

PRESIDENT FORD COMMITTEE RECORDS POLITICAL OFFICE FILES, 1974-76

Collection Type

Personal Papers

Extent

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Record Type

Textual

Scope and Content Note

The Political Office Files document strategic and organizational issues during the primary and general presidential campaigns. The files are particularly valuable for documentation on PFC organizing and campaign activities at the state and local levels. They are less reflective of campaign planning at the national level.

The deputy chairman for political organization (the political director) was responsible for developing and implementing campaign strategy and directing a large and geographically dispersed staff. Bo Callaway appointed Lee Nunn as director of political organization in July 1975. Nunn resigned just three months later citing insurmountable differences with the chairman.

In addition to developing political strategy and developing a nationwide political organization, Spencer and his staff assimilated "intelligence" on competitors' campaigns and delegates, maintained liaison with key Republican leaders throughout the country, monitored state budgets, and oversaw the implementation of national and state campaign plans. An important aspect of the Political Office's early role was assisting in the selection of state PFC executive directors and finance

chairmen.

A large portion of the Political Office Files reflect the activities of several key staff who reported directly to Spencer. Norman E. ("Skip") Watts coordinated PFC activities in the 31 states and territories holding primary elections. Edward A. Terrill monitored PFC activities in the remaining 22 states holding conventions for delegate selection. Both Watts and Terrill continued in key Political Office roles in the post-convention period. William Russo joined them at the middle management level during the general campaign. (See attached organizational charts.) An important aspect of Spencer's leadership was his application of professional management techniques to a political campaign organization.

Cognizant of fiscal constraints, the Political Office staff grew quickly in the early months of the primary campaign but rapidly downsized state-by-state in the period following each state's primary election or convention, eliminating paid staff positions and closing campaign headquarters. Soon after Ford's nomination, state headquarters reopened and the staff of the Political Office at national headquarters expanded.

While the staff of the Political Office changed somewhat from the primary to general campaign period, the system of reporting information from the field remained virtually unchanged. State PFC personnel regularly reported to regional coordinators at national headquarters. Spencer and his immediate assistants reviewed synopses prepared by the regional coordinators and reported to the national chairman on state-level activities and progress. Any recommendations by Spencer, Watts, Terrill, and Russo were transmitted back through the chain of command to the PFC state executive director for implementation. With minor modifications, this system remained intact throughout the campaign. These reports appear throughout the Political Office files and provide tremendous detail on regional and state issues and campaign activities.

The extant files of the Political Office are not complete. For example, the files do not include evidence of Spencer's critical role in the development of a campaign plan for the general election. Neither do they document Spencer's role as acting PFC chairman in March 1976. The small portion of the Political Office Files readily identified as Spencer's primarily reflect only his responsibility for developing a

national organization.

While Spencer, and possibly Watts, Russo, and Terrill attended White House strategy meetings and meetings of the PFC's Executive and Advisory Committees, the files of the Political Office do not include documentation of their involvement. Nor does the file include high-level communication between the Political Office and members of the White House staff concerning national campaign planning. Additionally, there is little evidence in the files of the close working relationship between the Political Office and the PFC's polling operation headed by Robert Teeter.

Related Materials (as of January 1991):

The White House Central Files Subject File includes material on PFC state organizations and delegate monitoring in various sections of PL-Political Affairs. The files of Chief of Staff Richard Cheney include material on PFC organizational efforts, Political Office personnel, and suggested contacts with delegates. Material reflecting Political Office contact with the White House staff appears in the files of Cheney's assistant, James Field, and Staff Secretary Jerry Jones. Researchers should consult the personal papers of Michael Raoul-Duval and Robert Teeter for discussions of campaign strategy and drafts of Ford's general election campaign plan.

Last Modified Date

2024-05-17

Political Office: Stuart Spencer State File, 1975-76.

(Boxes C1-C5, 2.0 linear feet)

Memoranda, correspondence, polling data, reports by PFC state executive directors and field coordinators, and clippings accumulated by Political Office directors Lee Nunn and Stuart Spencer. The materials concern such topics as: state and local issues, state Republican party organizations, state campaign plans, selection and approval of PFC state executive and finance chairmen, media strategy, scheduling of presidential and advocate appearances, rules governing delegate selection, and reports concerning the local activities of the Reagan and Carter campaign organizations. Although some later material appears, the pre-nomination period is

best documented here. Many of the state files include "memos for the record" drafted by Chairman Bo Callaway early in the campaign. Spencer created few of the documents in the file; most were prepared for his information by Political Office staff.

