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WILLIAMS

WILLIAMS, RALPH

(OH-503)

49 pp.

OPEN

Captain, U.S. Navy; speechwriter on White House Staff, 1958-61.

DESCRIPTION: Farewell Message: Eisenhower's intention; who was behind it: Eisenhower or Norman Cousins (Saturday Review)?; Cousins' contributions to President's speeches; Chuck Percy (Bell and Howell president) suggestions of "a declaration of goals for the American people" and "a declaration of goals for the Republican Party"; personal background on Williams; first speechwriting job for Robert Anderson, Secretary of Navy, later Deputy Secretary of Defense; ca. 1956 writing for Admiral Burke (the CNO); called in by Captain Pete Aurand at White House (July 1958); met with Sherman Adams and Eisenhower; feelings about White House attitudes during crisis situation in Middle East (July 15, 1958); question of his military background vs. writing political speeches and the Hatch Act; met with Mac [Malcolm] Moos; discussion about whether Williams or Moos should be considered "first" speechwriter; designation of Moos; later addition of Steve Hess (1959) as third writer; personal comments on Moos; "pattern" used for speech writing; Eisenhower editing of speeches; rough drafts and Eisenhower's concern with final product; final speeches "became" Eisenhower; Williams' comments on the job of Presidential speechwriters; Williams' coining of phrase, "military-industrial complex", for Farewell Address; H.L. Mencken's influence on Moos, Hess' relationship with Moos; Moos-Hess book, Hats in the Ring; Williams' responsibility for national security and military policy segments of speeches; Milton Eisenhower's influence on Presidential speeches; Eisenhower's relationship with military-defense budget demands; Hap Arnold and the U.S. Air Force; Democrats and "the bomber gap"; 1960 campaign and the "missile gap"; Eisenhower's ideas on dangers of uninhibited military spending; scientific-technological-military scare tactics at budget time; relationship with Pete Aurand; trip to Abilene; suggestions for white papers on NSC policies from Gerard Smith, State Department; abandonment of project; hazards inherent in speechwriting-press release process; speech writing jobs following 1961.

NAMES:

Adams, Sherman
Anderson, Robert
Aurand, Evan (Pete)
Cousins, Norman
Eisenhower, Dwight D.
Eisenhower, Milton
Gray, Gordon

Hess, Stephen
Mencken, H.L.
Moos, Malcolm (Mac)
Morton, Rogers
Percy, Charles
Smith, Gerard
Wriston, Walter

[Eisenhower Library Oral History Project, interview by James Leyerzapf, 1988]