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RICHARD PARSONS FILES, 1974-77

Collection Type

White House Office Files

Extent

9.7 linear feet (ca. 19,400 pages)

Record Type

Textual

Access

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Processed by

William McNitt, February 1980

Scope and Content Note

Richard D. Parsons was a native of New York City and a 1971 graduate of Union University's Albany Law School. Following law school he served as an assistant counsel to Governor Nelson Rockefeller and, commencing in 1973, as First Assistant Counsel. In 1975, soon after Rockefeller's confirmation as Vice President, Parsons became Deputy Counsel to the Vice President. After the end of the Ford administration, Parsons went back to working for Nelson Rockefeller.

Dick Parsons joined the Domestic Council staff in March 1975, serving both as legal counsel and as an associate director. As counsel to the Domestic Council, he worked closely with the Counsel to the President in providing legal guidance in the formulation of domestic policy. There is little in this file to document this aspect of his work.

As associate director, Parsons succeeded Geoffrey Shepard in handling General Government, which included justice, treasury, commerce, Postal Service, civil rights and drugs. In a May 1975 reorganization his area of responsibility was subdivided

and Parsons became Associate Director for Justice, Crime, Civil Rights and Communications. (Communications was transferred to F. Lynn May in January of 1976.) In April 1976, when Kathleen Ryan left the Domestic Council, responsibility for consumer affairs was given to Parsons' office. Parsons served with the Domestic Council until the end of the Ford administration and then returned to New York to work for Nelson Rockefeller.

From March 1975 to January 1976 Parsons was assisted in his duties by Lynn May, who had previously worked for Geoffrey Shepard. Dawn Bennett-Alexander assisted Parsons from March 1976 until the end of the administration. There are some indications that Kathleen Ryan served as an assistant to Parsons for a few weeks after she joined the Domestic Council in April 1975.

Parsons and his staff were responsible for advice to the President and the formulation of domestic policy in the areas of:

- affirmative action
- busing
- civil rights
- communications
- consumer affairs
- crime
- drugs
- illegal aliens
- Indians
- justice
- postal service
- Puerto Rico
- privacy
- regulatory reform
- sex discrimination
- voting rights

Although Parsons nominally had responsibility for Indian affairs, his files have virtually nothing on that subject. Perhaps the presence on the White House staff of Dr. Theodore Marris and Bradley Patterson, both of whom handled Indian Affairs,

was cause for lessened involvement by the Domestic Council. The Parsons files contain little on Puerto Rico as this file was transferred to Dean Overman near the Ford Administration.

The Parsons files contain little material on communications and virtually nothing on postal service or regulatory reform as these subjects were handled almost exclusively by Lynn May. Similarly, Parsons has little on consumer affairs as Dawn Bennett-Alexander handled that subject. In most other areas Parsons either dealt with the matters himself or else shared them with his assistants.

In a number of cases Parsons served as James Cannon's representative on committees and task forces. For this reason there are significant materials in the Parsons files on the Domestic Council Committee on Illegal Aliens, the Interagency Committee for the Study of Problems Related to Illegal Mexican Migration into the United States, the Domestic Council Committee on the Right of Privacy, and the Domestic Council Drug Review Task Force. Parsons chaired the latter group and directed the writing of the White Paper on Drug Abuse.

One other project on which Parsons spent much time was the drafting of the President's crime message of June 19, 1975. His files contain memoranda, background information and working papers on this speech. The collection also contains information on the drafting and passage of legislation, particularly the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration reauthorization bill; the extension of the Voting Rights Act; and the drafting and approval of the Title IX regulations relating to sex discrimination in higher education.

The Parsons files consist of correspondence, memoranda, reports, speeches, drafts of legislation, briefing papers, press releases, publications and newspaper clippings. Virtually all of the correspondence and memoranda are between Parsons and his White House colleagues or between Parsons and officials in government agencies; there is little correspondence from the general public. Although most of the collection dates from the period of Parsons service with the Domestic Council, occasional items from the files of his predecessor, Geoffrey Shepard, are to be found here.

Related Materials (February 1980)

Related Materials can be found in the Domestic Council files of Parsons'

predecessor, Geoffrey Sheppard; his two assistants, Lynn May and Dawn Bennett-Alexander; and Dean Overman, who took over Parsons' file on Puerto Rico.

Last Modified Date

2025-03-11

General Subject File, 1974-77.

(Boxes 1-19, 7.8 linear feet)

Correspondence and memoranda, primarily between Parsons and other members of the White House staff or between Parsons and officials in government agencies such as the Department of Justice, the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, the Office of Telecommunications Policy, and the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration; reports; speeches; drafts of legislation; briefing papers; press releases; publications; and newspaper clippings. These materials concern the operation of the Domestic Council and issues handled by Parsons, including: affirmative action, busing, civil rights, crime, gun control, illegal aliens, privacy, sex discrimination, and the Voting Rights Act.

