

Materials of  
Gordon C. Strachan  
Among Nixon Presidential Materials, 1969-71

The Presidential historical materials of Gordon C. Strachan, Staff Assistant to the Director of Communications for the Executive Branch, are in the custody of the National Archives and Records Service, General Services Administration, under the provisions of Title I of the Presidential Recordings and Materials Preservation Act of 1974 (P. L. 93-526, 88 Stat. 1695) and implementing regulations. In accordance with the act and regulations, Archivists reviewed the file group to identify personal and private materials as well as non-historical items. These materials have been returned to Strachan.

Materials covered by the act have been archivally processed and described in this register. Items which are security classified or otherwise restricted under the act and regulations have been removed. A document withdrawal Record (GSA Form 7279) with a description of each restricted document has been inserted at the beginning of each folder from which material has been removed. A document Control Record marks the original position of the withdrawn item. Employees of the National Archives will review periodically the unclassified portions of closed materials for the purpose of opening those which no longer require restriction. Certain Classified documents may be declassified under the authority of Executive Order 12356 in response to a Mandatory Review Request (GSA Form 7277) submitted by the researcher

Linear feet of materials: 7 linear feet

## Biographical Note

1943, July 24	Born, Berkeley, California
1965 California	B.A. University of Southern California in international relations
1968 Berkeley	J.D., University of California Law School ,
1968-70	Associate Attorney with the law firm of Mudge, Rose Guthrie & Alexander, New York City
1969-70	Intermittent advance man in midterm congressional campaign
1970, August	Staff Assistant to Herbert G. Klein, Director of Communications for the Executive Branch
1971, March-1972	Staff Assistant to H.R. Haldeman, acting as liaison with the Committee to Re-elect the President
1972-73	General Counsel, United States Information Agency
1973, July the	Testified under grant of limited immunity before Senate Select Committee on Presidential Campaign Activities (Ervin Committee)
1974, March 1	Indicted by grand jury for conspiracy to cover up Watergate and "other illegal activities"
1975, June 10	All charges dropped by U.S. District Judge John Sirica
1975-?	Law Clerk with the law firm of Burman & Giaque, Salt Lake City, Utah. In January 1977 the Utah State bar restored his license to practice law and joined the firm as a lawyer
1982-?	Partner with the law firm of Prince, Yeates & Geldzahler, Salt Lake City, Utah

## Special Files Materials<sup>1</sup>

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\*The White House Special Files Unit maintained files considered sensitive either for reason of political content or security classification. This scope and content note does not describe all the materials of Gordon C.

#### Scope and Content Note

Gordon C. Strachan was California-born lawyer in Nixon's old New York law firm when he came to Washington in August 1970 to join the Nixon White House staff.

His former college classmate, Dwight L. Chapin, who was the President's appointments secretary, was the person responsible for recruiting him for a White House position. Strachan was, however, already acquainted with several Nixon aides from his college days at the University of Southern California and from his intermittent advance work during the 1970 congressional campaigns.

His first assignment at the White House was staff assistant to Herbert G. Klein, Director of Communications for the Executive Branch. It seemed he was filling a vacancy on Klein's staff that was created by the departure of James Hogue. There is in Strachan's files two folders of what appear to be Hogue's chronological files for the period March-July 1970. Although Strachan was hired as a staff assistant to Klein, he worked primarily under the supervision of Jeb S. Magruder, deputy director of communications, who reported directly to Klein and White House Chief of Staff H. R. Haldeman.

Strachan's most important daily assignment was overseeing the liaison work with the public information officers at various departments and agencies. Strachan personally handled liaison with departments of Commerce and Labor, Office of Economic Opportunity, and Peace Corps. Although he had been initially assigned responsibilities with the office of Emergency Preparedness, Army Corps of Engineers, Nixon's science adviser Lee A. DuBridge, and offices promoting voluntary service; his file folders on these topics are empty. The liaison work required daily contact with the appropriate public information officers, and in some instances Strachan was expected to maintain morning and afternoon telephone contacts with particular departments and agencies. Strachan's handwritten notes indicate the extent of these daily contacts. He was also required to prepare weekly and monthly reports on the activities of

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Strachan. As other groups of his materials are processed and described, the resulting finding aids will be attached.

his assigned departments and agencies.

