Register of the Wilbur Eveland papers

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Title: Wilbur Eveland papers  
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Collection Number: 80118  
Contributing Institution: Hoover Institution Archives  
Language of Material: English  
Physical Description: 14 manuscript boxes (5.6 linear feet)  
Physical Location: Hoover Institution Archives  
Creator: Eveland, Wilbur  
Access  
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Preferred Citation  
[Identification of item], Wilbur Eveland papers, 1941-1983, [Box number], Hoover Institution Archives.  
Acquisition Information  
Acquired by the Hoover Institution Archives in 1980.  
Accruals  
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Alternative Forms of Material Available  
PDF files of declassified documents available through reading room workstations. Digital copies of select records also available at [https://digitalcollections.hoover.org](https://digitalcollections.hoover.org).  
Related Materials  
Charles Richard Crane memoirs, Hoover Institution Archives  
George Lenczowski papers, Hoover Institution Archives  
Philip C. McConnell papers, Hoover Institution Archives  
Harley C. Stevens papers, Hoover Institution Archives  
Alfred M. Lilienthal papers, Hoover Institution Archives  
Biographical Note  
Wilbur Crane Eveland was an intelligence agent known for his work with the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in the Middle East. He was born on July 1, 1918, in Spokane, Washington. At 17, Eveland lied about his age so that he could join a Marine Corps Reserve battalion at Puget Sound Navy Yard but failed the West Point written test when he took the examination the next year. Eveland then took classes at the University of California, Berkeley, and Harvard University. In 1940, Eveland joined the United States Army, where in January 1941 he was recruited as an agent for the Corps of Intelligent Police, later known as the Counter Intelligence Corps. He was put in charge of the Counter Intelligence Corps field offices in Panama and held several other intelligence positions until 1948, when he decided to become a military attaché.  
As preparation for work as a military attaché, Eveland took a one-year course in Arabic at the Army Language School, after which he was stationed at the American embassy in Baghdad, Iraq, from 1950 to 1952. Upon returning to the United States, Eveland was appointed as the Near East Intelligence specialist for the Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff of the Department of the Army.
Throughout the 1950s, Eveland worked for several United States government agencies. From 1953 to 1954, he organized and headed the Near East and African Branch of the Office of Foreign Military Affairs within the Office of the Secretary of Defense. While in this position, Eveland was one of two officers to meet with Gamal Abdel Nasser to discuss aid to Egypt. In 1955, Eveland became a consultant to the Operations Coordinating Board, an entity responsible for monitoring implementation of National Security Council policies, reviewing proposals for clandestine political actions abroad, and reviewing covert CIA expenditures (Ropes of Sand, p. 110).

Although not technically a CIA agent at this point in his career, Eveland was sent on a mission to Syria for the agency in 1955, where he was tasked with working with conservative groups in the country. Upon returning from this assignment, Eveland was recruited into the CIA, where he worked closely with Allen Dulles. From 1955 to 1959, Eveland was assigned to the American embassies in Damascus, Syria, and Beirut, Lebanon, as a CIA agent using Department of State cover. During this time, Eveland completed several missions in Syria, some involving coup attempts, including a mission to deliver half a million pounds to Syrian politician Mikhail Ilyan that Eveland completed shortly before the beginning of the Suez Crisis. Eveland participated in joint United States and United Kingdom planning sessions and also served as the contact person for Camille Chamoun, President of Lebanon.

From 1959 to 1961, Eveland was on CIA assignment to Rome, Italy, under cover as a Vinnell Corporation engineering company executive in charge of petroleum related construction, maintenance, and training projects in the Middle East and Africa. In 1962, he resigned from the CIA to become the vice president of Vinnell, although he was retained as an unpaid consultant to the CIA to maintain his security clearance. In the 1970s, Eveland worked as a consultant for various companies in the petroleum industry.

Eveland decided to write a book documenting American policy in the Middle East while watching the port of Beirut burn at the start of the Lebanese Civil War in 1975. The contract for Ropes of Sand: America's Failure in the Middle East was signed in 1977. Publication was delayed when the CIA requested a prepublication review of the work, but when the agency later chose not to examine the book, Eveland published the work in 1980. Eveland died in 1990.

Sources:

Scope and Content of Collection
The Wilbur Eveland papers contain material related to his book Ropes of Sand: America's Failure in the Middle East, an autobiographical work that discusses the role of the Central Intelligence Agency in American diplomacy in the Middle East. Published in 1980, the book describes Eveland's intelligence missions to countries such as Syria, Egypt, Lebanon, and Iraq, and his interactions with Allen Dulles and John Foster Dulles. Included are descriptions of a meeting with Gamal Abdel Nasser in 1954, various missions in Syria, the Suez Crisis, the Eisenhower Doctrine, and other events of significance in the Middle East. Because Eveland served as a consultant within the petroleum industry after resigning from the CIA in 1962, the book also describes the petroleum industry's role in diplomacy and policy in the Middle East.

The Ropes of Sand file includes drafts, research materials, and other documents related to the book. Many of the typescripts and galleys include annotations by Eveland and others. The curriculum vitae of Eveland can be found in box 8, folder 2. This file also includes Freedom of Information Act requests from Eveland and the resulting documents from various government agencies. Reviews of Ropes of Sand can be found in the materials for the dust jacket and also within the Increments.

The papers include Declassified U.S. government records that relate to the Middle East, the Baghdad Pact, and the Syro-Egyptian Union. Some of these documents have been stored as PDF files, which can be accessed through the reading room workstations.

Subjects and Indexing Terms
Secret service--United States.
United States. Central Intelligence Agency.
Middle East--Foreign relations--United States.
United States--Foreign relations--Middle East.
Ropes of Sand file 1941-1980

Scope and Contents note
Includes galleys, typescripts, printed matter, correspondence, diaries, badges, and one sound recording related to the publication of *Ropes of Sand: America's Failure in the Middle East*. Arranged alphabetically by format, with drafts arranged chronologically.

