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LEO CHERNE PAPERS, (1969) 1973-77 (1986)

Collection Type

Personal Papers

Extent

3.6 linear feet (ca. 7,200 pages)

Record Type

Textual

Access

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Processed by

Geir Gundersen, May 1991

Biography

Leo Cherne

September 8, 1912 - Born, New York City

1931 - New York University (B.A.)

1934 - New York University Law School (LL.B.)

1936-90 - Executive Director, then consultant, Research Institute of America, Inc.

1938 - Helped draft the U.S. Army and Navy industrial mobilization plans for war

1946 - U.S. Adviser on taxation and fiscal policy to General Douglas MacArthur

1946-52 - Honorary faculty member, and member of board of advisers, Industrial College of the Armed Forces; lecturer, New School for Social Research

1946-76 - Chairman, Executive Committee, Freedom House

1946-present - Chairman, Board of Directors, Lawyers Cooperative Publishing Company, Rochester, N.Y.

1951-present - Chairman, Board of Directors, International Rescue Commission

1967-68 - Member, U.S. Select Committee on Western Hemisphere Immigration

1971-76 - Member, U.S. Advisory Commission on International and Cultural Affairs

1973-77 & 1981-90 - Member, chairman, and vice chairman, President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board

1976-77 - Member, Intelligence Oversight Board

1978-present - Chairman, Citizens Commission on Indochinese Refugees

Scope and Content Note

Leo Cherne's career spanned more than fifty years. Cherne, an economist, first gained prominence in the private sector, as Executive Director of the Research Institute of America, founded to translate complex government legislation for the businessman; Chairman of the Executive Committee of Freedom House, established to advance the struggle for freedom at home and abroad; and Chairman of the International Rescue Committee, formed to assist democratic leaders, scholars, and others to escape Fascism, Communism, and other forms of totalitarianism. He maintained these positions for the greater part of his career. Cherne also served many Presidents, from Roosevelt to Bush, in a variety of capacities. These roles were primarily on an intermittent consultant basis, and included service as economic advisor to General Douglas MacArthur, memberships on the U.S. Select Committee for Western Hemisphere Immigration and the U.S. Advisory Commission on International Educational and Cultural Affairs, as well as his activities on the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board (PFIAB) and the

Intelligence Oversight Board (IOB).

The majority of papers from Cherne's career are at Boston University Special Collections. The official records of the International Rescue Committee are at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University.

Of the Cherne papers at the Ford Library, approximately four-fifths concern his activities as member, then chairman, of PFIAB. The remainder concerns his activities as member of the IOB during the Ford Administration. The collection does not include material from Cherne's return to PFIAB, 1981-90, as vice chairman under Presidents Reagan and Bush. These records were, prior to donation, separated by PFIAB officials for shipment to the Reagan Library. Described below under separate headings are Cherne's role in PFIAB and the IOB, the scope and content of his papers, and related materials in other Ford Library collections.

PFIAB, the IOB, and Leo Cherne

In the year preceding Cherne's selection as chairman of PFIAB and his appointment to the IOB in 1976, the Church Committee, the Pike Committee, and the Rockefeller Commission engaged in exhaustive investigations of the intelligence community (comprised of the CIA, Departments of State, Treasury, and Defense, ERDA, FBI, NSA and others). The investigations examined charges of intelligence agency abuses accumulated over the course of more than twenty-five years.

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These allegations resulted in widespread distrust of the entire intelligence community, and an increased concern as to whether intelligence agencies could exist and operate within the law. President Ford responded to these developments on February 17, 1976, by issuing Executive Order 11905, the first major reorganization of the intelligence community since 1947. This order, in addition to restructuring the intelligence community and establishing guidelines for the intelligence agencies, created the Intelligence Oversight Board.

Upon taking office, President Ford continued PFIAB in the form established by Richard Nixon in 1969 through Executive Order 11460. In 1976 President Ford expanded PFIAB's membership from ten to seventeen, and chose Leo Cherne, appointed in 1973, to succeed (Ret.) Admiral George W. Anderson, Jr., as PFIAB chairman. Ford also placed Cherne on the IOB, along with fellow PFIAB members Robert D. Murphy (as chairman) and Stephen Ailes. The memberships overlapped because Executive Order 11905 stated that IOB members could also serve on PFIAB.

Cherne served in this dual capacity until President Carter dissolved PFIAB and replaced the IOB membership five months after taking office. PFIAB was eliminated because Carter thought the National Security Council system and the intelligence community had been restructured to effectively review and assess foreign intelligence activities. Cherne rejoined PFIAB as vice chairman when President Reagan reactivated the Board in 1981.

In addition to overlapping memberships, composed of private citizens with various disciplines and backgrounds, PFIAB and the IOB shared other similarities. Cherne and the members of both Boards were paid as citizen consultants on a per diem basis, and permitted to work only so many days per year. In addition, the offices of PFIAB and the IOB were located in the Old Executive Office Building, and both made due with small budgets and staffs.