Arranged alphabetically by state.

Box C1 - Political Office: Stuart Spencer State File

Status	Title
OPEN	Alabama
OPEN	Alaska
OPEN	Arizona
OPEN	Arkansas
OPEN	California (1)-(5)
OPEN	Colorado
OPEN	Connecticut
OPEN	Delaware
OPEN	District of Columbia

Box C2 - Political Office: Stuart Spencer State File

Status	Title
OPEN	Florida (1)-(5)
OPEN	Georgia
OPEN	Hawaii
OPEN	Idaho
OPEN	Illinois (1)-(4)

Box C3 - Political Office: Stuart Spencer State File

Status	Title
OPEN	Illinois (6)-(7)
OPEN	Indiana
OPEN	Iowa
OPEN	Kansas
OPEN	Kentucky
OPEN	Louisiana

Status	Title
OPEN	Maine
OPEN	Maryland
OPEN	Massachusetts
OPEN	Michigan
OPEN	Minnesota
OPEN	Mississippi
OPEN	Missouri
OPEN	Montana
OPEN	Nebraska
OPEN	Nevada
OPEN	New Hampshire (received empty)
OPEN	New Jersey

Box C4 - Political Office: Stuart Spencer State File

Status	Title
OPEN	New Mexico
OPEN	New York
OPEN	North Carolina
OPEN	North Dakota
OPEN	Ohio (1)-(2)
OPEN	Oklahoma
OPEN	Oregon (1)-(2)
OPEN	Pennsylvania
OPEN	Rhode Island
OPEN	South Carolina
OPEN	South Dakota
OPEN	Tennessee
OPEN	Texas (1)-(2)

Box C5 - Political Office: Stuart Spencer State File

Status	Title
OPEN	Texas (3)-(6)
OPEN	Utah

Status	Title
OPEN	Vermont
OPEN	Virginia
OPEN	Washington
OPEN	West Virginia
OPEN	Wisconsin (1)-(3)
OPEN	Wyoming

Political Office: Primary Campaign Coordinators' Reference File, 1975-76.

(Boxes C6-C11, 2.4 linear feet)

Memoranda, correspondence, and reports by PFC state executive directors and field coordinators accumulated by Skip Watts, primary states coordinator, and Edward Terrill, convention states coordinator. The focus of this file is somewhat less issue-oriented than the Spencer file described above but copies of some documents appear in both files. Most of the material in this series relate directly to PFC organizing efforts and campaign activities at the state level including such topics as the rules governing delegate selection, delegate tallies and tracking, the appointment of state PFC officials, Reagan's campaign activities, phone bank operation, local media campaigns (including occasional transcripts of commercials and radio actualities), state campaign plans and budgets, and the results of state primary elections, caucuses, and conventions. A short sequence of regional reports precedes the state file. The Ford Library did not receive a file for Massachusetts.

Arranged alphabetically by state.

Box C6 - Political Office: Primary Campaign Coordinators' Reference File

Status	Title
OPEN	Regional Reports California (Dave Liggett)
OPEN	Regional Reports Midwest (Jon Holt)
OPEN	Regional Reports Pacific (Nola Haerle)
OPEN	Regional Reports Southwest (Al Zapanta)
OPEN	Regional Reports Western (Bob Flanigan)

Box C7 - Political Office: Primary Campaign Coordinators' Reference File

Status	Title
OPEN	Alabama (1)-(2)

Status	Title
OPEN	Alaska
OPEN	Arizona
OPEN	Arkansas (1)-(2)
OPEN	California (1)-(3)
OPEN	Colorado (1)-(2)
OPEN	Connecticut
OPEN	Delaware
OPEN	District of Columbia

Box C8 - Political Office: Primary Campaign Coordinators' Reference File

Status	Title
OPEN	Florida
OPEN	Georgia (1)-(3)
OPEN	Hawaii
OPEN	Idaho
OPEN	Illinois (1)-(3)
OPEN	Indiana
OPEN	Iowa (1)

Box C9 - Political Office: Primary Campaign Coordinators' Reference File

Status	Title
OPEN	Iowa (2)-(3)
OPEN	Kansas
OPEN	Kentucky (1)-(3)
OPEN	Louisiana
OPEN	Maryland
OPEN	Michigan
OPEN	Minnesota
OPEN	Mississippi

Box C10 - Political Office: Primary Campaign Coordinators' Reference File

Status	Title
OPEN	Missouri
OPEN	Montana

Status	Title
OPEN	Nebraska
OPEN	Nevada
OPEN	New Hampshire
OPEN	New Jersey
OPEN	New Mexico
OPEN	New York (1)-(2)
OPEN	North Carolina
OPEN	North Dakota
OPEN	Ohio
OPEN	Oklahoma
OPEN	Oregon
OPEN	Pennsylvania

Box C11 - Political Office: Primary Campaign Coordinators' Reference File

Status	Title
OPEN	South Carolina
OPEN	South Dakota
OPEN	Tennessee (1)-(2)
OPEN	Texas
OPEN	Utah
OPEN	Vermont
OPEN	Virginia (1)-(3)
OPEN	Washington
OPEN	Wisconsin
OPEN	Wyoming
OPEN	Guam

Political Office: General Election State File, 1976.