Box/Folder: 1 : 1
Badges, Corps of Intelligence Police, 1941, undated

Box: 1
Correspondence

Box/Folder: 1 : 2-3
Berger, Elmer, 1978-1980

Box/Folder: 1 : 4
CIA and Department of Justice, concerning security commitments, 1980

Box/Folder: 1 : 5
Philby, H. A. R. (Kim) letter, undated

Diaries, 1977-1979

Box/Folder: 1 : 6-7
Drafts

Box/Folder: 1 : 8
Typescript, undated

Box/Folder: 2 : 1-3
Typescript, undated (contd.)

Box/Folder: 2 : 4-6
Typescript, *Innocents Abroad* by Eveland and Thomas Faber, circa 1978

Scope and Contents note
Early draft of *Ropes of Sand*

Box/Folder: 3 : 1
Typescript, *Innocents Abroad* by Eveland and Thomas Faber, circa 1978 (contd.)

Scope and Contents note
Early draft of *Ropes of Sand*

Box/Folder: 3 : 2-5
Typescript, outline and annotated first draft, 1978

Box/Folder: 4 : 1
Typescript, outline and annotated first draft, 1978 (contd.)

Box/Folder: 4 : 2
Typescript, partial first draft, June 1978

Box/Folder: 4 : 3-5
Typescript, *Innocents Abroad* by Wilbur Eveland and Thomas Faber, August 1978

Scope and Contents note
Early draft of *Ropes of Sand*

Box/Folder: 5 : 1
Partial typescript, outline, revision notes, chapter drafts, 1978-1979

Box/Folder: 5 : 2-15
Typescript, *"Norton Book,“ Prologue-Chapter 13, circa 1979*

Scope and Contents note
Includes correspondence

Box/Folder: 6 : 1
Typescript, *"Norton Book,“ Chapter 14-Chapter 27, circa 1979*

Scope and Contents note
Includes correspondence

Box/Folder: 7 : 1-2
Partial typescript, circa 1979

Box/Folder: 7 : 3-5
Typescript, Star’s draft, April 1979

Box/Folder: 8 : 1
Typescript, Star’s draft, April 1979 (contd.)

Box/Folder: 8 : 2
Partial draft, outline, book proposal, notes, April 1979

Scope and Contents note
Possibly part of Star’s draft.

Box/Folder: 8 : 3-5
Typescript, October 1979

Box/Folder: 9 : 1-2
Typescript, October 1979 (contd.)

Box/Folder: 9 : 3-6
Typescript, November 1979

Box/Folder: 10 : 1-2
Galley, January 1980

Box/Folder: 10 : 3-4
Galley with Eveland’s corrections, January 1980
Box/Folder: 11:
1-2  
**Galley with Eveland's corrections, February 1980**

Scope and Contents note
Includes note about galley's use during a meeting between Eveland, Mark Lynch, and CIA attorneys

Box/Folder: 11:
3-5  
**Galley, "final page proofs before decision to print in light of CIA's refusal to review the book," February 1980**

Box/Folder: 12:
1-3  
**Galley, master set, second pass, February 1980**

Box/Folder: 12:
4  
**Index and front matter, March-April 1980**

Box/Folder: 12:
5  
**Dust jacket materials, 1980**

Scope and Contents note
Includes reviews, photograph of Eveland, clippings on CIA and book release

Box: 12  
**Freedom of Information Act requests and documents**

Box/Folder: 12:
6  
**Central Intelligence Agency, 1955-1978**

Box/Folder: 13:
1-3  
**Department of State, 1953-1978**

Box/Folder: 13:
4  
**Federal Bureau of Investigation and Department of Justice, 1954-1980**

Box/Folder: 13:
5  
**Photographs, Middle East, 1954, undated**

Box/Folder: 13:
6-7  
**Printed folios, 1980**

Box/Folder: 14:
1  
**Proposal for Ropes of Sand, undated**

Scope and Contents note
From "Norton Book" typescript

Box/Folder: 14:
2  
**Published book, 1980**

Box/Folder: 14:
3  
**Sound recording, 1977**

Scope and Contents note
Telephone conversations with Thomas Farber, John Marks, Ellen Levine, and Starling Lawrence leading to book contracts on compact sound cassette

Box: 14  
**Increments 1982-1983**

Scope and Contents note
Includes clippings of articles written by Eveland, correspondence from Eveland to politicians, and reviews of Ropes of Sand. Arranged chronologically.

Box/Folder: 14:
4  
**1982**

Scope and Contents note
Includes correspondence

Box/Folder: 14:
5  
**1983**

Scope and Contents note
Includes Ropes of Sand reviews, clippings by Eveland, correspondence

Box: 14, reading room workstation  
**Declassified U.S. government records 1955-1958**

Scope and Contents note
Consists of formerly security-classified records of the U.S. government, released in full or in part, related to the Middle East, the Baghdad Pact, and the Syro-Egyptian Union. Includes some interfiled material determined to be unclassified. Formats include PDF files and paper documents such as correspondence. Arranged chronologically by date of release by Hoover.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading room workstation</th>
<th>2010 release of records, 1955-1958</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Contents note</td>
<td>Records relating to the Middle East, particularly U.S. and United Kingdom interests, the Baghdad Pact, and the Syro-Egyptian Union. Available as PDF files.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scope and Contents note</td>
<td>Memorandum, letter, and Christmas message, all unclassified, relating to the situation in the Middle East, 1955-1956; unclassified letter, 1982</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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| 2017 release of records, circa 1955-1958 |