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JOHN T. CALKINS FILES, 1975-76

Collection Type

White House Office Files

Extent

1.6 linear feet (ca. 3,200 pages)

Record Type

Textual

Access

Open. Some items are temporarily restricted under terms of the donor's deed of gift, a copy of which is available on request, or under National Archives and Records Administration general restrictions (36 CFR 1256).

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Processed by

Paul Conway, March 1985

Biography

John T. (Jack) Calkins

5/14/25 - Born, Elmira, New York

1943-46 - United States Army

1949 - BA, Syracuse University

1949-51 - Special Assistant to Rep. John Davies (NY)

1952 - Account Executive, Mellor Advertising Agency, Elmira, New York

1953-57 - Administrative Assistant to Rep. Sterling Cole (NY)

1958-70 - Executive Assistant to Rep. Howard Robison (NY)

1970-75 - Executive Director, National Republican Congressional Committee

Jan. 1975-Jan. 1976 - Executive Assistant to White House Counsellor Robert T. Hartmann

March 1976 - Candidate for U.S. House of Representatives, New York, 39th District

1977-80 - Administrative Assistant to U. S. Representative Robert McEwen (NY)

Scope and Content Note

The John T. Calkins Files consist primarily of correspondence prepared by him during his one year tenure as executive assistant to presidential counsellor Robert T. Hartmann. The files document his numerous contacts with local, state, and national Republican Party officials and members of the general public. The files are arranged as subject and general correspondence series.

Calkins, formerly executive director of the National Republican Congressional Committee, joined the White House staff in January 1975 to help Hartmann develop wider contacts with Republican Party officials. Calkins brought with him 25 years of experience assisting various Republican congressmen and coordinating Republican Party financial support for congressional candidates. During 1975 Calkins worked with Hartmann assistant Gwen Anderson as White House contact for Republican Party officials. He answered letters on behalf of Hartmann or President Ford, prepared schedule proposals, drafted presidential letters to groups, and recommended appointments to federal boards and commissions.

President Ford's reluctance to involve his staff heavily in local Republican politics limited the effectiveness of Calkins' White House work. Calkins left the White House in January 1976 to run for Congress in a special primary election in New York's 39th congressional district. He lost. Following his departure Gwen Anderson assumed most of his duties, assisted by Douglas Smith.

The Calkins files primarily document his efforts to explain Ford administration policies to local Republican Party officials, and help make preparations for President Ford's presidential campaign prior to and immediately following the establishment of the President Ford Committee. Calkins also attempted to infuse various White House staff with a greater appreciation of the concerns of Republican politicians and the Republican National Committee. The files only indirectly document Calkins' difficulties on the job. The general absence of incoming correspondence and lack of substantive memoranda or notes from Hartmann or other senior presidential aides complicates a full assessment of Calkins' role in the White House.

Related Materials (March 1985)

The files of Gwen Anderson contain extensive materials on White House relations with state and local Republican Party officials and the Republican National Committee. Additional materials on President Ford's efforts on behalf of the Republican Party may be located in various subcategories of the White House Central Files category Political Affairs (PL). White House contacts with non-government organizations, including political party officials, are documented in the files of Domestic Council staff member James Falk.

The files of Counsellor Robert Hartmann also contains significant materials on White House political activities. They are currently (March 1985) unprocessed and unavailable for research.

Last Modified Date

2025-03-07

Photographs, 1975-76.

Photographs of Congressional candidate Grant P. Jones of California and of President Gerald R. Ford meeting with the Mayor of Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

Photographs, 1975-76.

Status	Title
OPEN	View container list for this series

Political Affairs Subject File, 1975-76.

(Boxes 1-3, 1.0 linear feet)

Correspondence, memoranda, clippings and notes exchanged between Calkins and state and local Republican Party members, officials of the Republican National Committee and concerned citizens on local and national political issues and on President Ford's impending campaign, including early fundraising efforts. Also included are memos to and from White House staff about the establishment of the President Ford Committee, the operations of the political office under Robert Hartmann, recommended appointments to federal boards and commissions, and occasional schedule proposals of a political nature.

Arranged alphabetically by subject.

Box 1 - Political Affairs Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Alaska
OPEN	Arizona
OPEN	Arkansas
OPEN	Budget Deficits
OPEN	California (1)-(3)
OPEN	Capital Punishment
OPEN	Colorado
OPEN	Common Situs Legislation
OPEN	Community Services Administration
OPEN	Consumer Advocacy Legislation (S.200)
OPEN	Deaf Persons
OPEN	Death Penalty
OPEN	Democratic Candidates
OPEN	District of Columbia
OPEN	Energy
OPEN	Executive Order 9066 (Japanese-Americans in WWII)
OPEN	Federal Election Commission
OPEN	Florida
OPEN	Ford, Betty
OPEN	Georgia

Status	Title
OPEN	Hartmann Office Procedures
OPEN	Hawaii
OPEN	Highway Funds
OPEN	Hoellen, John (Candidate for Mayor of Chicago)
OPEN	Illegal Aliens
OPEN	Illinois
OPEN	Indiana
OPEN	Iowa
OPEN	Kansas
OPEN	Kentucky

Box 2 - Political Affairs Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Massachusetts
OPEN	Michigan
OPEN	Minnesota
OPEN	Mississippi
OPEN	Missouri
OPEN	National Association of Life Underwriters
OPEN	National Family Week Proclamation
OPEN	National Governors Conference
OPEN	New Hampshire
OPEN	New Jersey
OPEN	New York
OPEN	North Carolina
OPEN	North Dakota
OPEN	Ohio
OPEN	Pennsylvania
OPEN	Personnel / Recommendations
OPEN	Photograph Requests (1)-(2)
OPEN	Policy Memos
OPEN	President Ford Committee

Status	Title
OPEN	President Ford - Personal
OPEN	President Ford - Voting Record in Congress
OPEN	Presidential Dinners - Invitations
OPEN	Presidential Election Campaign - Offers of Assistance
OPEN	Presidential letters (1)-(2)
OPEN	Presidential Painting (By Donald E. Johnson)
OPEN	Questions and Answers
OPEN	Reagan Candidacy
OPEN	Republican Congressional Booster Club
OPEN	Republican Congressional Campaign Committee

Box 3 - Political Affairs Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Republican National Committee (1)-(2)
OPEN	Republican National Committee - Executive Committee
OPEN	Republican National Committee - Finance Committee
OPEN	Republican Party
OPEN	Republican Senate - House Dinner, 4/15/75
OPEN	Republican Senatorial Committee
OPEN	Republican Steering Committee
OPEN	Rockefeller, Nelson
OPEN	Schedule Proposals
OPEN	South Carolina
OPEN	South Dakota
OPEN	Tennessee
OPEN	Texas
OPEN	Vermont
OPEN	Virginia
OPEN	West Virginia
OPEN	White House Intern Program
OPEN	White House Organization
OPEN	Wisconsin

Status	Title
OPEN	World Food Problems
OPEN	Young Republicans

General Correspondence, 1975-76.

(Boxes 3-4, 0.6 linear feet)

Primarily copies of outgoing letters and memos from Calkins or Hartmann to local and state Republican Party members and to White House staff concerned with President Ford's efforts on behalf of the Republican Party, personnel and scheduling recommendations, and requests for appointments. Copies of some correspondence are also filed in the political affairs file under appropriate topics.

Arranged alphabetically by subject.

Box 3 (Continued) - General Correspondence

Status	Title
OPEN	A-F

Box 4 - General Correspondence

Status	Title
OPEN	G-Z