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STASSEN

STASSEN, HAROLD (OH-519) 28 pages Open

Director of the Foreign Operations Administration, 1953-55; Special Assistant to the President for Disarmament, 1955-58.

DESCRIPTION: Stassen's role as chief of arms negotiations in the Eisenhower administration; instructions from the President to develop a policy so we could take initiatives, a better chance for world peace; assembling a group of atomic energy specialists, military leaders, scientists and economists; report analyzing the hydrogen bomb age and missile age presented to the President and National Security Council (NSC) in the spring of 1955; debate on meeting with Russians for a summit; Eisenhower's decision to hold a Summit Meeting at Geneva in July 1955; the President and NSC policy to move toward an open world; the greater chance for communication and reciprocal observations after Stalin's death; the "Open Skies" policy based on the Stassen committee report; Dulles' view of summit with no disarmament or arms control discussion; Stassen to Geneva Conference when Russians opened the subject of disarmament; publicity and impact of speech prepared by Stassen and given by Eisenhower; Rockefeller's concept of an exchange of delegations negotiated and begun 1957; credit given to Eisenhower's leadership to open up Soviet Union and decrease the danger of surprise attack; Eisenhower's change from Dulles' policy; Goodpaster memorandum on limited inspection; political issues that came before disarmament and the "Atoms for Peace" speech; internal opposition to any negotiations with Soviets; conferences with John Foster Dulles and CIA Director, Allen Dulles, on Soviet talks; Soviet withdrawal from Austria; Hungary and Czechoslovakia; exchanges of people, mutual economic development and opening of trade; discussion of Dulles' opposition to communication with Soviets other than diplomatic; Stassen's views on open exchanges of ideas and trade, a strong military, recognition of both Chinas, both Viet Nams, both Koreas, and both Germanys; comments on the UN constructive role in negotiations; debates between Humphreys, Dulles and Stassen at staff meetings; Eisenhower's heart attack and the change afterwards; Cabinet members making more policy decisions; Admiral Strauss and "Atoms for Peace"; summary of Eisenhower's decisions that avoided nuclear war.

[Dwight D. Eisenhower Library Oral History, interview by Dr. Thomas Soapes, April 29, 1977]