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## **NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR. STAFF ASSISTANT JOHN K. MATHENY FILES, 1975-77**

### **Collection Type**

White House Office Files

### **Extent**

4.4 linear feet (ca. 8,800 pages)

### **Record Type**

Textual

## **Access**

Gerald R. Ford donated to the United States of America his copyrights in all of his unpublished writings in National Archives collections.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.

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## **Provenance**

[Provenance of the National Security Adviser Files](#)

## **Processed by**

William McNitt, August 1996; Revised March 2000, revised by Donna Lehman, June 2013

## **Scope and Content Note**

United States Air Force Captain John K. Matheny was detailed to the National Security Council staff in July 1975 and served until the end of the Ford administration. Although his official job title was Staff Assistant to the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, the position was sometimes called "junior military assistant." He worked closely with Robert C. "Bud" McFarlane, Military Assistant to the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs.

Matheny's duties consisted of administrative and executive functions, concerned mainly with facilitating the day-to-day flow of NSC decision papers. In October

1975, Matheny became directly involved in assisting McFarlane and NSC Staff Secretary Jeanne Davis in processing document requests from the Senate and House Select Committees on Intelligence. He also conducted research and analysis on issues involving the organization and management of the intelligence community and produced hundreds of pages of written analysis for McFarlane, Brent Scowcroft, and President Ford. Matheny soon became acknowledged as the NSC expert on matters relating to the intelligence investigations and intelligence community reforms.

The bulk of the Matheny collection concerns his work on intelligence matters, although some materials on other topics appear. The collection includes extensive materials on the congressional select committees, documenting both the handling of document requests and Matheny's detailed analyses of various draft and final committee reports. Although this collection contains Matheny's memoranda on the release of documents, it does not always include copies of the actual documents requested by the select committees. The collection does contain many of the SALT compliance documents requested by the House Select Committee, however, including Verification Panel minutes.

Other materials document the development of intelligence reform proposals within the administration, especially between the time that the President received a detailed options book on December 22, 1975 and the issuance of Executive Order 11905 on February 18, 1976. There are several folders with items regarding the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act. The files also contain detailed information on various presidential meetings and discussion of various reorganization options. Some material also concerns intelligence legislation considered by Congress and the involvement of the intelligence community in the investigation of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

The collection also includes a significant file on the Ford administration's internal evaluation of its handling of the Mayaguez incident. After the crisis ended, President Ford directed the Secretaries of State and Defense and the Director of the CIA to prepare a report on the handling of the incident. He requested detailed chronologies, copies of each directive or instruction issued, and observations or suggestions which would contribute to the ability of the NSC to deal effectively with future crises. The collection contains not only this information, but also copies of

minutes of NSC meetings held during the crisis and NSC memoranda analyzing the evaluations and recommendations of the three agencies.

Late in the administration, Matheny monitored the Justice Department investigation of former CIA Director Richard Helms and accumulated a large file on that topic. Although Matheny's duties involved matters other than intelligence and the Mayaguez incident, the only information in the collection documenting these other activities is his small chronological file and one or two thin folders.

### **Related Materials** (August 1996)

Closely-related open collections on the intelligence investigations include White House Central Files Subject File categories ND 6 (Intelligence) and FG 393 (Commission on CIA Activities Within the United States); the Richard Cheney Files; the James Connor Files; the Ron Nessen Files and Papers; and the files of various staff members in the Congressional Relations Office, especially the Vernon Loen/Charles Leppert collection. The Staff Convenience File of the NSC Staff Secretary concerning information liaison with commissions and congressional committees relate closely to Matheny's work on the handling of document requests during the 1975 investigations of the intelligence community. Although the bulk of the files of the Rockefeller Commission are unprocessed, the Library has opened folders relating to the investigation of possible CIA involvement in the assassination of President John F. Kennedy or in anti-Castro plots of the early 1960s. In addition, the Library holds an unprocessed collection of James Wilderotter, and Mason Cargill/Timothy Hardy Files, and unprocessed series on intelligence matters from the files of Philip Buchen, Michael Raoul-Duval, and John Marsh. These collections/series are not currently available for research.