While similarities existed, the responsibilities of the two boards differed markedly. PFIAB focused on the objectivity and quality of intelligence, while the IOB addressed propriety and legal compliance within the intelligence community.

PFIAB strived to stimulate creativity, give birth to new ideas, and encourage the development of new techniques and concepts. The Board intended to assure that the intelligence gathering process met the specific intelligence needs of the President and his principal advisors.

As PFIAB chairman, Cherne met several times with the President and his two closest White House aides involved with intelligence, Counsellor John Marsh and Counsel Philip Buchen. This access no doubt helped shape PFIAB meeting agendas, set by Cherne and the Board's Executive Secretary, Wheaton Byers.

PFIAB met on the first Thursday and Friday of every other month, with ad hoc committee meetings as required. During its meetings, the Board met with various intelligence principals, Cabinet officers, and other officials as necessary. When necessary, PFIAB, due to its limited staff, used consultants and relied on elements of the intelligence community for additional assistance. The Board reported directly to the President.

The IOB met according to need and averaged one formal meeting every 3 or 4 weeks. Between meetings there was frequent contact between the Board and its staff. In order to provide the members of the Board with an understanding of current intelligence agency practices and personnel, the staff frequently met with representatives of the intelligence community.

In addition, Executive Order 11905 required all elements of the intelligence community to report to the IOB, at least once quarterly, concerning any activities which raised a question of legality or propriety. Since the general counsels and inspector generals of the intelligence agencies did the reporting, they, in effect, acted as field staff for the IOB. The IOB also received annual reports from the heads of departments and agencies comprising the intelligence community, as well as allegations, regarding intelligence agency improprieties, from other employees of intelligence agencies, and from members of the public.

Scope and Content of the Cherne Papers

Some of the collection's strongest materials concern the origins and administration of PFIAB and the IOB. The papers also document Cherne's informal exchanges of advice and comments with many people prominent in the intelligence community, such as William E. Colby, William E. Simon, and Edward Teller, during a time of intense controversy. Cherne's interest in the collection of economic intelligence is evident in several special instances. Other files often include published material related to the boards, while there are virtually no files on specific intelligence operations.

However, there are few or no formal files about PFIAB and IOB meetings. Official PFIAB and IOB records are located at their respective offices in Washington, D.C.

Related Materials (April 1991)

Related materials on PFIAB and the IOB are located in several other Library

collections. One good source is the White House Central Files subject categories FG 208 (President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board) and FG 422 (Intelligence Oversight Board). White House staff files containing documentation on PFIAB and the IOB include those of Staff Secretary James E. Connor, the Presidential Handwriting File, and the White House Records Office: Legislation Case Files.

The 1975-76 intelligence investigations and reorganization of the intelligence community are extensively documented in many Library collections.

Last Modified Date

2025-03-07

President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board Subject File, (1969) 1973-77 (1986).

(Boxes 1-8, 2.9 linear feet)

Memoranda, correspondence, reports, clippings, publications, and notes on PFIAB and its history, functions, meetings, and budget. Also, miscellaneous information on intelligence-related topics such as: the Central Intelligence Agency, congressional investigations, legislation and executive orders, economics, international cultural affairs, refugees, strategic and critical materials, arms control, the Soviet Union, Soviet grain sales, oil, terrorism, and Watergate.

Arranged alphabetically by subject.

Box 1 - President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Accuracy in the Media
OPEN	Anderson, George W., Jr.
OPEN	Baker, William O.
OPEN	Buchen, Philip W.
OPEN	Bush, George
OPEN	Byers, Wheaton
OPEN	Casey, William
OPEN	Central Intelligence Agency - Background Materials (1) - (4)

Status	Title
OPEN	Central Intelligence Agency - Congressional Subcommittees List of Members
OPEN	Central Intelligence Agency - Research Studies
OPEN	Cherne, Leo - Europe Trip (1) - (2)
OPEN	Cherne, Leo - PFIAB Appointment (1) - (2)
Box 2 - President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board Subject File	

Status	Title
OPEN	Cherne, Leo - PFIAB Chairman - Appointment
OPEN	Cherne, Leo - PFIAB Time Logs
OPEN	Church Committee (1) - (2)
OPEN	Citizens Committee for U.S. Intelligence
OPEN	Colby, William E.
OPEN	Connally, John
OPEN	Economic Growth
OPEN	Economic Intelligence (1) - (3)
OPEN	Economic Policy Board
OPEN	Economic Stockpiling
OPEN	Economics - "The Corporation" - Television Transcript
OPEN	Electronic Surveillance
OPEN	Energy
OPEN	Europe
OPEN	Executive Order 11652
OPEN	Executive Order 11905 (1) - (3)

