

RICHARD M. BISSELL JR. PAPERS  
INTERVIEWS SERIES  
1958 - 1994; 3 Boxes

This series consists primarily of requests for interviews and not of the interviews themselves, though notes are sometimes available. Researchers should consult the Oral History Interviews Series of this collection for documentation concerning formal interviews with Bissell conducted by repositories of historical materials. Other interviews with Bissell on a variety of topics may be found within the Subject Series of this collection.

Interview requestors in this series are typically private parties ranging from authors to students at multiple levels of the educational hierarchy. Document formats in this series include correspondence, memoranda, published materials and scholarly papers.

The interview files in this series are arranged in two different fashions: chronologically and alphabetically by subject. The "Interviews -- 1990 -- [1994]" file folders exhibit a somewhat unusual filing arrangement in which individual case files of correspondence between Bissell and a given correspondent are arranged in reverse chronological order by the date of the originating correspondence and not, as would be more typical, of the final instance of correspondence. Bissell indicates in a January 12, 1994, letter that he is months behind on granting interviews and has decided to consider requests based upon the length of the initiator's wait. If this method of considering interview requests predates the 1994 letter it could account for the unusual arrangement in the "Interviews -- 1990 -- [1994]" files. The remainder of the chronological interview files and alphabetized subject interview files are arranged more conventionally in reverse chronological order by the last instance of correspondence.

The correspondence files arranged alphabetically by subject contain Bissell interview requests and responses on variety of subjects related to his life and career. Much of the correspondence concerns making appointments to conduct interviews. In some cases, potential interviewers include copies of previous scholarly works for Bissell to peruse along with their letters of introduction. Some researchers also include copies of historical documentation for Bissell's consideration; an example is found as an enclosure to a July 2, 1990, letter from the historian of the Contemporary History Branch of the U.S. Department of the Navy's Naval Historical Center. The enclosure is a copy of a 1958 memorandum of conversation from the director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) on the subject of a briefing of Senator Stuart Symington on Soviet Ballistic Missile Programs and Capabilities. It was copied from the original in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library and Museum. In some cases Bissell's notes about potential answers to the questions to be asked during the interviews are included with the correspondence. Documentation in each folder is arranged in reverse chronological order.

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