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GRUENTHER

GRUENTHER, HOMER (OH-254) 108 pages PRCQ (Columbia)

Active in the Eisenhower campaign, 1952; Assistant to the Deputy Assistant to the President, 1953-61.

Interview #1. Personal background: first meetings with DDE; working as administrative assistant to senators from Nebraska. Convincing delegates to vote for DDE at the 1952 Republican Convention. Work at the 1952 Convention: DDE personally meeting delegates; the significant people working behind the scenes. Congressional roll calls on statehood for Alaska and Hawaii. Impressions of DDE's thoughts on running for a third term. Anecdotes about being on the campaign train in 1952: staff members missing the train; DDE's speeches; Mamie Eisenhower as a campaigner; opinion on value of a long campaign and use of a campaign train. Anecdotes about DDE: his golf; portraits painted of him while President.

Interview #2. His White House staff duties re Congressional liaison: example of work on St. Lawrence Seaway bills; DDE's use of personal persuasion on Congressman; Saturday morning meetings of Department and White House legislative liaison staff members; the personal and political aspects of Congressional liaison activities; DDE presiding at bipartisan legislative leaders' meetings at the White House. Comment on use of public opinion polls to test policy sentiment. Joseph McCarthy, and the general question of security leaks. DDE's heart attack in 1955, and handling of the situation by Sherman Adams. Comments on DDE's press conferences: types of questions and answers; DDE's syntax; James Hagerty as Press Secretary. Anecdotes about DDE relaxing in post-Presidential years by playing golf and bridge.

[Columbia Oral History Project interviews by John T. Mason, Jr., 1972]