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COTTER, CORNELIUS P.: Papers, 1959-61

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The Papers of Cornelius P. Cotter, 1959-61, were deposited in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library in September 1971. Literary property rights in the writings of Cornelius Cotter are retained by the author. At his death, literary rights pass to the United States.

Linear feet: 2
Approximate number of pages: 4,700
Approximate number of items: 1,700

These papers were reviewed under the instrument of gift signed by Cornelius Cotter on August 26, 1974. Under the terms of this instrument, the following classes of documents are withheld from research use:

1. Papers relating to the family and private business affairs.
2. Papers relating to the family and private business affairs of other persons who have had correspondence with Cornelius Cotter.
3. Papers relating to investigations of individuals or to appointments and personnel matters.
4. Papers containing statements made by or to Cornelius Cotter in confidence unless in the judgment of the Director of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library the reason for confidentiality no longer exists.
5. All other papers which contain information or statements that might be used to injure, harass, or damage any living person.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Republican Committee on Program and Progress was established in 1959 by Republican national chairman Meade Alcorn. The idea for the committee grew from the concern of President Eisenhower and other party leaders that if the GOP did not effectively articulate imaginative solutions to the challenges in both foreign and domestic policy facing America in the 1960's and 1970's, the party would face a series of defeats at the polls comparable to that of 1958. The committee consisted of forty-four Republicans chosen from office holders, party officials, former members of the Eisenhower Administration, and leading figures in business, education, labor, agriculture, and the professions. The committee was chaired by Charles H. Percy, president of Bell and Howell. Cornelius P. Cotter, professor of political science at Stanford University, was appointed executive director.

The committee was divided into the following task forces under the specified chairmen:

The Impact of Science and Technology

Charles Ducommun--President, Ducommun Metals

National Security and Peace

Dr. Albert Jacobs--President, Trinity College

Human Rights and Needs

Bertha Adkins--Under Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare

Economic Opportunity and Progress

Dr. Gabriel Hauge--Special Assistant to the President for Economic Affairs 1956-1958; Chairman of the Finance Committee and member of the Board of Directors of Manufacturers Trust Company

The papers in the collection reveal the administrative workings of the committee, the nature of policy inputs from political, business, and professional figures, the nature of press coverage of the committee's work, and the proceedings of committee meetings. Letters from individuals outside the committee range from platitudinous comments to imaginative policy suggestions. Drafts of task force reports and verbatim transcripts of full committee sessions show part of the process by which the committee arrived at its conclusions. Of particular interest are formal statements by Senator Barry Goldwater, Senator Thruston Morton, and Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare Arthur Flemming.

While these documents reveal little about policy-making in the Eisenhower Administration, they do reveal the attitudes of GOP leaders toward major domestic and foreign policy issues as well as their attitudes toward the status of the Republican party as an electoral force. This collection is also significant for the study of the 1958 and 1960 elections. Documents in the collection also illustrate the obstacles a political party faces when it attempts to become a vehicle for policy making.

The results of the committee's work were published in 1960 under the title Decisions for a Better America. Copies are available in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library Book Collection.

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