

JOHN ROBSON PAPERS, 1970-93

Collection Type

Personal Papers

Extent

8.0 linear feet (ca. 16,000 pages)

Record Type

Textual

Access

Advance consultation is required so that archivists may complete routine review of requested folders for restricted information.

Copyright

John Robson donated to the United States of America his copyrights in all of his unpublished writings in National Archives collections. The copyrights to materials written by other individuals or organizations are presumed to remain with them. Works prepared by U.S. Government employees as part of their official duties are in the public domain.

Processed by

Jennifer Sternaman, August 1995

Biography

John E. Robson

June 21, 1930 - Born, New York City, NY

1952 - B.A., Yale University

1955 - LL.B., Harvard University

1958-65 - Leibman, Williams, Bennett, Baird and Minow (Partner and Associate)

1966 - Special Assistant to the Director, Bureau of the Budget, Office of Management and Budget

1967-69 - Undersecretary, U.S. Department of Transportation (General Counsel, 1967)

July-Sept. 1968 - Administrator, Urban Mass Transportation Administration

1970-74 - Sidley and Austin (Partner and Member of Executive Committee)

1975-77 - Chairman, U.S. Civil Aeronautics Board

1978-85 - G.D. Searle & Co. (including President and C.E.O.)

1980-83 - Informal consultant, Reagan administration transition

1986-88 - Emory University (Dean and Professor of Management, School of Business Administration)

1989-92 - Deputy Secretary of the Treasury, U.S. Department of the Treasury

1993-? - Yale University (Lester Crown Distinguished Faculty, School of Organization and Management)

1993-? - Heritage Foundation (visiting fellow, Co-Chair of the Advisory Council on Regulatory Reform)

1993 - Member, National Commission to Ensure A Competitive Airline Industry

2001-2002 - President and Chairman, Export-Import Bank of the United States

March 21, 2002 - Died, Washington, D.C.

Scope and Content Note

John E. Robson has had a varied professional career in law practice, management, academia, and government service. He began his career in government in 1966 with the Office of Management and Budget. He has worked, as both unofficial and official advisor, for each administration since Lyndon Johnson's, mostly in economic and transportation matters.

A highlight of Robson's government service came when he was appointed as Chairman of the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB) in April 1975. When Robson took over, the CAB was under critical examination. The former chairman, Robert Timm, had resigned amid allegations that he accepted favors from American Airlines and controversy about how the CAB handled an investigation of questionable airline political contributions. In addition, the Ford administration was launching a major regulatory reform program, leading to media speculation that Robson had been appointed specifically to deregulate the airlines. Robson, however, maintains that he was appointed because he was well-known, "clean", competent, and known to people in the White House, especially Donald Rumsfeld, a friend since high school.

Barely settled in his office, Robson immediately began efforts to lessen the controls on the airlines and to encourage competition between them. These actions were not universally popular. By the end of his tenure as Chairman, airlines were beginning to operate under relaxed price controls and more like traditional

businesses. Although Robson's papers primarily reflect his activities and perspectives, researchers will get a sense of the overall reaction to his policies, especially from members of the CAB and the airline industry.

Before and after his appointment to the CAB, Robson served the Nixon, Ford, and Reagan administrations in various official and unofficial advisory capacities. He contributed to both the Nixon and Ford economic programs through his work with the 1970 Cost of Living Council; his participation in the October 1974 "Summit Conference on Inflation;" and by writing and distributing to White House officials his thoughts on such economic matters as inflation, wage and price policy, and economic efficiency. In addition, he advised the 1980 Reagan transition team on transportation issues. The Robson Papers reflect these activities.

Upon leaving the CAB Robson went back to the private sector to work in business and business education, but the collection does not document any of these activities. He returned to government service for a short time (1989-92) as Deputy Secretary of the Treasury; his speeches from this time period are part of the collection. There is also material from his work with the 1993 National Commission to Ensure a Competitive Airline Industry.

Related Materials (August 1995)

For additional material on the Civil Aeronautics Board, see the Dudley Chapman Files, and White House Central Files Subject File categories CA (Civil Aviation) and FG88 (Civil Aeronautics Board).

The initial accession of Robson Papers contained extensive material on his work in OMB and the Urban Mass Transportation Administration during the Johnson administration, but at the donor's request the Ford Library transferred that material to the Johnson Library in July 1994.

Last Modified Date

2024-05-31

Oral History, 1981.

(Box 1, 0.2 linear feet)

Interviews with Robson, conducted by Richard W. Smithey, Yale School of Organization and Management. Contains both edited and complete

transcripts. Mostly covers Robson's experiences as chairman of the Civil Aeronautics Board, especially management issues.

