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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Manuscripts and Archives  
Yale University Library  
P.O. Box 208240  
New Haven, CT 06520-8240  
mssa.assist@yale.edu  
http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/

CALL NUMBER: MS 165

CREATOR: Danaher, John Anthony, 1899-

TITLE: John Anthony Danaher papers

DATES: 1900–1982

BULK DATES: 1938–1953

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 36.25 linear feet (81 boxes)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: The papers consist primarily of John A. Danaher’s senatorial files and include political and constituent correspondence, speeches, background material, and copies of legislation. The files document Danaher’s service on the Judiciary, Finance, and Banking and Currency Committees during the 76th-78th Congresses, and highlight his efforts to prevent American involvement in World War II, his study of post-war foreign policy aims, and his concerns over domestic liberties during wartime. The papers also contain files relating to Danaher’s service on the Republican National Committee and Republican Party staff, and document his role as a campaign adviser to congressmen and to Dwight Eisenhower between 1945 and 1952. In addition there are also scrapbooks and files which document Danaher’s pre-senatorial career. The papers contain no substantive material relating to Danaher’s legal or judicial career.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: http://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0165

Requesting Instructions
To request items from this collection for use in the Manuscripts and Archives reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at http://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0165.

To order reproductions from this collection, please go to http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/ifr_copy_order.html. The information you will need to submit an order includes: the collection call number, collection title, series or accession number, box number, and folder number or name.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box
f. folder
Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Conditions Governing Access
The materials are open for research.

Conditions Governing Use
Copyright status for collection materials is unknown. Transmission or reproduction of materials protected by U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S.C.) beyond that allowed by fair use requires the written permission of the copyright owners. Works not in the public domain cannot be commercially exploited without permission of the copyright owners. Responsibility for any use rests exclusively with the user.

Preferred Citation
John Anthony Danaher Papers (MS 165). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

Biographical / Historical
John A. Danaher was born in Meriden, Connecticut on January 9, 1889. He graduated from Yale University in 1920 and was admitted to the Connecticut bar in 1922. From 1922 to 1934 he served as an assistant United States attorney in Hartford and from 1933 to 1935 he was secretary of state of Connecticut. Danaher was elected to the United States Senate in 1938 and served one term. Following his defeat for reelection in 1944, he resumed his law practice in Hartford and Washington, D.C. He remained an active adviser to Republican election campaigns from 1945 to 1952. In 1953 Danaher was named to a circuit judgeship on the United State Court of Appeals in Washington where he served until his retirement in 1969.

Scope and Contents
The John Anthony Danaher Papers consist primarily of Danaher’s files for his one term in the United States Senate (1939-1945). The files, which include political and constituent correspondence, speeches, background material, copies of legislation, and clippings, document Danaher’s service on the Judiciary, Finance, and Banking and Currency Committees. The papers highlight Danaher’s efforts to prevent United States involvement in the war in Europe, his questioning of the aims of post-war foreign policy, and his actions to safeguard domestic liberty against possible incursions by the wartime government. The papers also contain files relating to Danaher’s service as a Republican national committeeman, congressional aide, executive director of the Republican U.S. Senatorial Campaign (1948), and director of the special activities division for the 1952 Republican presidential campaign. In addition the papers include scrapbooks and a few files which document Danaher’s pre-senatorial career.

The papers, which Danaher gave to the Yale University Library in 1969, 1978, and 1979, are arranged in three series and two additions: I. U.S. Senate Correspondence Files, 1936-1945; II. U.S. Senate Subject Files, 1919-1953; III. General Files, 1916-1979.

The first two series, which comprise the bulk of the papers, document Danaher’s senatorial career; both contain materials on topics of Danaher’s concern such as neutrality, lend-lease legislation, money and monetary policy, and Connecticut politics. The two series, however, include only a relatively small and
select portion of Danaher’s files from his senatorial office. At the time, Danaher left office in 1945 he had no place to deposit or preserve his files. He estimated that some six tons of material from 96 file drawers were destroyed. Series III contains material from Danaher’s pre- and post-senatorial careers and relates primarily to his campaign efforts for the Republican Party between 1945 and 1952.

Series I, U.S. SENATE CORRESPONDENCE FILES, contains political and constituent correspondence, speeches, clippings, background material, political memorabilia, and legislation files, which are arranged according to a filing system established by Danaher’s senatorial office staff. The system included ten filing categories: 1. General material; 2. JAD personal material; 3. Legislative files; 4. Position file; 5. Immigration and naturalization files; 6. Documents file; 7. Veteran’s cases; 8. Bills introduced by JAD; 9. Post office; and Committee files, which were not given a numeric designation. The filing system is described fully in memoranda and notes included in folders 634 and 635. Portions of files 1-3, 8, and Committee files are included in Series I. The section heading General correlates with 1; Personal with 2; Legislation with 3; Bills with 8; and Committees with Committee files. Each section contains material from the 76th, 77th, and 78th Congress. The staff made pink cross-reference sheets to identify related material in other files. These are not comprehensive, however.

