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ABILENE, KANSAS

BISSELL, RICHARD M., JR.: PAPERS, 1909-95

Accession 09-01  
Processed by CJA  
Date Completed: April 2011

The Papers of Richard M. Bissell Jr. were donated to the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library and Museum in December 2008 by Thomas E. Bissell.

Linear Feet of Shelf Space Occupied: 35.8  
Approximate Number of Pages: 56,750

Under terms of the instrument of gift, the following classes of items are withheld from research use:

1. Papers and other historical materials the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy of a living person.
2. Papers and other historical materials that are specifically authorized under criteria established by statute or Executive order to be kept secret in the interest of national defense or foreign policy, and are in fact properly classified pursuant to such statute or Executive order.

## Appendix

### Richard M. Bissell Jr. Biographical Note

Richard Mervin Bissell Jr. (September 18, 1909 - February 7, 1994) was born in Hartford, Connecticut in a home formerly owned by author Mark Twain. His parents were Richard Mervin Bissell Sr. (Vice President of the Hartford Fire Insurance Company) and Marie Truesdale (National Director of Volunteer Services for the American Red Cross.) In childhood he attended the Kingswood School in his former childhood home and later the Groton School in Massachusetts. He entered Yale in 1928 and graduated with an A.B. in history in 1932. After studying at the London School of Economics, Bissell earned a PhD in economics from Yale in 1939 and remained as an active assistant professor through October 1941 and went on leave until April 1942. During this period and throughout the rest of his life, Bissell would serve as a business consultant to a variety of professional concerns.

Bissell entered public life by joining the Department of Commerce as Chief Economic Analyst of the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce. He served in a variety of positions for federal agencies from 1942 until 1955 including the War Shipping Administration, the Office of War Mobilization and Reconversion, the Economic Cooperation Administration and the Mutual Security Agency. During this period Bissell returned to higher education as an associate professor (later professor) of economics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology from 1946 until 1952. While at MIT, Bissell consulted for the Ford Foundation and authored "Notes on U.S. Strategy" following the preparation of National Security Council paper (NSC-141) on the allocation of resources to U.S. security programs. In writing the NSC paper, Bissell worked in conjunction with Frank Nash and Paul Nitze under the direction of the Secretary of State Dean Acheson, Secretary of Defense Robert Lovett, and Director of Mutual Security William Averell Harriman. Bissell described it in his autobiography as, "the Truman administration's last will and testament on issues of national security." Using what he had learned from authoring NSC-141, Bissell wrote "Notes on U.S. Strategy" which dealt with the international military, political, and economic policy of the United States in the atomic age.

Bissell joined the CIA in 1954 as Special Assistant to the Director. In 1959 he was made Deputy Director of Plans and remained so until he left the agency. Bissell was responsible for overseeing the U-2 program and the planning of the Bay of Pigs invasion among other projects. Bissell was offered a new position in the CIA following the failure of the Bay of Pigs invasion that, in his estimation, amounted to a demotion. Faced with the prospect of having to accept a position he did not want, Bissell retired from federal service on February 28, 1962. Shortly afterwards he received the National Security Medal from President John F. Kennedy.

Bissell embarked on careers outside of the federal government following his departure from the CIA. He joined the Institute for Defense Analysis and eventually came to serve as president in July of 1962. The Institute of Defense Analysis (IDA) served (and

continues to serve) as a federally-funded independent research organization responsive to the U.S. government on issues of national security. Bissell indicates in his autobiography that he encountered considerable obstacles and frustration in attempting to reshape IDA before he was eventually asked to resign. After carefully weighing his options and considering multiple opportunities, Bissell joined the United Aircraft Corporation in 1964 as director of Marketing and Planning. By his admission the work was not as stimulating as what he encountered in government service and he retired early in 1974. His UAC secretary, Francis T. Pudlo, left with him and continued to serve in the same capacity through the remainder of his life, eventually co-authoring his autobiography with Jonathan E. Lewis.