Box 1 - Oral History

Status	Title
OPEN	"The Move to Airline Deregulation: Perspective of Former CAB Chairman John E. Robson" Interview (1)-(2)

Subject File, March 1970 - November 1993.

(Boxes 1-9, 3.4 linear feet)

Reports, memoranda, correspondence, publications, and logs. Topics include airline deregulation, Robson's association with Donald Rumsfeld through the Nixon and Ford administrations, Civil Aeronautics Board issues (personnel, deregulation, board activities, and dissolution of board), the Ford administration economic program, Carter to Reagan transition (transportation issues), and Robson's advisory commission work.

Arranged alphabetically by subject.

Box 1 (Continued) - Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Aviation Safety Commission, 1988 (1)-(2)
OPEN	Chief of Staff (ideas on goals for Don Rumsfeld)
OPEN	Civil Aeronautics Board - Airline Deregulation Bill
OPEN	Civil Aeronautics Board - Air Service Improvement Act - Analysis
OPEN	Civil Aeronautics Board - Air Service Improvement Act - Statement by Glenn Anderson
OPEN	Civil Aeronautics Board - Aviation Act of 1975 - Amendments (proposed by CAB task force)
OPEN	Civil Aeronautics Board - Aviation Act of 1975 - Analysis (1)-(2)

Box 2 - Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Civil Aeronautics Board - Aviation Act of 1975 - Analysis (3)-(4)

Status	Title
OPEN	Civil Aeronautics Board - Correspondence, 5/77-8/82
OPEN	Civil Aeronautics Board - Dissolution
OPEN	Civil Aeronautics Board - "Leak" to the press/Personnel matters (1)-(3)
OPEN	Civil Aeronautics Board - Pre-Appointment Press Speculation and Criticism - Clippings (1)-(3)
OPEN	Civil Aeronautics Board - Publications - "Airline Deregulation: A Test Case for Fundamental Regulatory Reform"

Box 3 - Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Civil Aeronautics Board - Publications - "Aviation Regulatory Reform, Part II"
OPEN	Civil Aeronautics Board - Publications - "Competition and the Airlines"
OPEN	Civil Aeronautics Board - Publications - "Early Experience with Airline Deregulation"
OPEN	Civil Aeronautics Board - Publications - "The Genesis of Airline Deregulation: The Role of the Kennedy Hearing and Report"
OPEN	Civil Aeronautics Board - Publications - Miscellaneous
OPEN	Civil Aeronautics Board - Publications - "Presentation of the Civil Aeronautics Board Before the US Senate Committee on Commerce Subcommittee on Aviation"

Box 4 - Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Civil Aeronautics Board - Publications - "Presentation of the CAB Before the Subcommittee on Aviation" (3/21/77)
OPEN	Civil Aeronautics Board - Publications - "Regulatory Reform: Report of CAB"
OPEN	Civil Aeronautics Board - Publications - Report on Activities
OPEN	Civil Aeronautics Board - Publications - Robson resignation (4/30/77)

Status	Title
OPEN	Civil Aeronautics Board - Publications - Sunset Seminar Proceedings
OPEN	Civil Aeronautics Board - Publications - Telephone Calls (1)-(4)

Box 5 - Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Civil Aeronautics Board - Timm, Robert (re: Timm resignation and Dept. of Justice investigation of Timm) (1)-(3)
OPEN	Civil Aeronautics Board - Weekly Appointments, 1975-77 (1)-(3)
OPEN	"Deregulation: Will It Help or Hinder?" (from a seminar on Private Placement, 1979 -- Robson's contribution)
OPEN	Domestic Issues/Policy
OPEN	Domestic Issues/Policy - Clippings
OPEN	Economic Program - Background Memoranda (1)-(3)
OPEN	Economic Program - Ford speech (Robson's contributions) (1)-(2)

Box 6 - Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Economic Program - Summit Conference on Inflation - Catalogue of Ideas (1)-(3)
OPEN	Economic Program - Summit Conference on Inflation - Correspondence
OPEN	Economic Program - Summit Conference on Inflation - Economic Policy Recommendations (Ford speech)
OPEN	Economic Program - Summit Conference on Inflation - General (includes material on Ford's speech) (1)-(4)
OPEN	Energy Program