### **Last Modified Date**

2025-03-17

### **Subject File, 1975-77.**

(Boxes 1-11, 4.4 linear feet)

Memoranda, correspondence, reports, congressional bills, lists, option papers, chronologies, minutes, and clippings. The materials primarily concern the congressional intelligence investigations and the administration's intelligence community reform efforts. Specific topics include document requests, subpoenas,

and declassification requests: reports of the select committees; SALT compliance; John F. Kennedy assassination; Executive Order 11905; FISA; Intelligence Coordinating Group; and intelligence community activities in Chile, Cuba, Italy, and Angola. In addition the series contains significant materials on the Justice Department investigation of former CIA Director Richard Helms in late 1976 and the administration's self-evaluation of its handling of the Mayaguez incident.

Arranged alphabetically by subject and chronologically thereunder.

### **Box 1 - Subject File**

<b>Status</b>	<b>Title</b>
OPEN	Chronological File (1)-(2)
OPEN	Colby Report re New York Times Article, 12/24/74
OPEN	Congressional Intelligence Investigations - General
OPEN	Director of Central Intelligence's Implementation of the President's
OPEN	Directive Concerning CIA Activities Within the United States
OPEN	Executive Order 11905 - U.S. Foreign Intelligence Activities (1)-(3)
OPEN	Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1976 - S.3197 (1)-(3)
OPEN	House Select Committee on Intelligence - Committee Report
OPEN	House Select Committee on Intelligence :Analytical Summary of Proposals Concerning the Intelligence Community

### **Box 2 - Subject File**

<b>Status</b>	<b>Title</b>
OPEN	House Select Committee on Intelligence - Committee Report
OPEN	House Select Committee on Intelligence :Classified Information in the Report (1)-(5)
OPEN	House Select Committee on Intelligence :Leak of the Report (1)-(5)

<b>Status</b>	<b>Title</b>
OPEN	House Select Committee on Intelligence :Release by the Committee

### **Box 3 - Subject File**

<b>Status</b>	<b>Title</b>
OPEN	House Select Committee on Intelligence - Document Requests
OPEN	House Select Committee on Intelligence :CIA Responses (1)-(3)
OPEN	House Select Committee on Intelligence :Computer Printout
OPEN	House Select Committee on Intelligence :General (1)-(2)
OPEN	House Select Committee on Intelligence :Subpoenas (1)-(3)
OPEN	House Select Committee on Intelligence - General
OPEN	House Select Committee on Intelligence - Possible Loss of Documents Loaned to the Committee (1)-(2)

### **Box 4 - Subject File**

<b>Status</b>	<b>Title</b>
OPEN	House Select Committee on Intelligence - Presidential Letter to Chairman Pike
OPEN	House Select Committee on Intelligence - Release of Statements on Italy and Angola (1)-(2)
OPEN	House Select Committee on Intelligence - Right of Congress to Declassify Material (1)-(2)
OPEN	House Select Committee on Intelligence - SALT Compliance
OPEN	House Select Committee on Intelligence :Committee Hearings
OPEN	House Select Committee on Intelligence :Compliance Issues White Paper
OPEN	House Select Committee on Intelligence :Document Requests (1)-(6)

### **Box 5 - Subject File**

<b>Status</b>	<b>Title</b>
OPEN	House Select Committee on Intelligence - SALT Compliance
OPEN	House Select Committee on Intelligence : "Hold" Items Provided to the Committee (1)-(7)
OPEN	House Select Committee on Intelligence :List of Item Provided to the Committee
OPEN	House Select Committee on Intelligence :Testimony and Press Conferences
OPEN	House Select Committee on Intelligence :Verification Panel Minutes (1)-(3)

#### **Box 6 - Subject File**

<b>Status</b>	<b>Title</b>
OPEN	House Select Committee on Intelligence - SALT Compliance
OPEN	House Select Committee on Intelligence :Zumwalt Testimony
OPEN	Intelligence Community Decision Book for the President, 12/22/75 (1)-(4)
OPEN	Intelligence Coordinating Group (1)-(2)
OPEN	Intelligence Reorganization Options, 1/76 (1)-(4)

