

Processed by: DAD
Date: 7/12/74

BISSELL

BISSELL, RICHARD M., JR. (OH-168) 49 pages PRCQ (Columbia)

Consultant to the Administrator, Mutual Security Administration, 1953; Special Assistant to the Director, 1954-59, and Deputy Director of Plans, 1959-62, Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).

Interview #1. Personal background: education; entrance into government work; member, committee to study U.S. security policy, 1952. Consultant to Administrator, Mutual Security Administration (impressions of Harold Stassen as MSA Administrator). Joining the CIA. Comments on the overthrow of the pro-communist government in Guatemala, June 1954: Arbenz-pro-communist President; Armas-rebel leader; importance to the rebels of the use of planes; public opinion in Guatemala on the overthrow; CIA information re the overthrow. Castro and the Bay of Pigs invasion; importance of the lack of air cover; self-delusions officials had about U.S. disavowing any connection with the invaders; CIA's estimate of invasion's success; description of the several phases the plans went through in 1960-61; political problems trying to unify competing groups of Cuban exiles; first appraisals of Castro as a possible communist. U-2 spy plane project: initial discussions; DDE approving the development and use of the plane; Bissell the CIA person in charge of the U-2 project; development and testing of the plane; overseas bases; first flight over Russia; timing of individual flights as approved by DDE; F.G. Powers' U-2 flight in 1960; general evaluation of the U-2 operation.

[COHP interview by Ed Edwin, 1967]