Box 3 - President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Federal Bureau of Investigation
OPEN	Ford, Gerald R.
OPEN	Foreign Assistance Act of 1974
OPEN	Foreign Investment in the U.S.
OPEN	Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1976 (S.3197) (1) - (3)

Status	Title
OPEN	Freedom of Information Act - State Department Testimony
OPEN	Galvin, Robert W.
OPEN	Gray, Gordon
OPEN	Green Book - Patty Hearst Affair (1) - (2)
OPEN	Intelligence (1) - (2)
OPEN	Interagency Classification Review Committee
OPEN	Jerusalem
OPEN	Joint Committee on Intelligence Oversight
OPEN	Kissinger, Henry (1) - (2)
OPEN	Laird, Melvin R.
OPEN	Luce, Clare Booth
OPEN	Marsh, John O., Jr.

Box 4 - President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	"Military Aspects of Change, National Security, and Peace" - Published Article
OPEN	Miscellaneous
OPEN	National Security Act of 1947 - Amendment
OPEN	National Strategy Information Center, Inc.
OPEN	National Security Agency
OPEN	Navy
OPEN	Notecards Re Intelligence Community
OPEN	Oil
OPEN	Olmer, Lionel (1) - (2)
OPEN	Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968
OPEN	Pike Committee
OPEN	President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board - Budget
OPEN	President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board - Dinner: Arrangements
OPEN	President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board - Dinner: Guest Correspondence

Status	Title
OPEN	President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board - Dinner: Speeches
OPEN	President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board - General Correspondence (1) - (2)
OPEN	President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board - History (1) - (2)

Box 5 - President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board - Intelligence: Newsclips (1) - (9)

Box 6 - President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board - Intelligence: Published Articles (1) - (2)
OPEN	President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board - Meetings
OPEN	President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board - Membership Expansion
OPEN	President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board - Miscellaneous Clippings
OPEN	President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board - National Security Leaks, 1982 - 86 (1) - (2)
OPEN	President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board - National Security Issues
OPEN	President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board - Termination (1) - (2)
OPEN	Publications - Miscellaneous
OPEN	Rockefeller, Nelson
OPEN	Rockefeller Commission
OPEN	Rumsfeld, Donald
OPEN	Schlesinger, Arthur, Jr.
OPEN	Schlesinger, James R.
OPEN	Seidman, William L.

Status	Title
OPEN	Simon, William E.

Box 7 - President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Soviet Union (1) - (3)
OPEN	Soviet Union - Grain Sales (Mostly Publications)
OPEN	Standards of Conduct
OPEN	Strategic and Critical Materials
OPEN	Technology
OPEN	Teller, Edward
OPEN	Terrorism (1) - (3)
OPEN	U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency
OPEN	Watergate
OPEN	White House Press Releases

Box 8 - President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	White House Study Project - Report No. 2 (1) - (4)
OPEN	Williams, Edward Bennett
OPEN	Willison, Sir David

Intelligence Oversight Board Subject File, (1975) 1976-77 (1980).

(Boxes 8-9, 0.6 linear feet)

Memoranda, correspondence, clippings, publications, reports, and notes on the IOB and its history, procedures, and meetings. Also, miscellaneous information on intelligence-related issues such as: the Central Intelligence Agency and its Inspector General and General Counsel, legislation and executive orders, and the Carter transition.

Arranged alphabetically by subject.

Box 8 (Continued) - Intelligence Oversight Board Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Central Intelligence Agency

Status	Title
OPEN	Central Intelligence Agency - Inspector General and General Counsel Organizations
OPEN	Cherne, Leo - IOB Appointment
OPEN	Cherne, Leo - IOB Appointment: Congratulations (1) - (6)
OPEN	Cherne, Leo - IOB Notes
OPEN	Executive Order 11905 - Intelligence Reform Package

Box 9 - Intelligence Oversight Board Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Executive Order 12036 - Foreign Intelligence Organization and Control, 1978 (Press Releases)
OPEN	Federal Intelligence Agencies Control Act of 1977
OPEN	H.R. 12618 - Joint Committee on Intelligence Operations Act
OPEN	Intelligence Oversight Board - General Correspondence
OPEN	Intelligence Oversight Board - History
OPEN	Intelligence Oversight Board - Intelligence: News Clips
OPEN	Intelligence Oversight Board - Intelligence: Periodical Articles
OPEN	Intelligence Oversight Board - Meetings
OPEN	Intelligence Oversight Board - Procedures
OPEN	Murphy, Robert D.

Personal Subject File, 1974-78.

(Box 9, 0.1 linear feet)

Items on the International Rescue Committee's work with refugees, including those from South Vietnam, and 1976 birthday greetings to Mr. Cherne.

Arranged alphabetically by subject.

Box 9 (Continued) - Personal Subject File

Status	Title
OPEN	Birthday Cards
OPEN	International Rescue Committee