#### **Box 7 - Subject File**

<b>Status</b>	<b>Title</b>
OPEN	Intelligence - Return of Documents to Agencies by Intelligence
OPEN	Coordinating Group Staff (1)-(3)
OPEN	Justice Department Investigation of Richard Helms, 10/76-12/76 (1)-(7)
OPEN	Management of Classified National Security Information

#### **Box 8 - Subject File**

<b>Status</b>	<b>Title</b>
OPEN	Mayaguez Performance Evaluation - CIA Reports Submitted to the U.S. Intelligence Board

<b>Status</b>	<b>Title</b>
OPEN	Mayaguez Performance Evaluation - Memoranda, 6/75-10/75
OPEN	Mayaguez Performance Evaluation - Tab 1 - Kissinger Report to the President
OPEN	Mayaguez Performance Evaluation - Tab A - Draft Presidential Memoranda to Colby and Schlesinger
OPEN	Mayaguez Performance Evaluation - Tabs B & C - Presidential Memoranda Requesting a Performance Evaluation
OPEN	Mayaguez Performance Evaluation - Tabs D & E - Colby and Schlesinger Observations and Suggestions
OPEN	Mayaguez Performance Evaluation - Annex 1 - Presidential Orders Given at NSC Meetings
OPEN	Mayaguez Performance Evaluation - Annex 2 - Minutes of NSC Meetings (1)-(2)
OPEN	Mayaguez Performance Evaluation - Annex 3 - Intelligence Community Chronologies
OPEN	Mayaguez Performance Evaluation - Annex 4 - Intelligence Community Orders
OPEN	Mayaguez Performance Evaluation - Annex 5 - State Department Chronology
OPEN	Mayaguez Performance Evaluation - Annexes 6 & 7 - State Department Orders and Recommendations
OPEN	Mayaguez Performance Evaluation - Annex 8 - Defense Department After Action Report and Orders (1)-(3)

#### **Box 9 - Subject File**

<b>Status</b>	<b>Title</b>
OPEN	Mayaguez Performance Evaluation - Annex 8 - Defense Department After Action Report and Orders (4)-(6)
OPEN	Organization and Management of the Foreign Intelligence Community - Draft Report to the President (1)-(2)
OPEN	Preliminary Comments on the CIA Study "American Intelligence: A Framework for the Future," 10/75 (1)-(4)



<b>Status</b>	<b>Title</b>
OPEN	President's Meetings on Intelligence Decisions, 1/76-2/76 (1)-(2)

**Box 10 - Subject File**

<b>Status</b>	<b>Title</b>
OPEN	Rockefeller Commission - David Belin's Summary Report on U.S. Government Involvement in Plots to Assassinate Foreign Leaders
OPEN	Rockefeller Commission - FOIA Suit re National Security Council Intelligence Directives
OPEN	Rockefeller Commission - General
OPEN	Rockefeller Commission - Press Clippings (1)-(6)
OPEN	Secret Service Protection of the President
OPEN	Select Committee to Investigate the Assassination of John F. Kennedy - Statement of Representative Thomas Downing, 8/2/76 (1)-(2)
OPEN	Senate Select Committee on Intelligence - Document Requests
OPEN	Senate Select Committee on Intelligence :Computer Printout
OPEN	Senate Select Committee on Intelligence :General

**Box 11 Subject File**

<b>Status</b>	<b>Title</b>
OPEN	Senate Select Committee on Intelligence - Draft Report on Assassinations: Approval of Quotations, 8/75-9/75 (1)-(3)
OPEN	Senate Select Committee on Intelligence - Draft Report on the Kennedy Assassination, 6/76 (1)-(2)
OPEN	Senate Select Committee on Intelligence - Draft Reports - Matheny Review, 3/76-4/76 (1)-(5)
OPEN	Senate Select Committee on Intelligence - Final Report
OPEN	Senate Select Committee on Intelligence - Material Provided re Huston Plan

Status	Title
OPEN	Senate Select Committee on Intelligence - National Security Agency
OPEN	Senate Resolution 400 - Intelligence Oversight Committee