Although Strachan had functional duties as staff assistant in the communications office, he had been initially recruited to be what was called project manager. In his testimony before the Ervin Committee, Strachan described the specialized duties of a project manager. Specific issues of varying degrees of importance to the administration were assigned to one senior White House staffer and one junior staff member to devise the best strategy for communicating to the public various Presidential and administration activities or programs. For example, during the 1970 midterm elections the state of the economy became a major campaign issue. Strachan and White House speech writer William L. Safire were assigned to the economy issue as a project--Strachan as the junior staff assistant and Safire as the senior person. Both individuals also worked as a team on another major project: preparing plans to disseminate information in. In each instance they reported to Haldeman through Magruder on the alleged high cost of congressional spending. The titles of the folders in Strachan's files indicate the topics of other projects on which he worked: Vietnam, State of the Union address, B-52 casualty figures, Honor America Day, SST, inflation, polling, the Indian occupation of Alcatraz, Presidential Vetoes, political advertising, and selected legislation.

As a project manager, it was Strachan's responsibility to develop so-called game plans for a particular event or issue from all the ideas furnished by interested staffers or offices. The general format of these tentative plans included a description of the event or issue, the desired objective, and a proposed course of action. Strachan would thus outline the possible steps the administration might take in dealing with a particular event or issue, and then, using the game plan as a working document, prepare a follow-up memorandum based on his annotations to the original game plan. In addition to this, it was his responsibility as the project manager to make certain that the plan was carried out as agreed by Haldeman and other senior staffers.

Strachan's files also revealed his involvement in the mailings operation which the communications office was becoming increasingly more active. Klein and his staff felt a need to improve the dissemination of information from the White House to the public, because they realized not every news organization could afford to neither maintain a correspondent in Washington nor belong to one of the major wire services. Consequently, the communications office began to mail out fact sheets or background materials on specific issues to editorial writers , publishers, news media directors, another influential groups for their use. As the operation began to expand in size and scope, the staff realized that it could not be handled within the White House and so turned to the Republican National Committee (RNC) for assistance. To insure the proper coordination between the White House and RNC, Strachan was assigned to task of liaison. He made certain that the lists were periodically updated and that the most effective groups received a complete set of mail listings. Strachan was also instrumental in expanding the mailings list to include select groups of individual voters, such as blue-collar workers, educators, farmers, and various ethnic groups. Although the content of the mailings varied greatly, the objective remained always the same--to foster and mold public opinion in support of the President and his policies and programs.

An offshoot to the mailings operation was a letters-to-the-editor project. Under Magruder's guidance, a White House letter-writing campaign was established around single issues, such as law and order, media bias, welfare reform, campus violence, integration, select legislation, and political candidates. Since the RNC had the facilities and ample manpower to handle the details, it took on the job and supplied the writers and other support services for the White House. Strachan, acting as the White House Liaison, provided the proper supervision coordination for the project.

Strachan worked for Klein until after the 1970 elections. Once these elections were concluded, key senior White House staff members immediately began to turn their attention to planning for the 1972 Presidential campaign.

An indication of this shift in outlook was a reshuffling of personnel within

the White House staff, and Strachan was one of those Nixon aides affected. By March 1971 he was working as a staff assistant on Haldeman's staff, handling all projects in the political area. Although Strachan told the Ervin Committee he worked in Klein's shop until the end of December 1970, his chronological files as a staff assistant to Klein end at the beginning of March 1971.

Other material related to Gordon Strachan are in Haldeman's Staff Member and Office Files within the White House Special Files. These files include, as a readily identifiable body of materials, Strachan's chronological files. These particular files, comprising 3.6 cubic feet, date from March 1971 to December 1972, when he left Haldeman's staff to assume the duties of general counsel at the United States Information Agency. There is also a tape recording and transcript of the exit interview with Strachan that was conducted on December 14, 1972, by personnel of the Office of Presidential Papers and Archives.