Bissell embarked on a variety of business consulting jobs after departing UAC both as an employee of others as well as a freelancer in his own right. In his final years he served as president of the Friends of Hill-Stead Museum and as treasurer of the board of directors of the Duncaster Life Care Center. He died in his home in Farmington Connecticut on February 7, 1994.

#### Bibliography:

Bissell, Richard M. Jr., with Jonathan E. Lewis and Frances T. Pudlo. Reflections of a Cold Warrior: From Yalta to the Bay of Pigs. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996.

Papers of Richard M. Bissell Jr., Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library

#### Richard M. Bissell Jr. Biographical Chronology

September 18, 1909	Born in the Mark Twain House in Hartford, Connecticut
1916 – 1922	Kingswood School
1922 – 1928	Groton School
1928 – 1932	Yale University (A.B.)
1932 – 1933	London School of Economics
1934	Research assistant at Yale University
1935 – 1938	Instructor at Yale University
1936 – 1941	Economic Advisor to the Connecticut Public Utilities Commission

1937 – 1939	Consultant to <i>Fortune</i> magazine
1939	Ph.D. from Yale University
September 1939 – April 1942	Assistant Professor at Yale University (On leave from October 1941 to April 1942)
July 6, 1940	Married Ann Cornelia Bushnell
October 1941 – June 1942	Chief Economic Analyst, Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, Department of Commerce
April 1942 – June 1942	Assigned to the War Shipping Administration from the Department of Commerce
April 1942 – October 1942	Assistant to the Deputy Administrator, War Shipping Administration
October 1942 – July 1943	Director, Division of Economic Policy, War Shipping Administration
October 1942 – December 1945	Economist to the Combined Shipping Adjustment Board and Assistant to the Deputy Administrator, War Shipping Administration
July 1943 – December 1945	Director of Ship Requirements, War Shipping Administration
October 1944 – December 1945	Executive Officer of the Combined Shipping Adjustment Board, War Shipping Administration
March 1945 – December 1945	Secretary, Shipping Employment Policy, Committee of the United Maritime Authority, War Shipping Administration
December 1945 – March 1946	Economic advisor to director of Office of War Mobilization and Reconversion
March 1946 – September 1946	Deputy Director of Office of War Mobilization and Reconversion

September 1946 – November 1946	Consultant to the Cosmopolitan Shipping Company
September 1946 – August 1947	Consultant to the United States Steel Corporation of Delaware
October 1946 – July 1948	Associate Professor of Economics, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)
April 1947 – July 1948	Consultant to Scudder, Stevens and Clark
June 1947 – July 1947	Consultant to the Coordinator of Exports
June 1947 – July 1948	Consultant to the Brightwater Paper Company
July 1947 – January 1948	Executive Secretary of the President's Committee on Foreign Aid (Harriman Committee)
January 1948 – July 1948	Consultant to the Asiatic Petroleum Company
February 1948 – July 1948	Consultant to the United States Steel Corporation of Delaware
February 1948 – July 1948	Consultant to the Gray and Rogers Advertising Agency
April 1948	Consultant, Economic Cooperation Administration (ECA)
May 1948	Assistant Deputy Administrator, Economic Cooperation Administration (ECA)
July 1948 – July 1952	Professor of Economics, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)
1949	Honorary M.A. degree, Yale University
June 1949	Assistant Administrator for Programs, Economic Cooperation Administration (ECA)
October 1950 – December 1951	Deputy Administrator, Economic

	Cooperation Administration (ECA)
December 30, 1951 – January 18, 1952	Deputy Director & Acting Director, Mutual Security Agency (MSA)
January 18, 1952 – January 1954	Consultant to the Ford Foundation and director of a research project through the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)
September 29, 1952 – August, 22 1955	Consultant to the Director, Mutual Security Agency (MSA)
February 1, 1954 – January 2, 1959	Special Assistant to the Director, Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)
January 2, 1959 – February 28, 1962	Deputy Director of Plans, Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)
September 1961 – February 1962	Co-director of the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO)
March 1, 1962	Awarded National Security Medal by President John F. Kennedy
March 1, 1962 – July 1962	Executive Vice President, Institute for Defense Analysis (IDA)
July 1962 – September 1964	President, Institute for Defense Analysis (IDA)
September 1964 – September 1974	United Aircraft Corporation, Director of Marketing and Economic Planning
1965 – 1971	Regent, University of Hartford
1973	President of the Farmington Historical Society
1974 – 1976	Trustee, Mark Twain Memorial
1974 – 1977	Secretary of the Farmington Bicentennial Committee

