



Ruebhausen (Oscar M.) papers

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Rockefeller Archive Center

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Summary Information

Repository:	Rockefeller Archive Center
Creator - aut:	Ruebhausen, Oscar M.
Title:	Oscar M. Ruebhausen papers
ID:	FA077
Date [inclusive]:	1941-2000
Physical Description:	8.31 Cubic Feet 22 document boxes.
Language of the Material:	English .

Preferred Citation

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Biographical/Historical note

Oscar M. Ruebhausen was born in Manhattan on August 28, 1912, and grew up in Vermont. He graduated summa cum laude from Dartmouth in 1934 and in 1937 from Yale Law School, where he was a member of the Law Review. He then joined the law firm of Debevoise, Stevenson, Plimpton, & Page, a six-year-old firm with twelve lawyers that is now known as Debevoise Plimpton. Mr. Ruebhausen was presiding partner of Debevoise Plimpton from 1972 to 1981.

Exempt from military service for health reasons, he went to Washington, D.C. during World War II to work in the counsel's office of the Lend-Lease Administration. In 1944 he became general counsel for the Office of Scientific Research and Development, directed by Dr. Vannevar Bush.

Mr. Ruebhausen was an intimate but unpaid adviser to Nelson A. Rockefeller for many years and was active in various appointed positions in New York state government. He also managed Governor Rockefeller's properties in Venezuela and Ecuador. Additionally, he was chairman of the boards of the Russell Sage Foundation and the Greenwall Foundation. In the 1950s and 1960s, he was chairman of the board of Bennington College, where he made news by renouncing federal loans because students had to sign loyalty oaths to get them.

Oscar Ruebhausen died on December 7, 2004, in New York.

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Scope and Contents note

This collection comprises a portion of the files of Oscar M. Ruebhausen (pronounced "REEB-how-zen"), an attorney and member of the Manhattan law firm of Debevoise Plimpton. Mr. Ruebhausen was a long-time friend and advisor to Nelson A. Rockefeller, whom he met in the late 1940s. While a small percentage of these records document his interactions with or about Governor Rockefeller, the bulk of the collection documents his professional activities outside of the law firm.

The collection begins with the personal files maintained by Mr. Ruebhausen while employed by the U. S. Office of Scientific Research and Development during World War II (folders 1-12). Next, there are materials related to the establishment of the National Science Foundation, for which he was an advisor (folders 17-21).

This collection also includes files concerning his work as the first Chair of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York's Committee on Atomic Energy, which was created shortly after World War II ended. This committee took the initiative in giving legal guidance to the U. S. Congress and the Atomic Energy Commission (folders 22-64). Of particular interest in his correspondence as Chair of the Bar Association Committee are letters and published papers reflecting his efforts to avoid secrecy in the workings of the AEC. The Bar Association Committee also prepared draft legislation for the creation of the New York State Office of Atomic Development in 1959, later called the New York State Office of Atomic and Space Development (folders 65-74). Mr. Ruebhausen was named Vice Chairman of this office by Governor Nelson Rockefeller.

Additionally, these papers contain extensive materials pertaining to his service as a member of the President's Science Advisory Committee during 1970-1972 (folders 82-92) and even more on fallout shelters from the 1950s and 1960s (folders 93-104). He was also very active in Governor Rockefeller's 1958 gubernatorial campaign as an officer of Democrats for Rockefeller (folders 106-116). Long a personal lawyer to Governor Rockefeller, he was instrumental in the 1983 creation of the Nelson A. Rockefeller Center for the Social Sciences at Dartmouth College, their mutual alma mater (folders 155-164).

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Arrangement note

For the most part, the files in this collection are arranged chronologically, based on the agency or committee with which Ruebhausen was working.

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File Plan

Former Classification: IV 3A 28

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

Rockefeller Archive Center

15 Dayton Avenue

Sleepy Hollow 10591

archive@rockarch.org

URL: <http://www.rockarch.org>

Processing Information

Charles A. Bradley and Amy R. Fitch completed processing of the papers in February 2006.

Processing Level 3: Standard Processing. All material is available in acid free manuscript boxes and folders.

Conditions Governing Access

Open for research with select materials restricted are noted. Brittle or damaged items are available at the discretion of RAC.

Conditions Governing Use

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Immediate Source of Acquisition note

This collection was donated to the Rockefeller Archive Center in 2005.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Nuclear energy
 - Political campaigns -- United States
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Collection Inventory

Title/Description	Instances	
United States Office of Scientific Research and Development (OSRD) - Correspondence, 1944-1946		
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May 11-August 11, 1944	box 1	folder 1
August 29-October 31, 1944	box 1	folder 2
November 1, 1944-January 15, 1945	box 1	folder 3
January 16-March 31, 1945	box 1	folder 4
April 1-May 31, 1945	box 1	folder 5
June 1-August 31, 1945	box 1	folder 6
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Departments: "Explanation of Principles for Determination
of Costs Under Government Contracts"

United States Office of Scientific Research and Development (OSRD) Contracts Forms Manual, 1941	box 2	folder 10
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Ruebhausen Desk Reference Book (Part I): OSRD Executive
Orders, administrative orders, forms, subcontracts, purchase
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United States Office of Scientific Research and Development (OSRD), 1941	box 2	folder 12
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Ruebhausen Desk Reference Book (Part II): Lend-Lease,
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Untitled (closed box)

box 21

Conditions Governing Access:

Conditions Governing Access

Restricted material.

Untitled (closed box)

box 22

Conditions Governing Access:

Conditions Governing Access

Restricted material.