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ROUNTREE, WILLIAM M.: Papers, 1935-95

Accession 01-9
Processed by: TB
Date Completed: August 2001

The papers of William M. Rountree were deposited in the Eisenhower Library by his daughter Mrs. Susan Rountree Hanes in March 2001.

Linear feet: 1.2
Approximate number of pages: 2400
Approximate number of items: 1500

Mrs. Hanes signed an instrument of gift for her father's papers on April 2, 2001. Literary rights in the papers of William Rountree in this collection, and in all other collections of papers held by the National Archives, have been donated to the public. Under terms of the instrument of gift the following classes of documents are withheld from research use:

1. Papers which constitute an invasion of personal privacy of a living person.
2. Papers which are required to be kept secret in the interest of national defense or foreign policy and are properly classified.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

William Manning Rountree (1917-1995) was born in Swainsboro, Georgia. After graduating from high school in 1935 he got a job with the Treasury Department where he held various clerical and accounting positions. He later became involved with the lend-lease program. In 1942 he transferred to the Department of State and was assigned to Cairo, Egypt where he helped organize World War II aid programs. This led to a long diplomatic career in which Rountree specialized in the Middle East and South Asia. During 1948 and 1949 he was assigned to the U.S. Embassy in Athens, Greece, where he helped administer U.S. aid programs to the Greek army which was fighting Communist insurgents. He later held positions in Turkey and Iran. In 1956 he became Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian and African Affairs. In this position he helped develop U.S. policy involving the Suez Canal crisis in November 1956 and the U.S. intervention in Lebanon in 1958. Rountree served as Ambassador to Pakistan (1959-62), Sudan (1962-65), South Africa (1965-70), and Brazil (1970-73). He retired in May 1973 and settled in Gainesville, Florida.

The papers of William Rountree consist of correspondence and subject files pertaining to his diplomatic career. Approximately one third of the collection contains his personal correspondence from his service in the State Department. Most of the correspondence is of a routine social nature, although Rountree saved some significant letters from his service in Greece during 1948-49, and South Africa during 1965-70. Another third of the collection contains condolence mail received by Rountree's wife Suzanne after his death in November 1995.

The remaining third of the collection consists largely of Rountree's personnel file. In 1983 he invoked the Privacy Act to obtain copies of documents which the Department of State had collected about him. The documents he received are mostly administrative in nature, and pertain to his appointments to various positions, and the granting of a security clearance. The files contain no information on his duties or professional activities. Rountree also received a few documents that had been originated by the FBI and other government agencies. Some of the FBI and State documents concerning the investigation of Rountree for his security clearance were sanitized in order to protect the sources and methods of the investigation.

The personnel material in the collection also includes copies of Rountree's evaluations and commendations that he received during his career. These contain general comments on some of the major incidents with which he dealt while serving as an ambassador.

CONTAINER LIST

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1	Biographies Condolence Mail A-E (1) (2) Condolence Mail F-L (1)-(3) Condolence Mail M-Q (1) (2) Condolence Mail R-Z (1) (2)
2	Condolence Mail (Miscellaneous) (1) (2) Correspondence 1935-47 Correspondence 1948-1949 (1)-(3) [conditions in Greece] Correspondence 1950-1955 Correspondence 1956 (1)-(3) [congratulatory letters re appointment as Assistant Secretary of State; Henry Wiens re Iraq] Correspondence 1957-9/1965 (1) (2) Correspondence 11/65-10/70 [South Africa] Correspondence 11/70-5/73 Alphabetical (1) (2) Correspondence 11/70-5/73 Chronological (1) (2)
3	Correspondence 7/73-5/94 (1) (2) [Bruce Laingen re conditions at US embassy, Iran, July 1979; international civil aviation conference, 1973] Memorabilia Obituaries Personnel File – Commendations (1) (2) [work in Greece, Turkey, Iran, Sudan, South Africa, Brazil]

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3 Personnel File – Passport Applications
(cont.)

Personnel File – Retirement 1973

Privacy Act Request – FBI

Privacy Act Request – Miscellaneous Agencies

Privacy Act Request – State Department Aug. 1983 (1)-(3)

Privacy Act Request – State Department Oct. 1983 [declassified evaluation of international civil aviation conference, 1973]

Privacy Act Request – State Department Retirement Files (1) (2)

Speech Notes

Travel – Trip to Belem & Manaus March 9-15, 1973

END OF CONTAINER