1974 – 1981	Member, Board of Directors of Covenant Mutual and Covenant Life Insurance Company
1974 – 1994	Independent business consultant
1975 – 1981	Member, Board of Directors of the World Affairs Center
1980 – 1984	President, Friends of Hill-Stead Museum
1981 – 1988	Treasurer, Board of Directors of Duncaster Life Care Center
February 7, 1994	Died in his home in Farmington, Connecticut

#### Scope and Content Note

The Papers of Richard M. Bissell Jr. consist of correspondence, photographs, articles, clippings, telegrams, reports, notes, drafts, calendars, speeches, minutes, invitations and other document formats noted in the individual series descriptions. The overall collection is particularly strong in documenting Bissell's personal life, early professional life (inclusive of his work with the “Marshall Plan”), business activities and historic reminiscences. Period documentation of Bissell's activities with the Central Intelligence Agency is sparse to the point of near non-existence, though there is a small body of information available on the “Church Committee” (United States Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities) postdating his employment with the agency. Bissell explains in several letters to archival repositories seeking his papers that the papers he created and received at the CIA had to be left behind when he left the agency. Most of the information in this collection concerning Bissell’s activities in the CIA is located in after-the-fact reminiscences contained in Bissell’s correspondence with researchers and friends, interviews, intelligence theory and history papers and talks given in multiple venues. His years and activities with the IDA are similarly under-documented.

During processing it was determined that the papers have been rearranged several times since their creation. Individual documents in the collection bear file codes for files that no longer exist and cross reference sheets in the collection point to storage areas and files that no longer accurately reflect the arrangement of the collection as it exists today.

The current arrangement of the papers has not appreciably changed from when they arrived at the library. The arrangement probably does not reflect the arrangement scheme of the papers as it existed when the papers were in active use. Prior to the arrival of the papers at the library, Bissell’s former office staff removed and returned items of personal

interest to the Bissell family. There is no record of what or how much material was removed. It also appears that the bulk of papers were arranged by subject (now reflected in series designations) at some point and it is unclear if this was done while the papers were in active use.

Each series contains a scope and content note detailing the series content and arrangement. In many cases, it appears that Bissell's office staff photocopied documents and filed them in multiple places either for the sake of convenience or for other reasons. Bissell's office staff also created cross reference sheets ("see" and "see also" references) and filed them with the papers to document items of related interest or items that were removed to other locations. Researchers attempting to locate these items will have to examine multiple series and folder titles to determine the locations referenced.

Those materials that did not arrive in folders were assigned titled folders by the processing archivist and are indicated by brackets around the folder title. Bracketed information following the folder titles indicates subjects and objects of note contained within the folders as identified by the processing archivist. Information in the brackets should not be considered a complete accounting of every subject or item in the folders.

At the time of the initial completion of this finding aid in April 2011, 2825 pages of unmarked and potentially classified materials were returned from the equity-holding federal agencies to which they were submitted for review.

This collection contains twenty separate series. The series in this collection are as follows:

Calendar Series

Correspondence Series

Cosmopolitan Shipping Company Consulting Series

Covenant Group Series

Economics Notes and Papers Series

Ford Foundation Series

Historic and Oversize Papers Series

Hoagland Consulting Series

Interviews Series

Marshall Plan Series



Miscellaneous Publications Series

National Defense Problems Group Series

Oral History Interviews Series

Personal Information and Biographical Series

Social Science Council Research Series

Subject Series

Talks and Papers Series

United Aircraft Series

United States Steel Consulting Series

Walt and Eugene Rostow Series