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HAMPTON

HAMPTON, ROBERT E.

(OH-485)

70 pages

OPEN

Department of State official, 1950-55 and 1957-58; Department of the Air Force (manpower, personnel, and organization), 1955-57; Special Assistant in the White House and Staff Assistant to the President, 1958-61.

DESCRIPTION: Interview #1. Personal information: enlisted in Air corps out of high school; assignment to 8th Air Force in England as radio-radar man; POW in Germany (1945); interrogation; experiences; enrolled in University of Tennessee (1946) in chemical engineering; switched to business administration courses and economics and graduated with BA in Business Administration; influence of Dr. Auniker (history) and Dr. Tietze (philosophy) on future reading/thinking; concerns about historical writers; finished work at University of Tennessee-Chattanooga; married; became principal of a public grammar school near Cleveland, Tennessee (1949); Government work: went to State Department in March 1950; assigned as a vice consul to Munich, Germany, doing visa work; trained at Foreign Service Institute; competence in German language; work experiences with displaced persons, escapees, defectors, etc.; interest in how things were done vs. policy aspects of foreign policy; return to Washington to write advisory opinions in types of cases handled in Europe; training program for State Department Secretariat; worked under Earl Sohn; moved to Bureau of Security and Consular Affairs (circa 1953); no political involvement up to this time; became staff assistant in Secretary's Office (Dulles); responsibilities of job; "policy" mail; movement into management-personnel area; relationship with John W. Hanes, Jr.; initial stages of preparing the Dulles papers for Princeton Library; relationship with Dulles; impressions of Dulles; movement to Air Force as assistant deputy to David Smith, assistant secretary of Air Force for manpower, personnel, and organization (1955); scope of job; changes taking place in Air Force.

Interview #2. Appointment as Special Assistant to the Under-Secretary of Administration, Department of State (1957-58); scope of job; opinion of Loy Henderson, Under-Secretary for Administration; patronage and the White House; relationships with Robert K. Gray (Special Assistant in White House) and Sherman Adams (The Assistant to the President); assessment of Adams' personality; job of Office of Congressional Affairs; personal contacts with Secretary Dulles; personal satisfactions of the job; process of ambassadorial appointments; appointment to the White House (1958) as Bob Gray's replacement; differences between political appointments and career service jobs; interview with Sherman Adams; comments on Adams' character and habits; interview with General Persons concerning scope of job; Eisenhower's influence on attitudes of White House staff; Hampton's observations of the complex nature of the job and the need for sensitivity in dealing with people.

[Dwight D. Eisenhower Library Oral History, interviews by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, February 6, 1975, and August 24, 1976]