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Date: 3/5/84

SEATON

SEATON, GLADYS D. (OH-390) 173 pages Open

Wife of Fred Seaton, Secretary of the Interior, 1956-61.

DESCRIPTION: Interview #1. Family background: birth, early life and education in Kansas; Fred Seaton's father's association with Senator Joseph Bristow and arrangements for Dwight D. Eisenhower to attend West Point. Meeting her husband at Kansas State Agricultural College. Fred Seaton's disagreement with the college administration. His involvement in Kansas Young Republicans activities and his participation in 1936 presidential campaign. Gladys Seaton's impressions of Alf Landon. Describes the Seaton's move to Hastings, Nebraska, the purchase of Hastings Daily Tribune, and the life of a publisher's wife in Hastings. Fred Seaton's involvement in Nebraska politics and his appointment as U.S. Senator from Nebraska. The Seatons' move to Washington, D.C. and Mrs. Seaton's activities there; joining a Senate ladies group. Talks about the Seatons' children. Fred Seaton's trip to Paris to persuade General Eisenhower to run for President; describes first meeting with Dwight and Mamie Eisenhower; comments on General Alfred Gruenther. Considerable discussion of the Seatons' activities during 1952 campaign; Fred Seaton's communications skills; Contrasted DDE with Robert Taft. Gladys Seaton's experiences on the 1952 campaign train. Discusses Richard Nixon's fund and Fred Seaton's support of Nixon. Comments on DDE's personality. Remarks about Mamie Eisenhower and about Katherine Howard. Fred Seaton's appointment as Assistant Secretary of Defense for Legislative Affairs. Fred Seaton's views of Senator Joseph McCarthy. Describes social life in Washington: protocol, the Washington cocktail parties, the Seaton's recreational interests.

Interview #2. Devoted primarily to social affairs: attendance at Ladies of the Senate meetings, White House dinner parties, Washington cocktail parties, and other functions. Briefly discusses duties of White House staff members. Comments on Charles Willis, Sherman and Rachel Adams, William H. Godell, Robert Gray and Gray's book Eighteen Acres Under Glass. Comments about Queen Elizabeth and Queen Julianna at White House State dinners.

[Eisenhower Library Oral History Project, interviews by Maclyn Burg 1974 and 1975]