Appendix B

The White House Central Files comprise the largest collection in the Library, totaling approximately 6,500,000 pages. All of the major foreign and domestic issues and policies associated with the Eisenhower Administration, as well as the political events of the period, are documented by the Central Files. To date, approximately 2,200,000 pages of the Central Files comprising, for the most part, the more historically significant segments of the collection have been processed. Available for research at this time are the Confidential File (CF), the Official File (OF), 90 percent of the General File (GF), and 50 percent of the President's Personal File (PPF). The unprocessed portions of the General File and the President's Personal File largely pertain to subjects of marginal historical value such as message requests from organizations, public requests for photographs, birthday congratulations, and invitations. Researchers may request that selected portions of the General File and the President's Personal File be processed and made available for research. Whether such requests can be honored, however, depends upon the size of the request, when the materials will be needed by the researcher, and the amount of staff time that can be diverted from other projects at the time of the request.

The Official File

The Official File (OF), totaling approximately 766,000 pages, contains a substantial quantity of high-level materials reflecting major issues of public policy and presidential actions. Included are correspondence, memoranda, drafts of speeches and executive orders, telegrams, reports, agenda, press releases, and other materials.

The General File

The General File (GF), totaling approximately 1,054,000 pages, consists essentially of expressions of public opinion on major issues by individuals and organizations, and materials pertaining to endorsements of individuals for public office. However, one can occasionally find in the files important correspondence and memoranda originated by members of Congress, the judiciary, and executive departments.

The President's Personal File

The President's Personal File (PPF), totaling approximately 790,000 pages, consists primarily of the President's social correspondence, congratulatory letters from the President to individuals, and human interest letters. There are, generally speaking, few substantive documents in this file.

The Confidential File

The Confidential File (CF), totaling approximately 84,000 pages, contains the highest-level materials in the Central Files on many subjects. The correspondence, memoranda, telegrams, and reports in the file are especially rich on such subjects as national security policy, foreign relations, domestic and foreign economic policy, and natural

resources. Security classified documents comprise approximately 30 percent of the file.

The Pre-Inaugural File

The Pre-Inaugural File, totaling approximately 20,000 pages, was created by the staff of Dwight D. Eisenhower prior to his inauguration as President. The file, which covers the period from June 1952 to January 1953, consists primarily of correspondence of Eisenhower and his staff with the general public concerning the 1952 presidential campaign and the 1953 inauguration. The file also contains a small quantity of Eisenhower's correspondence with party leaders, prominent public figures, and friends.

The Alphabetical File

The Alphabetical File, totaling almost 3,000,000 pages, is the largest of the remaining unprocessed segments of the Central Files. The "Alpha" File consists of routine letters from the general public, referral sheets indicating that certain items of public mail were forwarded to government departments for responses, and cross-reference sheets to most of the documents in the OF, GF, and PPF segments of the Central Files. These cross-reference sheets serve as a valuable index which assists the staff in locating documents that cannot be found in the obvious file locations.

The remaining segments of the Central Files, most of which are unprocessed, total approximately 800,000 pages. These segments consist of bulk public opinion mail on major issues, oversize reports and charts, publications, and a small quantity of materials similar to those found in OF, GF, PPF and the Alphabetical File.

Finding aids to the Official, General, and President's Personal Files consist of filing manuals created by the White House Files Section during the Eisenhower Administration, and container (folder title) lists prepared by the staff of the Eisenhower Library. The Official, General, and President's Personal Files were organized by the Central Files Section under a numeric-subject system. That is, code numbers were assigned to government departments, to major policy issues and to foreign nations, and all documents pertaining to each subject were then filed under the assigned codes. For example, high-level materials pertaining to the Department of Defense were filed under OF 3. The numeric codes were broken down further if necessary to incorporate subtopics-for example, OF 3-A is the code for the Department of the Army, and OF 3-B for the Navy. When necessary, these codes were divided even further-for example, OF 3-B-1 is the numeric designation for the Chief of Naval Operations. The General File and the President's Personal File are arranged in the same fashion.

The filing manuals have a dual organization based upon the subject-numeric system. The first part of the filing manual consists of a sequential numerical listing, the code numbers listed in the left column and the corresponding subjects in the right. The second part of the manual is set up in reverse fashion, with an alphabetically-arranged subject listing in the left column and the corresponding code numbers in the right. These filing manuals are quite large-the OF manual consists of approximately 650

pages, the GF manual is about 400 pages, and the PPF manual is the smallest at 350 pages.

In addition to the manuals, the Library has made available to researchers container lists which consist essentially of the numeric-subject lists with box numbers and folder titles added. Ordinarily, a researcher would look for materials pertaining to his subject by first examining the alphabetical subject listing in the filing manuals and determining which code numbers are pertinent. He then would locate these code numbers in the container lists to determine the quantity of relevant materials and to pinpoint specific folders of interest. For example, a researcher interested in the Federal Communications Commission would find in the filing manual to the Official File that the code number assigned to the FCC is OF 16. Checking the OF container list he would find that the OF 16 materials are in boxes 190-191 and that there is a single FCC file folder for each year of the administration. These container lists, like the filing manuals, are quite large-the OF list is 309 pages, the GF list is 788 pages, and the PPF list is 406 pages.

A container list is available for the Confidential File. This file is arranged alphabetically, and most folder titles pertain to government agencies, public and private organizations, and major policy and political issues. For example, there are folders titled "Department of the Army," "American Bulgarian League," and "Atomic Energy and Bomb." The finding aid to the Confidential File is relatively small, amounting to only 39 pages.