Box 7 - Subject File

Status	Title
---------------	--------------

OPEN	International Air Transportation Association - Annual General Meeting, 1993
OPEN	Miscellaneous (1)-(2)
OPEN	National Commission to Ensure a Strong Competitive Airline Industry - Briefing Book
OPEN	National Commission to Ensure a Strong Competitive Airline Industry - General (1)-(6)
OPEN	National Commission to Ensure a Strong Competitive Airline Industry - Published Report
OPEN	National Commission to Ensure a Strong Competitive Airline Industry - Robson dissent
OPEN	Nixon Administration - Civil Service Proposal
OPEN	Nixon Administration - Correspondence with Don Rumsfeld (includes clippings and printed material) (1)-(2)

Box 8 - Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Nixon Administration - Cost of Living Council
OPEN	Nixon Administration - Wage and Price Controls (1)-(4)
OPEN	Personal (mostly articles on airline deregulation) (1)-(3)
OPEN	Reagan Administration - Letters of Congratulations, Recommendations
OPEN	Reagan Administration - Policy and Personnel issues for regulatory agencies
OPEN	Reagan Administration - Transition - Action Letter
OPEN	Reagan Administration - Transition - General
OPEN	Reagan Administration - Transition - Policy Analysis

Box 9 - Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Reagan Administration - Transition - Secretary of Transportation (considerations for new appointees)
OPEN / DIGITIZED	Reagan Administration - Transition - Transportation Issues Task Force
OPEN	Representative Leadership Briefing, 10/4/74

Status	Title
OPEN	Souvenirs
OPEN	State of the Union Address, 1975 (1)-(2)
OPEN	Standards of Conduct
OPEN	Watergate - draft presidential remarks to Judiciary Committee
OPEN	White House Staff - General
OPEN	White House Staff - Counsel's Office

Personal Correspondence, 1975-77.

(Boxes 9-15, 2.6 linear feet)

The material consists of invitations, thank you's, personal notes ("glad to hear about your job..."), acknowledgements or brief reflections on events or speeches Robson attended, job contacts, items re: Robson speeches and publications. There is some material about airline policy, primarily from people dissatisfied with airlines operations.

Arranged alphabetically and chronologically thereunder.

Box 9 (Continued) - Personal Correspondence

Status	Title
OPEN	A, 1975 - B, 1975

Box 10 - Personal Correspondence

Status	Title
CLOSED	B, 1976 - D, 1975

Box 11 - Personal Correspondence

Status	Title
CLOSED	D, 1976 - H, 1975

Box 12 - Personal Correspondence

Status	Title
CLOSED	H, 1976 - L, 1977

Box 13 - Personal Correspondence

Status	Title
CLOSED	M, 1975 - P, 1976

Box 14 - Personal Correspondence

Status	Title
CLOSED	Q, 1975 - T, 1975

Box 15 - Personal Correspondence

Status	Title
CLOSED	T, 1976 - Z, 1977

Speeches, 1975-92.

(Boxes 16-17, 0.9 linear feet)

Index and texts from Robson's speeches while he was working at the CAB and Department of the Treasury. There are no speeches from the period 1978-89.

Arranged chronologically.

Box 16 - Speeches

Status	Title
OPEN	Master Lists, 1989-92
OPEN	Index
OPEN	9/10/1975, Wings Club, New York City
OPEN	10/21/1975, Airport Operators Council International, Dorado Beach, Puerto Rico
OPEN	10/30/1975, New York Society of Security Analysts, New York
OPEN	11/5/1975, Boy Scouts Transportation Lunch-O-Rec, Chicago
OPEN	11/12/1975, Subcommittee on Aviation of the House Public Works and Transportation Committee
OPEN	11/13/1975, National Aviation Club, Washington DC
OPEN	1/19/1976, United Airlines Management Conference, Chicago
OPEN	1/20/1976, International Aviation Club, Washington DC
OPEN	1/26/1976, Braniff International Management Club, Dallas
OPEN	2/24/1976, Los Angeles Interline Management Club, Los Angeles

