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MORGAN

MORGAN, GERALD D. (OH-223) 133 pgs. w/index PRCQ

Special Assistant in the White House, 1953; Administrative Assistant to the President, 1953-55; Special Counsel to the President, 1955-58; Deputy Assistant to the President, 1953-61.

DESCRIPTION. PART 1: Personal information: family, early education, Princeton years, Harvard Law School; nature of the legislative counsels of the House and Senate; work in New York for U.S. Steel Corp. solicitor's office (1953); work in legislative drafting for New York County Grand Juror's Association; legislative researching and drafting; appointment to office of Legislative Counsel for the House in Washington; early work on Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1935, AAA of 1938, Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938; move into tax legislation area in 1940; involvement with Ways and Means Committee, Labor Committee (Mary Norton, chairman), and Military Affairs Committee; the Revenue Act of 1943 (the Rumpl Plan—Beardsley Rumpl) and the beginnings of the withholding tax; resignation from Legislative Counsel's office, 1945; establishment of private law practice with Leonard Calhoun; work with Republicans in the House on labor legislation, resulting in Hartley Bill in the House on labor legislation, resulting in Hartley Bill (eventually the Taft-Hartley Act); Morgan's political switch from Democrat to Republican affiliation in 1949; admiration for Senator Robert Taft; appointment to White House staff as assistant to Wilton Burton "Jerry" Persons along with Bryce N. Harlow to work as legislative liaison staff at the Capitol (1953); establishing a system to coordinate congressional requests/inquiries; Morgan's comments on difference between Democrats and Republicans regarding legislative liaison; Morgan's personal experience regarding sensitivity of the White House position; appointment as administrative assistant to the President in charge of legislative liaison; responsibilities of job; perceptions of Eisenhower by Congressional members; conservative Republican disagreements with Eisenhower policies (Reciprocal Trade and mutual security programs as examples); necessity for education and party unity to pass legislation; comments on patronage jobs/civil service legislation; problems regarding control of executive branch of government (Eisenhower's plan regarding immigration as example); information leaks (Taft-Hartley Act as example); Eisenhower's philosophy of staff functions; cohesiveness of White House staff; Morgan's comments on "ideal" staff member.

PART II: Early relationship between White House and Congress regarding legislation; development of weekly meetings of liaison people (White House and departments) prior to weekly meeting of legislative leaders and President; agenda setting for legislative leaders' meetings; comments on Robert "Bill" Knowland and the Senator Taft-Eisenhower relationship; effectiveness of weekly legislative leaders' meeting; briefing the President; legislative leaders involved in meetings; political attitudes toward legislation (foreign aid as example); Presidential advisors—Senator Taft and Charles Halleck; handling of the press following legislative leaders' meetings; Eisenhower's

attitude toward the party platform and conflicts with legislative leadership; Dan Reed, the excess profits tax bill, and the Ways and Means Committee; legislation concerning states' rights to submerged lands (mineral rights/oil rights); controversy over removing price and wage controls; difficulties inherent in removing legislation from statute books once imposed; problems involving a postal rate bill; controversy over amending the Taft-Hartley Act and extending the Reciprocal Trade Act; the Randall Commission (Clarence Randall); Eisenhower's effectiveness in promoting his legislative program; preparation of State of the Union messages; Eisenhower's editing of messages; Eisenhower's resistance to televising State of the Union messages; controversy surrounding Eisenhower's handling of the Senator Joseph McCarthy issue; Eisenhower's attitude toward McCarthy; Eisenhower's interest in the Atoms for Peace and St. Lawrence Seaway projects.

PART III: Eisenhower's executive order concerning internal security and the introduction of the security risk test; Morgan's responsibilities regarding White House security and all Presidential appointees in the executive branch; FBI "full field" investigations of Presidential appointees; criticism surrounding results of security risk checks in case of Dr. Robert Oppenheimer; importance of such checks; the 1954 controversy over the Bricker Amendment; Eisenhower's position on the Bricker Amendment; difficulties involved in getting a President's wishes carried out by executive branch (resistance to a compromise on the Bricker Amendment and resistance to a visa requirements change at State Department as examples); Eisenhower's relationship with Congress (especially in 1954); Charlie Halleck vs. Joe Martin; Eisenhower, the veto, and signing ceremonies; Eisenhower's attitude toward social legislation; Eisenhower and public relations; Eisenhower administration's record in area of civil rights; national spending and balancing the budget; Eisenhower's health problems; Hungarian refugee program; the Little Rock incident and Orval Faubus; campaigning with Eisenhower; handling of bills when the President was out of the country; Morgan's comments on the Sherman Adams' affair; White House Staff admiration of Adams.

A NAME INDEX is located at the end of the transcript.

[Columbia University Oral History Project, interview by John T. Mason, Jr., February 5, 1962; April 29, 1968; May 7, 1968.]