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MITCHELL

MITCHELL, WILLIAM L. (OH-93) 85 pages PRCQ(M)

Deputy Commissioner, 1946-59, and Commissioner, 1959-61, Social Security Administration

DESCRIPTION: Interview #1. Comments re retirement of Arthur J. Altmeyer as Commissioner of the Social Security Administration and resignation of Jane Hoey, Director of the Bureau of Public Assistance; Mitchell's tenure as Deputy Commissioner of Social Security under Commissioners John Trumbull and Charles Schottland. Arthur Flemming's insistence that Mitchell be named Commissioner of the Social Security Administration; impressions of Oveta Culp Hobby as Secretary of HEW; Marion Folsom as an administrator; Mitchell's relationship with Flemming; philosophical differences between Democratic and Republican administrations on Social Security; Herbert Hoover; reflections on DDE's unfamiliarity with the Social Security Administration's programs and policies; use of Social Security as a "political" issue; Nelson Rockefeller.

DESCRIPTION: Interview #2. Observations of Dr. Altmeyer's leadership at Social Security; the Wagner-Murray-Dingell Bill; the early careers of Rod Perkins and Elliot Richardson; comments re Dr. Altmeyer's association with Wilbur Cohen and Isadore Falk and effects of McCarthyism on Social Security. Senator Robert Taft's opposition to Social Security legislation; Mrs. Hobby's meeting with industrialist Henry Kaiser about the health insurance system of his employees; reflections on HEW discussions on the possibility of the government entering the health insurance field. Cuban refugees and the differences in handling the situation by the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations. A name index is located at the end of the transcript.

[Columbia Oral History Project, interviews by Peter Corning, 1968]