(Boxes C12-C20, 3.6 linear feet)

Memoranda, correspondence, reports, clippings, budget information, demographic data, and personnel forms compiled by field coordinators Skip Watts and William Russo and special assistant to the political director Edward Terrill during the post-

nomination campaign. Materials concern such topics as the evaluation of PFC state primary campaign personnel, state campaign plans and budgets, statistical studies from previous elections, Republican National Committee phone bank organization, debate reaction, recommended presidential letters and appearances, local congressional contests, and Carter's state campaign organizations. For some states, the lengthy RNC publication, "Political Profiles of the States," and extensive clippings are included in the file. The amount of material varies greatly from state to state.

Arranged alphabetically by state.

Box C12 - Political Office: General Election State File

Status	Title
OPEN	Alaska
OPEN	Alabama
OPEN	Arizona
OPEN	Arkansas
OPEN	California (1)-(2)
OPEN	Colorado
OPEN	Connecticut
OPEN	Delaware
OPEN	Florida (1)-(2)

Box C13 - Political Office: General Election State File

Status	Title
OPEN	Georgia
OPEN	Hawaii (1)-(2)
OPEN	Idaho
OPEN	Illinois (1)-(5)
OPEN	Illinois Clippings (1)-(2)

Box C14 - Political Office: General Election State File

Status	Title
OPEN	Indiana (1)-(5)
OPEN	Indiana Clippings (1)-(2)
OPEN	Iowa (1)-(2)

Status	Title
OPEN	Kansas
OPEN	Kentucky
OPEN	Louisiana
OPEN	Maine

Box C15 - Political Office: General Election State File

Status	Title
OPEN	Maryland
OPEN	Massachusetts
OPEN	Michigan (1)-(4)
OPEN	Minnesota
OPEN	Mississippi
OPEN	Missouri (1)-(2)
OPEN	Montana
OPEN	Nebraska
OPEN	Nevada (1)-(2)

Box C16 - Political Office: General Election State File

Status	Title
OPEN	New Hampshire
OPEN	New Jersey (1)-(2)
OPEN	New Mexico
OPEN	New York (1)-(4)
OPEN	North Carolina (1)-(2)

Box C17 - Political Office: General Election State File

Status	Title
OPEN	North Dakota
OPEN	Ohio (1)-(5)
OPEN	Ohio Clippings
OPEN	Oklahoma
OPEN	Oregon (1)-(3)
OPEN	Pennsylvania (1)-(2)

Box C18 - Political Office: General Election State File

Status	Title
OPEN	Pennsylvania (3)-(5)
OPEN	Rhode Island
OPEN	South Carolina
OPEN	South Dakota
OPEN	Tennessee
OPEN	Texas
OPEN	Utah
OPEN	Vermont
OPEN	Virginia (1)-(3)

Box C19 - Political Office: General Election State File

Status	Title
OPEN	Washington (1)-(3)
OPEN	West Virginia (1)-(3)
OPEN	Wisconsin (1)-(4)

Box C20 - Political Office: General Election State File

Status	Title
OPEN	Wisconsin Clippings (1)-(4)
OPEN	Wyoming

Political Office: Norman Watts Chronological File, 1975-76.

(Box C21, 0.4 linear feet)

Carbons of memoranda and correspondence drafted by Skip Watts, coordinator for primary states during the pre-nomination campaign and one of two field coordinators during the general election. Documents include communications Watts and his assistant, Barbara Wise, had with state executive directors, regional coordinators, White House staff, potential campaign workers and volunteers, and high-level PFC administrators such as Bo Callaway, Robert Visser, and Stuart Spencer. Topics include state campaign organizations and budgets, the Republican National Committee's phone bank operation, and delegate tallies and tracking.

Arranged chronologically.

Box C21 - Political Office: Norman Watts Chronological File>

Status	Title
OPEN	October 1975 - Oct. 1976

Political Office: Norman Watts Subject File, 1975-76.

