March 3, 1969]