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WHEELER

WHEELER, CLYDE A.

(OH-515)

38 pgs.

OPEN

Confidential Assistant to the Secretary of Agriculture, 1954-57; Special Assistant to the Secretary, 1957-59; Staff Assistant to President Eisenhower, 1959-60

DESCRIPTION: Joining the White House staff, 1959 (including why he transferred from the Department of Agriculture; Bryce Harlow; focus in new post; Wilton B. Persons; Saturday morning meetings; importance of team effort; early issues); perceptions of Eisenhower's congressional relations; legislative liaison staff (Harlow, [Edward A.] Ed McCabe, Jack [Z.] Anderson, Wheeler); procedures for dealing with legislative issues; Tuesday morning congressional leaders' meetings; Eisenhower's involvement in issues; Eisenhower's philosophy for handling members of Congress; Wheeler's assessment of Eisenhower as a "hands-on" President (including knowledge of issues; rapport with people; Eisenhower's viewpoints); Wheeler's assessment of the working styles of Ed McCabe, Jack Anderson, Bryce Harlow, and himself; the Eisenhower temper; Eisenhower's management style (including organization; the Kennedy administration and advice); Ezra Taft Benson (including criticism of; Eisenhower's support; Eisenhower's interest in agriculture); Khrushchev's visit (including Eisenhower's hopes for accord; problems of visit; criticism and support; Camp David and the Paris Summit); offices in the West Wing; decision to run for Congress; anecdote regarding gift from White House staff at farewell party; losing the election; major contributions of Eisenhower administration in agricultural policy (including farm policies; Soil Conservation Service; the school lunch program; exports; "Food for Peace" program; the barter program of food for minerals; the Soil Bank program); other Eisenhower Administration accomplishments (including settling Korean War; restoration of public confidence in government; military strength; civil rights issues; statehood for Alaska and Hawaii; hiring of blacks in government); Wheeler's personal feelings about government service (including friendships; sense of accomplishment); Eisenhower's ability to choose staff; Eisenhower's handling of foreign trouble spots.

[Dwight D. Eisenhower Library Oral History, interview by Martin Mack Teasley, November 15, 1990]