(Boxes C22-C24, 1.2 linear feet)

Memoranda, correspondence, reports, administrative forms, clippings, and printed material compiled by Watts for reference during the general election campaign. The materials concern such topics as legal guidance, People for Ford volunteer program, special voter group activities, PFC organization, Republican National Committee phone bank program, polling results, delegate tallies, and state gubernatorial and congressional contests. The series includes small correspondence files for Haley Barbour and Jack Inesco, two of the regional coordinators reporting to Watts during the general campaign.

Arranged alphabetically by subject.

Box C22 - Political Office: Norman Watts Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Advocates Program
OPEN	Budget Authorizations
OPEN	Campaign Management Reporting System
OPEN	Campaign Materials
OPEN	Campaign Manual Pacific Region (1)-(2)
OPEN	Carter, Jimmy ♡ Clippings
OPEN	Celebrities for Ford
OPEN	Debates
OPEN	Delegate Tallies
OPEN	Delegate Tallies Convention States (1)-(2)
OPEN	Delegate Tallies Primary States (1)-(2)
OPEN	Direct Mail Campaign Literature
OPEN	Fiscal Guidance

Box C23 - Political Office: Norman Watts Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Forms Administrative

Status	Title
OPEN	General Election Workbook (1)-(2)
OPEN	Legal Guidance
OPEN	Media Newspaper Lists
OPEN	Media Radio
OPEN	Media Television
OPEN	National Federation of Republican Women
OPEN	Primary Campaign Organization Manual
OPEN	President Ford Committee People for Ford
OPEN	President Ford Committee Staff
OPEN	President Ford Committee Staff State Organizations

Box C24 - Political Office: Norman Watts Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	President Ford Committee '76 Factbook (1)-(2)
OPEN	Recommended Presidential Contacts
OPEN	Regional Coordinators Memoranda and Correspondence Barbour, Haley (Southern States)
OPEN	Regional Coordinators Memoranda and Correspondence Inesco, Jack (Rocky Mountain States)
OPEN	Research Platform
OPEN	Research Public Opinion Polls
OPEN	Resumes
OPEN	Schedule Proposals
OPEN	Special Voter Groups
OPEN	Telephone Bank Program
OPEN	Vice Presidential Campaign

Political Office: William Russo Subject File, 1976.

(Boxes C25-C27, 1.2 linear feet)

Memoranda, correspondence, reports, itineraries, scheduling proposals, state campaign budgets, and press releases compiled by William Russo, a field coordinator during the general election campaign, and his assistant Glenda Leggitt. The materials concern such topics as the advocates program, debates, vice

presidential campaign, the September 1976 Mississippi river boat campaign trip, fiscal procedures and state budgets, People for Ford volunteer program, and PFC administrative matters. A small but significant file on abortion reflects Marjory Mecklenburg's liaison role with anti-abortion groups.

Arranged alphabetically by subject.

Box C25 - Political Office: William Russo Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Abortion (1)-(2)
OPEN	Advocate Program (1)-(3)
OPEN	Butz Resignation
OPEN	Campaign Management Reporting System
OPEN	Campaign Materials
OPEN	Carter, Jimmy ♦ Clippings and Quotes
OPEN	Correspondence
OPEN	Debates
OPEN	Democrats for Ford
OPEN	Dole, Robert Schedules (1)-(3)

Box C26 - Political Office: William Russo Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Expense Reports
OPEN	Farmers for Ford
OPEN	Fiscal Procedures General Campaign (1)-(2)
OPEN	Media
OPEN	Media Contacts
OPEN	Memoranda
OPEN	Mississippi River Boat Trip, September 1976 (1)-(3)
OPEN	Office Administration
OPEN	People for Ford Newsletters and Press Releases

Box C27 - Political Office: William Russo Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	People for Ford Peterson (Elly) Memoranda

Status	Title
OPEN	Phone Bank Program
OPEN	Polling Data
OPEN	President Ford Committee Guide for County Chairmen
OPEN	President Ford Committee Press Releases
OPEN	President Ford Committee Staff Lists
OPEN	President Ford Committee State Organization Chairmen Lists
OPEN	Press Releases Miscellaneous Groups
OPEN	Republican National Committee Presidential Campaign Task Force
OPEN	State Budgets (1)-(4)
OPEN	State Organizations President Ford Committee
OPEN	White House Requests

Political Office: Republican National Committee Campaign File, 1974-76.

