



Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library & Museum

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NEWS RELEASE

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Eisenhower's Views in 1968 Revealed *1968 Principal File Released*

ABILENE, KS—The Eisenhower Presidential Library and Museum announces the public opening of the 1968 Principal File of former President Dwight D. Eisenhower. This historical collection represents the last full year of Eisenhower's life in which the 34th President corresponded on issues of his day.

“This recently released 41,600 page collection is remarkable,” states Herb Pankratz, Archivist with the Eisenhower Presidential Library and Museum. “This collection contains some excellent correspondence expressing the candid views of an elder statesman on a variety of important issues.” Ike's correspondence contains occasional reflections on his boyhood years, West Point, and World War II. He frequently commented on the war in Vietnam and offered advice to President Johnson on this and other subjects. There are also some very poignant documents relating to his health problems and his 78th birthday.

Since 1968 was a presidential election year, politics was a major topic in Eisenhower's correspondence, as well as in the few interviews and press conferences held that year. He offered comments on all of the leading Republican candidates for president, including Nelson Rockefeller, William Scranton, George Romney, and Richard Nixon. Democratic candidates, Robert Kennedy (“a voluble adolescent”) and George Wallace (“Captain Kidd with a shave”), also merited some attention. In the end, Eisenhower decided Nixon was the best qualified Republican candidate and issued his endorsement on July 19.

This collection contains newly released information on historical events. There are numerous touching letters from individuals who offered to donate their hearts so Ike could have a transplant. Handwritten letters from school children, a handwritten note from Ed Sullivan, and a birthday greeting from the City of Abilene, Kansas, with over 2,000 signatures are additional items of memorabilia found in this series. Many well-known individuals continued to correspond with Eisenhower. Letters from James Hagerty, Jack Benny, Nelson Rockefeller, Chuck Percy, Lawrence Welk, Arthur Burns, Vernon Walters, Bob Hope, Bobby Jones, Arnold Palmer, Omar Bradley, Richard Nixon, Ronald Reagan, and Barry Goldwater are all found in this series.

The research room is open year-round, Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 12:45 to 5:15 p.m., except federal holidays. The Eisenhower Presidential Library and Museum is one of twelve presidential libraries operated by the National Archives and Records Administration. To learn more, please visit www.eisenhower.archives.gov.

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The proudest thing I can claim is that I am from Abilene.
Dwight D. Eisenhower, Homecoming Speech, Abilene, Kansas, June 22, 1945

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