Status	Title
OPEN	2/25/1976, Seattle Chamber of Commerce, Seattle
OPEN	3/9/1976, U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Public Works and Transportation Subcommittee on Aviation
OPEN	3/19/1976, O'Hare International Airport, Chicago
OPEN	4/8/1976, U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce Subcommittee on Aviation
OPEN	4/29/1976, U.S. House of Representatives
OPEN	5/4/1976, Joint Subcommittees on Investigations and Aviation Committee on Public Works and Transportation
OPEN	5/6/1976, Institutional Investor Institute 6th Annual Washington Roundtable, Washington DC
OPEN	5/19/1976, Commuter Airline Association of America, Rosslyn, VA
OPEN	5/25/1976, Senate Government Operations Committee
OPEN	7/22/1976, Subcommittee on Aviation of the Senate Committee on Commerce
OPEN	8/3/1976, Subcommittee on Aviation of the Senate Committee on Commerce
OPEN	8/4-5/1976, Subcommittee on Activities of Regulatory Agencies of the House Small Business Committee
OPEN	8/31/1976, Subcommittee on Aviation of the House Committee on Public Works and Transportation
OPEN	10/1/1976, Alaska State Chamber of Commerce Convention, Juneau, AL
OPEN	10/7/1976, New York Society of Security Analysts, New York
OPEN	10/14/1976, Houston Chamber of Commerce, Houston
OPEN	10/26/1976, Aero Club, Washington DC
OPEN	11/3/1976, Northwestern University Graduate School of Management, Chicago

Status	Title
OPEN	12/9/1976, Aviation Committee on the Chicago Association of Commerce and Industry, Chicago
OPEN	4/8/1976, Yale Speech
OPEN	3/21/1977, Senate Subcommittee on Aviation Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation
OPEN	4/4/1977, Testimony of the Civil Aeronautics Board
OPEN	3/4/1977, Subcommittee on Transportation of the Committee on Appropriations
OPEN	3/7/1977, Subcommittee on Transportation of the Committee on Appropriations
OPEN	4/18/1977, Subcommittee on Aviation House Committee on Public Works and Transportation
OPEN	5/17/1977, International Aviation Club
OPEN	6/28/1977, Ad Hoc Committee on Airline Regulatory Reform
OPEN	7/14/1977, Task Force on Tax Expenditures, Government Organization and Regulation House Committee on the Budget
OPEN	8/10/1977, Section on Utility Law, American Bar Association
OPEN	9/20/1978, Salomon Brothers
OPEN	9/12/1989, National Mortgage Conference of the National Council of Savings Institutions
OPEN	9/15/1989, Leadership Conference of the American Bankers Association
OPEN	9/20/1989, Exchequer Club
CLOSED	10/10/1989, Conference on Japanese Direct Investment
CLOSED	10/12/1989, Foreign Correspondence Club, Tokyo
CLOSED	10/21/1989, FLETCH Artesia Dedication Ceremony
CLOSED	11/9/1989, Chicago Committee
CLOSED	11/16/1989, Treasury Historical Association Lecture
CLOSED	3/7/1990, U.S. League of Savings Institutions

Status	Title
CLOSED	3/8/1990, Public Policy Issues Meeting
CLOSED	3/20/1990, American Business Conference Membership Meeting
CLOSED	3/14/1990, Treasury Executive Institute
CLOSED	4/1/1990, Press Briefing
CLOSED	4/2/1990, Independent Bankers Association of America
CLOSED	4/5/90, Center for Leadership and Career Change
CLOSED	4/19/1990, Press Briefing
CLOSED	4/25/1990, Mid-America Committee Luncheon
CLOSED	4/26/1990, Press Briefing
CLOSED	5/1/1990, National Association of Women Business Owners and National Small Business United
CLOSED	5/15/1990, Peace Officers Memorial Day Ceremony
CLOSED	6/18/1990, Center for Strategic and International Studies
CLOSED	7/17/1990, Magazine Publishers and CEO
CLOSED	7/18/1990, Air Transport Association Board Officers and Senior Staff
CLOSED	9/24/1990, American Bar Association and American Bankers Association
CLOSED	10/10/1990, National Foreign Policy Conference
CLOSED	10/23/1990, Emerging Markets Advisory Committee

Box 17 - Speeches

Status	Title
CLOSED	11/20/1990, Partnership for Democracy and Development in Central America
CLOSED	11/28/1990, Budapest, Hungary
CLOSED	1/9/1991, Top MINT Management Group
CLOSED	1/10/1991, The Association of Government Accountants
CLOSED	1/28/1991, Massachusetts Economic Development Authority Conference
CLOSED	1/29/1991, Yale School of Organization and Management