(Boxes C28-C34, 2.8 linear feet)

Reports, computer printouts, and printed material produced by the Republican National Committee and used by the Political Office as a reference file during the general campaign. Materials include a lengthy Jimmy Carter quotebook and information concerning the RNC nationwide phone bank program, especially the state-level organizations and tabulation of responses for the period immediately preceding the November election. Several publications compiled by the RNC's Presidential Campaign Task Force concerning state Republican and PFC organizations, local events providing campaign opportunities, media, balloting procedures, demographic and statistical data, and state issues comprise the bulk of the series.

Arranged alphabetically by subject.

Box C28 - Political Office: Republican National Committee Campaign File

Status	Title
OPEN	Carter Quotebook (1)-(5)
OPEN	Phonebank Program General
OPEN	Phonebank Program States (1)-(3)

Box C29 - Political Office: Republican National Committee Campaign File

Status	Title
OPEN	Phonebank Program Tabulations by Center 10/26/76 (1)-(9)

Box C30 - Political Office: Republican National Committee Campaign File

Status	Title
OPEN	Phonebank Program Tabulations by Center 10/30/76 (1)-(4)
OPEN	Phonebank Program Tabulations by State, 10/512/76
OPEN	Phonebank Program Tabulations by State, 10/1315/76
OPEN	Phonebank Program Tabulations by State, 10/1823/76
OPEN	Phonebank Program Tabulations by State, 10/2430/76

Box C31 - Political Office: Republican National Committee Campaign File

Status	Title
OPEN	Presidential Campaign Task Force Elected Officials and Candidates (1)-(5)
OPEN	Presidential Campaign Task Force General Election Information (1)-(4)

Box C32 - Political Office: Republican National Committee Campaign File

Status	Title
OPEN	Presidential Campaign Task Force General Election Information (5)-(6)
OPEN	Presidential Campaign Task Force General Reference
OPEN	Presidential Campaign Task Force Media (1)-(6)

Box C33 - Political Office: Republican National Committee Campaign File

Status	Title
OPEN	Presidential Campaign Task Force Media (7)-(9)
OPEN	Presidential Campaign Task Force Phone Bank Program (1)(4)
OPEN	Presidential Campaign Task Force Scheduling (1)-(2)

Box C34 - Political Office: Republican National Committee Campaign File

Status	Title
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OPEN Presidential Campaign Task Force Special Voter Groups
(1)-(5)

Political Office: PFC State Organization File, 1975-76.

(Boxes C35-C38, 1.6 linear feet)

Lists and occasional reports of the PFC's local leadership arranged by state. The file may have originally been compiled by Jack Stiles, working as delegate monitor and special consultant to the PFC chairman out of the Political Office prior to his death in April 1976. Included are updates from throughout the primary and general campaign.

Arranged alphabetically by state.

Box C35 - Political Office: PFC State Organization File

Status	Title
OPEN	Spencer Memo, February 1976
OPEN	Alabama
OPEN	Alaska
OPEN	Arizona
OPEN	Arkansas
OPEN	California
OPEN	Colorado
OPEN	Connecticut
OPEN	Delaware (received empty)
OPEN	District of Columbia
OPEN	Florida
OPEN	Georgia
OPEN	Hawaii
OPEN	Idaho
OPEN	Illinois
OPEN	Indiana
OPEN	Iowa
OPEN	Kansas (1)-(2)
OPEN	Kentucky

Status	Title
OPEN	Louisiana
OPEN	Maine
OPEN	Maryland
OPEN	Massachusetts
OPEN	Michigan
OPEN	Minnesota
OPEN	Mississippi
OPEN	Missouri
OPEN	Montana
OPEN	Nebraska
OPEN	Nevada
OPEN	New Hampshire

Box C36 - Political Office: PFC State Organization File

Status	Title
OPEN	New Jersey
OPEN	New Mexico
OPEN	New York
OPEN	North Carolina
OPEN	North Dakota
OPEN	Ohio
OPEN	Oklahoma
OPEN	Oregon
OPEN	Pennsylvania
OPEN	Rhode Island
OPEN	South Carolina
OPEN	South Dakota
OPEN	Tennessee
OPEN	Texas
OPEN	Utah
OPEN	Vermont
OPEN	Virginia

Status	Title
OPEN	Washington
OPEN	West Virginia
OPEN	Wisconsin
OPEN	Wyoming
OPEN	Guam

Box C37 - Political Office: PFC State Organization File

Status	Title
OPEN	State and Local Officials Name File: Alabama North Carolina

Box C38 - Political Office: PFC State Organization File

Status	Title
OPEN	State and Local Officials Name File: North Dakota Wyoming