Department of Agriculture official, 1953-58; Economic Advisor to the President, 1958-61.

DESCRIPTION: Interview #1 [part 1; pp. 1-81] Personal background. First meeting with Ezra Taft Benson. Pressures on Agriculture Department personnel. Agricultural issues: price supports, Congressional relations, Food for Peace program, rural development program, finding ground glass in school peanut butter. Transfer to White House staff, October 1958. Extensive comments on President Eisenhower: personality, character, political philosophy, delegation of responsibility, use of Secretary Benson as lightning rod to attract criticism. Lengthy accounts of Cabinet meetings: July 1, 1960 re Food for Peace program and DDE’s preoccupation with Federal Wage bill; November 27, 1959 re DDE’s concern over balanced budget; January 13, 1961 re transition to Kennedy administration; staff meetings of July 6, 1960 re Cuban sugar quota. U.S. policy toward Cuba and Dominican Republic. Inertia of government bureaucracy. Civilian and military managerial style. DDE’s management of White House staff. Joseph McCarthy. Sherman Adams and Wilton Persons. Congressional interest in agriculture: House and Senate committees; William Knowland; Everett Dirksen. Relations between State and Agriculture Departments.

Nixon. Decision to not have DDE actively support Nixon in 1960 campaign. Effect of DDE’s heart attack on Department of Agriculture.

A name index is located at the end of the transcript.

[Columbia University Oral History Project, interview by Ed Edwin, 1968]