## Description of Series

<u>Container Nos.</u>	<u>Series</u>
	SUBJECT FILES, 1969-71
1-18	Original, carbon, and electrostatic copies of incoming and outgoing memoranda, letters, handwritten notes, clippings, pamphlets, reports lists, diagrams, work drafts, speeches, and White House and departmental press releases. Subject document his daily staff assignments as liaison with public information officers at his assigned departments and agencies, his specialized duties as project manager, and his White House liaison work with the Republican National Committee. Included are Strachan's chronological files for the period August 1970 to March 1971 as well as chronological files for the March-July 1970 period attributable to to James H. Hogue, who immediately preceded him on Klein's staff. The arrangement is alphabetical by subject.

## Container List

<u>Container Nos.</u>	<u>Contents</u>
1	SUBJECT FILES, 1969-71 Anti-Ballistic Missiles Action Memos Administration Wives Briefing Advance Aging Black Boycott Blackmun Nomination Blue Collar Worker Brady--Tallahassee Bridgeport, Conn., Trip California Census Figures "52" Casualties CBS Mexican Coverage Chron File--August 1970 Chron File--September 1970 2 Chron File--October 1970 Chron File--November 1970 Chron File-- December 1970 Chron File--January 1971 Chron File--February 1971 Chron File-- March 1971 Clean-up Campaign Commission
2	Connally Contacts in Cities Conversation with the President--1/4/70 Correspondence--January 1971



<u>Container Nos.</u>	<u>Contents</u>
	<p>SUBJECT FILES, 1969-71 (Cont.)</p> <p>Correspondence Folder--Strachan Personal</p> <p>Council on Environmental Quality</p> <p>Crime Task Force</p>
3	<p>Daily Notes (1 of 3)</p> <p>Daily Notes (2 of 3)</p> <p>Daily Notes (3 of 3)</p> <p>Daily Reports--1969-1970</p> <p>Daily Reports--1971</p> <p>Daily Reports--Army Engineers</p> <p>Daily Reports--Commerce</p> <p>Daily Reports--General</p> <p>Daily Reports--Labor</p>
4	<p>Daily Reports--Office of Economic Opportunity</p> <p>Daily Reports--Office of Emergency Preparedness</p> <p>Daily Reports--Peace Corps</p> <p>Daily Reports--PIOs</p> <p>Daily Reports--Volunteerism</p> <p>Daily Telephone Messages</p> <p>Defense Cutbacks</p> <p>Departmental Assignment</p> <p>Departmental News Events--1970</p> <p>Departmental News Events--1971</p> <p>Depreciation</p> <p>Desegregation Message</p> <p>"Domestic Program"</p>
5	<p>Economic Players</p> <p>Eighteen-Year-Old Vote</p> <p>Executive Reorganization</p>

<u>Container Nos.</u>	<u>Contents</u>
	SUBJECT FILES, 1969-71 (Cont.)
	Federal Economy Act
	Financial Briefing Proposal
	Financial Leaders
	Financial Writers
	Foreign Aid Message
	Foreign Economic Policy
	Foreign Policy Briefing--New Orleans
6	Game Plans
	Hartford Briefing
	Hatfield-McGovern
	Jim Hogue Memoranda (1 of 2 folders)
	Jim Hogue Memoranda (2 of 2 folders)
7	Honor America Day
	Indians
	Inflation
	Mailing Material--Assignment and Chronology
	Mailing Material--Buchanan Memo (S&W) Distribution
	Mailing Material--Correspondence on Mailings
	Mailing Material--Distribution of Economy Paper
	Mailing Material--General Information
	Mailing Material--President's Jaycee Speech, 6/25/70
	Mailing Material--Mailings as Sent (1 of 2 folders)
	Mailing Material--Mailings as Sent (2 of 2 folders)
	Mailing Material--Post-Election Mailing for Herbert G. Klein
	Mailing Material--Presidential Letter and the Sidney Hook Article
	Mailing Material--Weekly Reports
	Marriott/Lewis