Arranged alphabetically by subject.

Box 1 - General Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Abortion
OPEN	Affirmative Action (1)-(5)
OPEN	Auto Theft Prevention, Interagency Committee on
OPEN	Bribes (Foreign) By U.S. Companies
OPEN	Budget FY 1976
OPEN	Budget FY 1977 - Department of Justice
OPEN	Budget FY 1977 - Immigration and Naturalization Service
OPEN	Budget FY 1977 - Office of Management and Budget Process
OPEN	Budget FY 1978

Box 2 - General Subject File

Status	Title
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OPEN	Busing - Alternatives to
OPEN	Busing - Boston
OPEN	Busing - Ferndale, Michigan
OPEN	Busing - Legislation (1)-(2)
OPEN	Busing - Message to Congress
OPEN	Busing - Miscellaneous Correspondence (1)-(2)
OPEN	Busing - Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
OPEN	Busing - Problem Areas with Busing Orders
OPEN	Cabinet Committee to Combat Terrorism
OPEN	Capital Punishment

Box 3 - General Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Chronological File (1)-(5)
OPEN	Civil Disturbances
OPEN	Civil Rights Act of 1964 - Title VI
OPEN	Civil Rights - General
OPEN	Civil Rights - Office for (H.E.W.)
OPEN	Civil Rights, U.S. Commission on
OPEN	Crime, Advisory Commission on
OPEN	Crime and Punishment
OPEN	Crime - Compensation for Victims
OPEN	Crime Control Act of 1976
OPEN	Crime Message of 6/19/75 - Action Memoranda (1)-(2)

Box 4 - General Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Crime Message of 6/19/75 - Action Memoranda (3)-(7)
OPEN	Crime Message of 6/19/75 - Background Materials (1)-(4)

Box 5 - General Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Crime Message of 6/19/75 - Follow-up
OPEN	Crime Message of 6/19/75 - Speech
OPEN	Crime Message of 6/19/75 - Working Papers (1)-(5)

Status	Title
OPEN	Crime Message of 2/14/76
OPEN	Department of Transportation Truck Braking Regulation
OPEN	Detroit Plan (Police Department Grant)
OPEN	Disaster Relief (Detention Facilities)

Box 6 - General Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	District of Columbia - Judges
OPEN	District of Columbia - Legislation
OPEN	Domestic Council - Budget
OPEN	Domestic Council - Organization
OPEN	Domestic Council - Public Forums
OPEN	Domestic Council - Staff Directives
OPEN	Domestic Council - Vice Presidential Briefings
OPEN	Domestic Council - Weekly Reports
OPEN	Elliott, Roland - Correspondence
OPEN	Emergency School Aid Act - Title VII
OPEN	Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
OPEN	Equal Employment Opportunity Coordinating Council (1)- (3)
OPEN	Executive Privilege
OPEN	Executive Protective Service - Bargaining Rights
OPEN	Executive Protection Service - Protection of Foreign Diplomatic Missions

Box 7 - General Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Fairness Doctrine (Broadcasting)
OPEN	Federal Bureau of Investigation - General
OPEN	Federal Bureau of Investigation - Message Switching (1)- (2)
OPEN	Federal Bureau of Investigation - Uniform Crime Reports
OPEN	Federal Election Commission

Status	Title
OPEN	First Lady - Comments on Invitations, etc.
OPEN	Flat-time Sentencing
OPEN	Freedom of Information Act
OPEN	Gambling
OPEN	Gun Control Amendments of 1975
OPEN	Gun Control - Alternative Approaches to

Box 8 - General Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Gun Control - General (1)-(2)
OPEN	Gun Control - Legislation (1)-(2)
OPEN	Gun Control - Saturday Night Specials
OPEN	Gun Control - Testimony/Speeches
OPEN	Gun Control - Working Papers
OPEN	Hatch Act
OPEN	Hispanic Affairs

Box 9 - General Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Hoover Commission
OPEN	Human Rights Commission, U.S. (Proposal for)
OPEN	Housing - Ethnic Purity of Neighborhoods
OPEN	Illegal Aliens - Cuban Defectors from Angola
OPEN	Illegal Aliens - Cuban Refugees
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>Illegal Aliens - Domestic Council Committee (1)</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>Illegal Aliens - Domestic Council Committee (2)</u>
OPEN / DIGITIZED	<u>Illegal Aliens - Domestic Council Committee (3)</u>
OPEN	Illegal Aliens - Interagency Committee (1)
OPEN	Illegal Aliens - Interagency Committee (2)
OPEN	Illegal Aliens - Interagency Committee (3)
OPEN	Illegal Aliens - Interagency Committee (4)
OPEN	Immigration and Naturalization Service - Move from Richmond to Dallas