Status	Title
CLOSED	2/15/1991, Mount Rushmore Commemorative Coin Launch
CLOSED	2/27/1991, Conference at White House
CLOSED	3/18/1991, Joint Financial Management Improvement Program
CLOSED	4/9/1991, American Business Conference
CLOSED	4/11/1991, American Council of Life Insurance
CLOSED	4/11/1991, North Atlantic Assembly Symposium
CLOSED	4/11/1991, Arnold and Porter's Annual Meeting - Financial Institutions Seminar
CLOSED	4/16/1991, SRI International Corporate Circle
CLOSED	4/30/1991, International Institute for Securities Market Development
CLOSED	4/30/1991, Emory University Executive MBA Program
CLOSED	5/9/1991, Conference of Business Economists
CLOSED	5/13/1991, Inter-American Center of Tax Administrators
CLOSED	5/14/1991, White House Briefing
CLOSED	5/14/1991, Georgetown University School of Business Administration
CLOSED	5/21/1991, Organization of American States
CLOSED	5/23/1991, Arthur Anderson International Business Symposium
CLOSED	6/8/1991, Institute for East-West Securities Studies
CLOSED	6/10/1991, Signing of Memoranda of Understanding
CLOSED	6/20/1991, Washington Workshop
CLOSED	7/24/1991, Management Training and Market Economies
CLOSED	7/26/1991, Briefing for Foreign Press
CLOSED	8/1/1991, Tirana, Albania
CLOSED	9/11/1991, CSIS Washington Roundtable
CLOSED	9/16/1991, Southern Governors Association Annual Meeting
CLOSED	9/17/1991, National Association of Securities Dealer

Status	Title
CLOSED	9/25/1991, National Council of the Housing Industry
CLOSED	10/14-15/1991, Colorado Mortgage Bankers Association and Dallas Chamber of Commerce
CLOSED	10/23/1991, Private Sector Council Roundtable Discussion
CLOSED	10/31/1991, Appraisal Subcommittee, State Regulators Conference
CLOSED	11/4/1991, Annual Conference of the Interagency Committee on Women in Federal Law Enforcement
CLOSED	11/19/1991, Council for Excellence in Government
CLOSED	11/20/1991, National Association of Manufacturers
CLOSED	11/21/1991, Russell 20/20 Group
CLOSED	12/7/1991, Tax Foundation Conference
CLOSED	12/16/1991, National Examiners Meeting
CLOSED	1/8/1992, FLETCH Awards of Excellence Ceremony
CLOSED	1/10/1992, California Bankers Association
CLOSED	1/22/1992, Chicago Area Boy Scouts Council
CLOSED	1/23/1992, Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget and the Business Roundtable Budget Symposium
CLOSED	1/27/1992, National Association of Home Builders
CLOSED	2/1/1992, Business Higher Education Forum
CLOSED	2/3/1992, Mortgage Bankers Association
CLOSED	2/7/1992, Remarks to Greater Boston Savings Bond Volunteer Luncheon
CLOSED	3/11/1992, Remarks to National Council of Community Bankers
CLOSED	4/2/1992, American Iron and Steel Institute
CLOSED	4/8/1992, Remarks to World Affairs Council Public Forum
CLOSED	4/21/1992, National Economists Club
CLOSED	5/6/1992, New York State Bankers Group
CLOSED	5/11/1992, New Hampshire Forum: Accessing Credit in a New Lending Environment

Status	Title
CLOSED	5/15/1992, White House Briefing
CLOSED	5/19/1992, Urban Land Institute
CLOSED	5/26/1992, Trade and Investment Council
CLOSED	6/8/1992, American Bankers Association
CLOSED	6/10/1992, Industrial Biotechnology Association
CLOSED	6/17/1992, U.S. - Russia Business Summit
CLOSED	6/22/1992, Savings and Community Bankers of America
CLOSED	9/9/1992, American Electronics Association
CLOSED	9/19/1992, Business - Government Relations Council
CLOSED	9/22/1992, Financial Account Standards Board
CLOSED	9/24/1992, Tri-City Small Business Small Bank Regulatory Burden Luncheon
CLOSED	9/25/1992, Independent Bankers Association of Texas
CLOSED	9/29/1992, New York Stock Exchange
CLOSED	10/7/1992, Washington Rotary Club
CLOSED	10/23/1992, National Association of Manufacturers Board of Directors
CLOSED	11/9/1992, Kellogg Alumni Club of New York
CLOSED	11/16/1992, Financial Executives Institute
CLOSED	12/2/1992, Business Higher Education Forum

Scrapbooks, 1975-80.

(Boxes 18-19, 0.9 linear feet)

Newspaper clippings, some photos. The volumes mostly document CAB activities.

Arranged chronologically.

Box 18 - Scrapbooks

Status	Title
OPEN	Scrapbooks - Volume I (1)-(3)
OPEN	Scrapbooks - Volume II (1)-(3)

Box 19 - Scrapbooks

Status**Title**

OPEN

Scrapbooks - Volume II (4)

OPEN

Scrapbooks - Volume III (1)-(6)