SMITH, WILLIAM J. (OH-240) 91 pages PRCQ

Legislative secretary and legal counsel to Arkansas Governor Orval Faubus, 1957-67; Associate Justice of the Arkansas Supreme Court, 1958.

DESCRIPTION: Interview #1. Background information on how he became associated with Governor Faubus. Assessment of Superintendent Virgil Blossom, and the Blossom Plan for desegregation of Little Rock schools. Actions of Faubus: reasons for calling out the National Guard; going to Newport with Brooks Hays to meet with DDE.

Interview #2. Comments on Faubus’ meeting with DDE at Newport. Faubus’ philosophy of following court orders. Harassment of the Governor and his aides by federal officials and local extremists. Observations re Governor Faubus: political benefits of Faubus’ handling of the school situation; Faubus and Jimmy Karam; Faubus as a leader of public opinion; Faubus’ “law and order” philosophy, and feelings towards strict segregationists; Faubus’ position towards Ed I. McKinley and the school board recall election of 1959; Faubus as a populist, and a man of conviction; Faubus and the private Raney High School, 1958-59. Role of Attorney General Herbert Brownell during the crisis in 1957.

[Columbia University Oral History Project interviews by John Luter, 1971]