Box 10 - General Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Indian Rights
OPEN	Initiatives
OPEN	INTERPOL (International Police Communications Network)
OPEN	Issue Papers
OPEN	Jewish Community - Civil Rights
OPEN	Juvenile Delinquency
OPEN	Law Enforcement Assistance Administration - Crime and the Older Person
OPEN	Law Enforcement Assistance Administration - General
OPEN	Law Enforcement Assistance Administration - Grants for Political Conventions
OPEN	Law Enforcement Assistance Administration - L.A. Police Department Civil Rights Complaints
OPEN	Law Enforcement Assistance Administration - Project LEAP
OPEN	Law Enforcement Assistance Administration - Public Safety Officers Death Benefit
OPEN	Law Enforcement Assistance Administration - Reauthorization Bill (1)-(3)

Box 11 - General Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Legal Services Corporation
OPEN	Legislation - Enrolled Bills
OPEN	Legislation - Proposals (1)-(2)
OPEN	Legislation - Watch List
OPEN	Mandatory Minimum Sentences
OPEN	Mayors, U.S. Conference of
OPEN	National Referendum
OPEN	No Fault Automobile Insurance
OPEN	Office of Telecommunications Policy (1)-(2)

Box 12 - General Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Office of Telecommunications Policy (3)
OPEN	Overseas Voters Registration Act
OPEN	Peacetime Nuclear Emergencies Working Group
OPEN	Pension Benefits - Sex Discrimination
OPEN	Personnel Matters
OPEN	Postcard Voter Registration
OPEN	President - Briefing Papers
OPEN	President - Memoranda to
OPEN	President - Schedule Proposals
OPEN	President - Trips (Parsons Input)
OPEN	Presidential Commendation Letters
OPEN	Presidential Condolence Letters regarding Police Officer Deaths

Box 13 - General Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Presidential Events (Proposed)
OPEN	Presidential Gifts
OPEN	Presidential Messages
OPEN	Presidential Signature, Bill Becoming Law Without
OPEN	Prison Rehabilitation, Public Works and
OPEN	Privacy - Background Materials
OPEN	Privacy - Domestic Council Committee (1)-(4)
OPEN	Privacy - General (1)-(2)

Box 14 - General Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Privacy - General (3)-(4)
OPEN	Privacy - National Information Policy Report (1)-(2)
OPEN	Privacy Protection Study Commission (1)-(2)
OPEN	Privacy - Study on Personnel Investigations and Adjudication (1)-(2)
OPEN	Private Schools - Segregation by

Box 15 - General Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Problem Areas (Department of Justice)
OPEN	Productivity and Work Quality, National Commission on
OPEN	Public Disclosure - Lobbying Act of 1976
OPEN	Question and Answer Briefing Sheets (1)-(4)
OPEN	Regulatory Reform
OPEN	Rehabilitation Act of 1973
OPEN	Republican Legislative Agenda
OPEN	San Diego - Bureau of Prisons
OPEN	Science and Technology Policy, Office of Press Releases
OPEN	Secret Service Protection
OPEN	Security Investigations - Executive Order Regarding
OPEN	Sex Discrimination (Title IX) - Athletic Guidelines (1)-(2)
OPEN	Sex Discrimination (Title IX) - Background Materials

Box 16 - General Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Sex Discrimination (Title IX) - Brigham Young University and Hillsdale College
OPEN	Sex Discrimination (Title IX) - Final Regulations
OPEN	Sex Discrimination (Title IX) - General (1)-(6)

Box 17 - General Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Sex Discrimination (Title IX) - General (7)-(8)
OPEN	Sex Discrimination (Title IX) - Tower Amendment
OPEN	Shield Law for Newsmen
OPEN	Speeches - Richard Thornburgh
OPEN	State and Local Governments - Emergency Aid to
OPEN	State of the Union - 1976
OPEN	State of the Union - 1976 - Follow-up
OPEN	State of the Union - 1977
OPEN	Summer Jobs for Urban Youth

Status	Title
OPEN	Sunshine Act (open meetings)
OPEN	Supreme Court Rulings

Box 18 - General Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Swine Flu Immunization Program (1)-(2)
OPEN	Veto Power - Pocket Veto
OPEN	Transition - Presidential, 1976, 1977
OPEN	Voting Rights Act - Background Materials (1)-(4)
OPEN	Voting Rights Act - Memoranda (1)-(2)

Box 19 - General Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Voting Rights Act - Memoranda (3)
OPEN	Voting Rights Act - Signing Ceremony
OPEN	Watergate Reorganization and Reform Act
OPEN	White House Conference on Handicapped Individuals
OPEN	Wine Labeling
OPEN	Women's Equality Day

Drug Abuse Subject File, 1974-76.

