

NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISER. NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL MEETINGS FILE, 1974-77

Collection Type

White House Office Files

Extent

0.8 linear feet (ca. 1,600 pages)

Record Type

Textual

Access

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Processed by

Leesa Tobin, February 1998 (revised 6/99)

Scope and Content Note

The NSC Meetings File is one of many subcollections that comprise the National Security Adviser Files. The provenance and nature of the National Security Adviser Files as a whole are described in [Appendix A](#).

The National Security Council was created in 1947 in response to the increased complexity of national security issues in the post-World War II period and the necessity for coordination of political, military and economic factors in developing and implementing a national security policy.

Every president uses the National Security Council (NSC) in the development of foreign policy to a greater or lesser degree. During the Ford Administration the NSC was the principal forum through which major foreign policy issues were brought to the President for decision.

During meetings President Ford acted as chairman of the NSC. Statutory members in attendance included the vice president and the secretaries of State and Defense. The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff acted as the primary military advisor; the director of the Central Intelligence Agency advised on intelligence matters; and the director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency was the advisor on arms control matters. The assistant to the president for national security affairs (Dr. Henry Kissinger until November 1975, then General Brent Scowcroft) acted as the chief supervisory officer of the NSC system, planning NSC meeting agenda and overseeing the preparation of briefing materials. Other department heads were invited to attend NSC meetings depending on the agenda.

The National Security Council met at the President's behest to provide him with an opportunity to hear debate between the principals involved concerning various preferred courses of action. Often this would be in response to a National Security Study Memorandum concerning an issue of considerable importance, for example, military aid to Israel or SALT negotiations. The NSC met thirty-nine times during the Ford Administration. Some of the meetings were brief, while a number lasted for

more than two hours. The gatherings were usually held in the Cabinet Room.

Meetings often began with an intelligence briefing. Kissinger or Scowcroft would then outline issues and options and the President would ask each attendee for his views and recommendations. Participants stated their positions and often had the opportunity to rebut the views of others in attendance. Some of the discussions were quite detailed and occasionally debates would develop among those in attendance with differing policy preferences.

No taped records of these meetings are known to exist. An NSC staff member, often someone who had staff responsibility for the topic being discussed, took notes and later prepared a formal record of the gathering. This collection is not complete, however. For five of the NSC meetings held during the administration, there are no formal meeting minutes, although those files usually include briefing material and agendas.

Topics discussed during NSC meetings include: the Middle East peace negotiations, aid to Israel, SALT, the Vietnam War, Panama Canal Treaty negotiations, the Helsinki Agreements, Angola, American-Soviet relations, military readiness, Southern Africa, and the intelligence investigations. The minutes also reflect relations between various members of President Ford's cabinet and advisors.

Related Materials (June 1999)

Many NSC meetings included discussion of National Security Study Memoranda (NSSM) and eventually resulted in a National Security Decision Memoranda (NSDM) signed by the President. A complete file of these documents is available to researchers.

Last Modified Date

2024-05-15

National Security Council Meetings File, 1974-77.

(Boxes 1-2, 0.8 linear feet)

Briefing material, agendas and meeting minutes for most of the thirty-nine National Security Council meetings held during the Ford Administration. Topics include; the Middle East peace negotiations, aid to Israel, SALT, the Vietnamese War, Panama

Canal Treaty negotiations, the Helsinki Agreements, Angola, American-Soviet relations, military readiness, Southern Africa, and investigations of the intelligence community.

Arranged chronologically by date of the meeting.

Box 1 - National Security Council Meetings File

Status	Title
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>NSC Meeting, August 10, 1974 [topics: Presidential Transition, Organization and Operation of the National Security Council]</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>NSC Meeting, September 6, 1974 [topic: Israeli Arms Request] (no minutes available)</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>NSC Meeting, September 14, 1974 [topic: Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT)]</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>NSC Meeting, October 7, 1974 [topics: Leaks of Classified Documents, Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT)]</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>NSC Meeting, October 18, 1974 [topics: Secretary Kissinger's Trip to the Middle East, Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT)]</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>NSC Meeting, December 2, 1974 [topics: Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT), President's Trip to Japan, Korea, and Soviet Union]</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>NSC Meeting, January 23, 1975 [topic: Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions (MBFR)]</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>NSC Meeting, January 29, 1975 [topic: Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT)]</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>NSC Meeting, March 5, 1975 [topic: Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT)]</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>NSC Meeting, March 28, 1975 [topics: Middle East, Vietnam, Cambodia]</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>NSC Meeting, April 9, 1975 [topic: Vietnam, Cambodia]</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>NSC Meeting, April 24, 1975 [topic: Indochina Evacuation]</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>NSC Meeting, April 28, 1975 [topic: Indochina Evacuation]</u>

Status	Title
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>NSC Meeting, May 12, 1975 [topic: Seizure of American Ship Mayaguez by the Cambodians]</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>NSC Meeting, May 13, 1975 (morning) [topic: Seizure of American Ship Mayaguez by the Cambodians]</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>NSC Meeting, May 13, 1975 (evening) [topic: Seizure of American Ship Mayaguez by the Cambodians]</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>NSC Meeting, May 14, 1975 [topic: Seizure of American Ship Mayaguez by the Cambodians]</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>NSC Meeting, May 15, 1975 [topics: Seizure of American Ship Mayaguez by the Cambodians, Panama Canal Negotiations, Middle East]</u>

Box 2 - National Security Council Meetings File.

Status	Title
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>NSC Meeting, June 27, 1975 [topic: Angola]</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>NSC Meeting, July 23, 1975 [topic: Panama Canal Negotiations]</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>NSC Meeting, July 25, 1975 [topic: Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT)]</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>NSC Meeting, August 9, 1975 [topics: Middle East Negotiations, Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT)]</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>NSC Meeting, September 17, 1975 [topics: Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT), Israeli Arms Request]</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>NSC Meeting, December 22, 1975 [topics: Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT), Angola]</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>NSC Meeting, January 8, 1976 [topic: Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT)]</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>NSC Meeting, January 13, 1976 [topics: Israeli Military Requirements, Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT)]</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>NSC Meeting, January 19, 1976 [topic: Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT)]</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>NSC Meeting, January 21, 1976 [topic: Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT)]</u>

Status	Title
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>NSC Meeting, February 11, 1976 [topic: Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT)]</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>NSC Meeting, April 7, 1976 [topics: Lebanon, Cubans in Southern Africa]</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>NSC Meeting, April 22, 1976 [topic: Study on Future Naval Force Requirements and Shipbuilding Plans] (no minutes available)</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>NSC Meeting, May 1, 1976 [topic: Study on Future Naval Force Requirements and Shipbuilding Plans] (no minutes available)</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>NSC Meeting, May 11, 1976 [topic: Secretary Kissinger's Trip to Africa]</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>NSC Meeting, July 21, 1976 [topic: Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT)] (no minutes available)</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>NSC Meeting, July 30, 1976 [topic: Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT)]</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>NSC Meeting, August 9, 1976 [topic: Strategic Stockpile]</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>NSC Meeting, December 2, 1976 [topics: U.S. Defense Policy and Military Posture and Study on Naval Force Requirements] (no minutes available)</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>NSC Meeting, December 15, 1976 [topic: U.S. Defense Policy and Military Posture]</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>NSC Meeting, January 13, 1977 [topic: Semi-annual Review of the Intelligence Community]</u>