National Security Adviser WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM: FORMER PRESIDENT NIXON'S INTELLIGENCE BRIEFINGS 1974-77

Collection Type

White House Office Files

Extent

0.8 linear feet (ca. 1,600 pages)

Record Type

Textual

Access

Open, but some materials continue to be national security classified and restricted. Access is governed by the donor's deed of gift, a copy of which is available on request, and National Archives and Records Administration regulations (36 CFR 1256).

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Processed by

William McNitt, November 2010

Scope and Content Note

The White House Situation Room: Former President Nixon's Intelligence Briefings is one of many sub-collections that comprise the National Security Adviser Files. The provenance of the Ford National Security Adviser Files and an explanation of the designations "Presidential" and "Institutional" are provided in Appendix A.

Soon after the August 9, 1974 transition, President Gerald Ford decided that former President Richard Nixon would continue to receive periodic intelligence briefings on foreign affairs. This was a courtesy that had been extended to other former Presidents in the past.

President Ford gave White House Counsellor John Marsh oversight over all White House contacts with Richard Nixon and his staff. Deputy National Security Adviser

Brent Scowcroft actually gathered the foreign affairs briefing material for President Nixon, sent a copy to Marsh, and then transmitted it to the former President through the White House Situation Room.

According to documents in the folder "Nixon, Richard – Briefings and Press Summaries" in Box 24 of the John Marsh Files:

"President Ford, lacking a normal transition period for his Presidency, felt that he might well require consultation on an emergency basis with Mr. Nixon regarding these matters, and he desired that Mr. Nixon's advice be based on the most current information."

In the fall of 1974, most of the briefings were sent to California by either secure fax or teletype (the White House Communications Agency still had staff and equipment in San Clemente). On three occasions, when WHCA was moving staff between sites, the briefing was delivered by courier on military flights. On September 20, 1974, a courier carried the briefing on a commercial flight. It is not clear exactly how the briefings were transmitted after the final shutdown of the WHCA facility in San Clemente on January 14, 1975, but it was probably handled through couriers on commercial flights.

These briefings for President Nixon continued throughout the Ford administration. Scowcroft originally planned to make a weekly transmission, but the time between briefings often stretched to two weeks or more. For the month of August 1976 no briefings appear in the collection.

In addition to the security-classified foreign affairs briefings, in the early months after the Nixon-Ford transition the White House Situation Room sent many unclassified documents to San Clemente. These included White House news summaries, newspaper reports, and wire reports along with occasional schedules, economic briefings, public documents, and a few personal messages for President Nixon. These documents were sent to California by fax. None of these unclassified items appear in this collection.

Related Materials (November 2010)
Among the files of the National Security Adviser are several other collections of briefing material maintained by the staff of the White House Situation Room. Among these are the Presidential Daily Briefings, Evening Reports from NSC Staff,

and Noon and Evening Notes.

Last Modified Date
2025-03-17

Boxes 1-2

 Nixon Briefings, 1974-77. (0.8 linear feet)
Periodic compilations prepared for former President Richard Nixon to keep him updated on developments around the world that might impact U.S. foreign affairs policies. The briefings were not intended to cover every foreign affairs development, just the most significant ones. Although news notes about various countries appear, they disproportionately concern the Soviet Union and China. There are also significant numbers of items on our NATO allies, especially France, West Germany, and the United Kingdom. Another major focus was developments in Indochina during the closing months of the Vietnam War. Many developments concerning OPEC, the Cyprus crisis, or tensions and negotiations in the Middle East also appear. Arranged chronologically.

Box 1 Nixon Briefings

Status	Title
OPEN	August 1974
OPEN	September 1974
OPEN	October 1974
OPEN	November 1974
OPEN	December 1974
OPEN	January 1975
OPEN	February 1975
OPEN	March 1975
OPEN	April 1975
OPEN	May 1975
OPEN	June 1975
OPEN	July 1975
OPEN	August 1975
OPEN	September 1975

Box 2 Nixon Briefings

Status	Title
OPEN	October 1975
OPEN	November 1975
OPEN	December 1975
OPEN	January 1976
OPEN	February 1976
OPEN	March 1976
OPEN	April 1976
OPEN	May 1976
OPEN	June 1976
OPEN	July 1976
OPEN	August 1976 (folder received empty)
OPEN	September 1976
OPEN	October 1976
OPEN	November 1976
OPEN	December 1976
OPEN	January 1977