(Boxes 19-24, 1.8 linear feet)

Correspondence and memoranda, primarily between Parsons and other members of the White House staff of between Parsons and members of Congress or officials in government agencies such as the Office of Management and Budget and the Departments of State, Justice, Treasury and Health, Education and Welfare; reports, speeches; briefing papers; press releases; publications; and newspaper clippings. These materials concern Parson's work on the issue of drug abuse and his chairmanship of the Domestic Council Drug Review Task Force. Major topics include: the White Paper on Drug Abuse, Congressional investigations of problems in the Drug Enforcement Administration, funding for international narcotics control, cooperation with Mexico and Turkey in attempts to reduce the production of opium, negotiations leading to memoranda of understanding between the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Customs Service, and the Internal Revenue Service to solve jurisdictional disputes, and President Ford's message to Congress

on drug abuse on April 27, 1976.

Arranged alphabetically by subject.

Box 19 (Continued) - Drug Abuse Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Bolivia
OPEN	Cabinet Committee for Drug Law Enforcement
OPEN	Cabinet Committee on Drug Abuse, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation
OPEN	Cabinet Committee on International Narcotics Control
OPEN	Congressional Correspondence
OPEN	Drug Enforcement Administration - Bensinger
OPEN	Drug Enforcement Administration - General (1)-(2)

Box 20 - Drug Abuse Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Drug Enforcement Magazine
OPEN	Drug Review Task Force - Clippings Supplied by the Drug Enforcement Administration
OPEN	Drug Review Task Force - General (1)-(9)

Box 21 - Drug Abuse Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Drug Review Task Force - General (10)-(11)
OPEN	Drug Review Task Force - Membership
OPEN	Drug Review Task Force - Work Groups
OPEN	Federal - State Roles
OPEN	International Narcotics Control (1)
OPEN	International Narcotics Control (2)
OPEN	International Narcotics Control (3)
OPEN	Legislation
OPEN	Marihuana

Status	Title
OPEN	Memoranda of Understanding Drug Enforcement Administration, Customs Service and Internal Revenue Service (1)

Box 22 - Drug Abuse Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Memoranda of Understanding Drug Enforcement Administration, Customs Service and Internal Revenue Service (2)
OPEN	Message to Congress (1)
OPEN	Message to Congress (2)
OPEN	Mexico (1)
OPEN	Mexico (2)
OPEN	Mexico (3)
OPEN	Mexico (4)
OPEN	Miscellaneous (1)
OPEN	Miscellaneous (2)
OPEN	Miscellaneous (3)

Box 23 - Drug Abuse Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	National Institute on Drug Abuse
OPEN	New York Drug Law Evaluation
OPEN	Newspaper Clippings
OPEN	Office for Drug Abuse Policy
OPEN	Opium (1)
OPEN	Opium (2)
OPEN	President and Senior Administration Official Briefing
OPEN	President - Meetings
OPEN	Presidential Proclamations on Drug Abuse
OPEN	Psychotropic Substances, Convention on
OPEN	Question and Answer Briefing Sheets
OPEN	Southwest Border Steering Group

Status	Title
OPEN	Special Action Office for Drug Abuse Prevention
OPEN	Speech Material
OPEN	Turkey - Arms Embargo

Box 24 - Drug Abuse Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	United Nations
OPEN	White Paper on Drug Abuse - Agency Comments on Drafts
OPEN	White Paper on Drug Abuse - Agency Comments on Final Report
OPEN	White Paper on Drug Abuse - Drafts
OPEN	White Paper on Drug Abuse - Follow-up
OPEN	White Paper on Drug Abuse - General
OPEN	White Paper on Drug Abuse - Governor's Letters
OPEN	White Paper on Drug Abuse - Page Proofs
OPEN	White Paper on Drug Abuse - Final Report

Edward E. Johnson Subject File, 1975-76.

(Box 25, 0.1 linear feet)

Edward E. Johnson worked for the Office of Management and Budget as Special Assistant to the Deputy Director for Federal Drug Management. He also served as Work Group Director for the Domestic Council Drug Review Task Force and managed the day to day operations of the task force under Parson's supervision. Johnson's file consists of memoranda, correspondence, meeting minutes, testimony before Congress, and copies of legislation and draft legislation. These materials concern the Domestic Council Drug Review Task Force, a Congressional investigation of Federal Drug enforcement, and proposed legislation on drug abuse.

Arranged alphabetically by subject.

Box 25 - Edward E. Johnson Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Domestic Council Drug Review Task Force

Status	Title
OPEN	Drug Abuse - Legislation
OPEN	Federal Drug Enforcement Investigation
OPEN	Meeting with Congressman Lester Wolff
OPEN	Psychotropic Substances Legislation