<u>Container Nos.</u>	<u>Contents</u>
	SUBJECT FILES, 1969-71
8	Meany's Toast and Newspaper Advertisements
	Memorandums Received
	Memorandums Sent--1970 (1 of 3 folders)
	Memorandums Sent--1970 (2 of 3 folders)
	Memorandums Sent--1970 (3 of 3 folders)
	Memorandums Sent--January 1971
	Memorandums Sent--February 1971
	Memorandums Sent--March 1971
	Meyers, Rev. Robert N.
	Miscellaneous--General
	Miscellaneous--Hatch Act
	Miscellaneous--HRH Memo of July 8, 1970
	Miscellaneous--Magruder
	Miscellaneous--Newspaper, Top 100
	Miscellaneous--Office
9	Monday Reports (1 of 2 folders)
	Monday Reports (2 of 2 folders)
	Moser--GSA
	Moynihan--A call for Cooperation
	Moynihan's Valedictory Remarks
	Muskie Column
	Nationalities--Administration Support Groups
	Neilsen Ratings--'72 Campaign
	New Schedules
	Newspaper Advertisements
	Newspaper Advertisements Information
10	Newspaper Clippings
	<u>New York Times</u> Opinion and Editorial Page
	Office Procedure
	Office of Minority Business Enterprises
	Operation Christmas

# Container List (Cont.)

<u>Container Nos.</u>	<u>Contents</u>
	SUBJECT FILES 1969-71 (Cont.)
10	Pageant for Peace--Advertisement The People Speak Political Polls--Gallup Poll, 9/10/70 Polls--Harris Poll, Hogue Presidential Documents Presidential Press Conference, 12/10/70
11	President's Promises and Performance President's Report on Vietnam President's Speech--October 31, 1970 Press Releases--Drafts (1 of 2 folders) Press Releases--Drafts (2 of 2 folders) Price Fighter League (1 of 2 folders) Price Fighter League (2 of 2 folders) Project "Home Run" Public Information Officers
12	Quotable Quotes Republican National Committee--Computer Retrieval Republican National Committee--General Republican National Committee-- <u>Monday</u> (magazine), 11/09/70 Republican National Committee--Letters to Editor Project RNC--Letters to Editor Project, June 1970 RNC--Letters to Editor Project, July 20-31, 1970 RNC--Letters to Editor Project Aug. 31-Sept. 4, 1970 RNC--Letters to Editor Project, September 7-25, 1970 RNC--Letters to Editor Project, October 2-30, 1970 RNC--Letters to Editor Project, November 2-December 4, 1970

Container List (Cont.)

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SUBJECT FILES 1969-71 (Cont.)

RNC--Letters to Editor Project, December 14-30, 1970

RNC--Letters to Editor Project, January 4-29, 1971

RNC--Letters to Editor Project, February 8-12, 1971

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Resumes--Ted Sell

Resumes--Robert Resor

Resumes--Duke Zeller

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Television--California

Television--Five Minute Spots

Television--Memos to Larry Higby

Televisions Requests--Snyder

Television--Texas

Television--"Today Show"

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Two Year Review

Unemployment--Safire

Unemployment Statistics

United Nations Youth

United States Information Agency

Container List (Cont.)

<u>Container Nos.</u>	<u>Contents</u>
	SUBJECT FILES 1969-71 (Cont.)
15	Wednesday Planning Group, September 24-December 31, 1969 Wednesday Planning Group, January 7-March 26, 1970 Wednesday Planning Group, April 1-November 25, 1970 Weekly Departmental News Events Weekly Report to the President, May 5-June 15, 1970 Weekly Report to the President, July 6-August 31, 1970 Weekly Report to the President, September 8-28, 1970 Weekly Report to the President, October 5-26, 1970
16	White House Budget White House Conference on Children White House Press Corps Material to be Filed (1 of 4 folders) Material to be Filed (2 of 4 folders) Material to be Filed (2 of 4) Material to be Filed (3 of 4) Material to be Filed (4 of 4 folders)
17	Material to be Filed (1 of 5 folders) Material to be Filed (2 of 5 folders) Material to be Filed (3 of 5 folders) Material to be Filed (4 of 5 folders) Material to be Filed (5 of 5 folders)
18	Material to be Filed (1 of 4 folders) Material to be Filed (1 of 4 folders) Material to be Filed (2 of 4 folders) Material to be Filed (3 of 4 folders) Material to be Filed (4 of 4 folders) Material to be Xeroxed