The General section includes cases, complaints, and inquiries concerning political and military affairs. The staff also made special files for important people and organizations and frequent correspondents. Many headings are topical and correspondence with friends and colleagues may be filed under a topical heading as well as a personal name. The files include correspondence with political associates such as Nathan Schatz, Raymond E. Baldwin, and J. Kenneth Bradley; representatives of the Connecticut press such as Maurice Sherman, Stewart Hoskins, William Downey, George Clapp, and Robert Byrnes; and Danaher’s law partner Alex W. Creedon. Danaher’s views on neutrality are reflected in correspondence with George K. Whitney of the Hartford America First Committee. Public response to Danaher’s speech at an America First rally is included in folders 117-121. Edwin Borchard, of the Yale Law School, a well-known exponent of neutrality, acted as an adviser to Danaher on foreign affairs as well as Judiciary Committee matters. His correspondence is filed in numerous places in Series I but is concentrated in folders 63-65 and 152-153. For additional Borchard-Danaher material see the Edwin M. Borchard Papers (MS 670).

Opposition to Danaher’s isolationism is reflected in files for the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies (folder 68), Connecticut United Nations Association (folder 177), and Eleanor Taft Tilton (folders 274-275a). For additional papers on this topic see the papers of the Hartford and Connecticut Chapters of the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies (MS 66).

The Personal section includes some exchanges with Danaher family members, invitations, requests for autographs and photographs, and compilations of and quotes from Danaher’s speeches. The section does not include any business or confidential correspondence.

The Legislative category was established by the staff for constituent correspondence on any legislation except that handled by one of Danaher’s committees. The correspondence reflects public concern on neutrality issues, lend-lease proposals, conscription, and post-war foreign policy. Danaher’s replies are often thoughtful reflections on issues and detailed explanations of his position. Correspondents include James Rowland Angell, Charles Beard, and Irving Fisher.

The Committees section documents Danaher’s service on the Committees on Banking and Currency, Judiciary, Finance, and Patents. The files do not contain routine constituent correspondence; any correspondence present relates background information on proposed legislation. Many items were sent by the offices of other senators, the Department of Justice, or the Treasury Department. The files also include notices of committee meetings, agendas, hearing transcripts, and background printed material. There are sizeable files on the various war powers acts, insurance regulation, the Office of War Information, the Board of Economic Warfare, and the yearly tax bills. Folder 363 contains a daily diary showing Danaher’s research and actions on one such piece of legislation.

The last section in Series I, Campaign 1938, contains the correspondence from Danaher’s successful senatorial campaign, which is composed primarily of letters of congratulation and Danaher’s
acknowledgements. The files are arranged in weekly chronological divisions and correspondence is alphabetical therein. Correspondence is filed according to the date of Danaher’s reply.

Series II, U.S. SENATE SUBJECT FILES; contains a small quantity of additional correspondence as well as more printed material, clippings, press releases, speeches, and legislative bills. This material is all, arranged by topic. The collected material represents a wide spectrum of political thought, and there are standard government and Republican Party publications, as well as pamphlets of politically active Catholic organizations; virulent anti-Semitic groups such as the American Tribunal; isolationist organizations such as American First; and pro-British groups such as Union Now. Although the series is not described in the memoranda of the office filing system some files contain the office’s pink cross-reference sheets which locate similar topical material in other files. Major topics in the series include: U.S. foreign policy, neutrality, aid to the allies, banking and currency, Connecticut politics, monetary policy, and the Republican Party. These subjects are also reflected in the collection of Danaher’s speeches filed in folders 677-690. Materials in folders 700-703 summarize Danaher’s senatorial voting record. The folders contain sheets giving the outcome of voting on individual bills and Danaher’s position. To these sheets Danaher often attached a memo to further record and explain the position he had taken.

Series III, GENERAL FILES, contains the only material in the papers documenting Danaher’s pre- and post-senatorial career. The correspondence, printed matter, speeches, and scrapbooks primarily concern Danaher’s work as a congressional and campaign adviser for the Republican Party. Campaign material is included in folders 712-735, 742-746, 750-751, 796-807, and 842 and in box 74. The Chronological section of the series includes some personal papers relating to Danaher’s appointments to various offices, property, legal matters, letters of recommendation, and reminiscences. The scrapbooks in boxes 72 and 73 are the best source of information on Danaher’s pre-senatorial career. Folders 808-809 also concern this period.

Arrangement

Collection Contents

Series I. U.S. SENATE CORRESPONDENCE FILES

15.75 linear feet (39 boxes)

This series is arranged in six sections: General; Personal; Legislation; Committees Bills; and Campaign, 1938. The first four sections are sub-divided further according to the Congress number.

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Selected Search Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library’s online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Subjects
Catholics -- United States -- Political activity
Elections -- Connecticut
Judges
Lawyers
Money -- United States
Neutrality
Political campaigns -- United States
World War, 1939-1945

Geographic Names
Connecticut -- Politics and government --
1865-1950
United States -- Foreign relations -- 1933-1945
United States -- Politics and government

Occupations
Legislators
Politicians
Public officers

Names
Baldwin, Raymond E. (Raymond Earl), 1893-1986
Borchard, Edwin, 1884-1951
Bradley, J. Kenneth
Creedon, Alex W.
Danaher, John Anthony, 1899-
Eisenhower, Dwight D. (Dwight David),
1890-1969
Schatz, Nathan
Sherman, Maurice Sinclair, 1873-1947
Tilton, Eleanor Taft

Corporate Bodies
America First Committee
Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies
Republican Party (U.S. : 1854- )
Republican Party. National Committee
United States. Congress. Senate