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WOMEN'S ISSUES AND THEIR ADVOCACY WITHIN THE WHITE HOUSE, 1974-1977



This collection documents Patricia Lindh's and Jeanne Holm's liaison with women's groups and their advocacy within the White House on issues of special interest to women. Includes material accumulated by presidential Counselor Anne Armstrong and Office of Women's Programs Director Karen Keesling. Topics include liaison activities with over 300 women's organizations, agency women's groups and program units, advisory committees on women and women appointees; public policy; and legislation and regulation of women's civil rights in the government and the economy.

Date Range: 1974-1977

Content: 54,111 images

Source Library: Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library

Detailed Description:

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The Special Assistant to the President for Women advised the President on women's issues, handled White House liaison with women's organizations and oversaw the work of the Office of Women's Programs (OWP). Presidential Counselor Anne Armstrong created the small office in the Nixon White House in February 1973 and brought it into the Ford administration. The office provided liaison between the President and women as a special interest group, encouraged recruitment of women for top-level government positions and initiated and assisted in the development of programs, policies, legislation and regulations supporting women's civil rights. In addition, the office sponsored a number of meetings attended by Mrs. Ford and occasionally sent her briefings concerning women's issues.

When Counselor Armstrong resigned in December 1974, the OWP was transferred to the Office of Public Liaison. Patricia Lindh, Armstrong's assistant, was appointed to the new position of Special Assistant to the President for Women and headed the office during the

United Nations' International Women's Year, 1975. Retired Major General Jeanne Holm succeeded Lindh when she resigned in March 1976.

The Lindh/Holm collection contains material from Armstrong, Lindh, Holm and Keesling from throughout the administration. Although the leadership changed, the purpose and substance of the office remained the same with only minor differences in style.

The bulk of the collection is derived from liaison activities with over 300 women's organizations, agency women's groups and program units, advisory committees on women and women appointees. Topics include public policy, legislation and regulation of women's civil rights in the government and the economy.

One series is devoted entirely to the planning of White House meetings, some of which were attended by President or Mrs. Ford, in which women leaders exchanged views with administration officials. These were part of the "Tuesday" and "Wednesday" meeting series organized by all White House Public Liaison Office units. Several meetings generated follow-up meetings hosted by, for example, the Small Business Administration and the Department of Labor. Other meetings sought priorities for the OWP agenda and candidates for presidential appointment.

The files also contain material related to OWP outreach activities, including attendance at conventions, speeches and solicitation of organization background and printed materials.

The OWP regularly provided the President and the White House staff with advice on legislation, regulations, proclamations and executive orders. Many documents were routinely staffed to the OWP for comment and review, as were large amounts of informational material. Substantial amounts of material are present related to sex and credit discrimination, affirmative action, education and child care.

Additionally, the Office's role in overseeing national activities for International Women's Year provided interesting material related to its origin in 1972, and Armstrong's and Lindh's efforts in securing an executive order and agency funding for a National Commission to Observe International Women's Year. Files on the United Nations' International Conference in Mexico City, the U.S. delegation's role and efforts to begin a 10 year World Plan of Action also appear.

Series Descriptions

Meetings File, 1974 1977.

Minutes (occasional, 1974 only), correspondence, memoranda, briefing papers, talking points, schedule proposals, draft presidential remarks and proclamations, agendas, speeches, Q's and A's, background materials, newsclippings, lists, notes. Topics include proclamation ceremonies, Tuesday and Wednesday meeting in the White House and meetings with the President on subjects of interest to women.

General Subject File, 1970 1976.

Correspondence, memoranda, reports, bills, regulations, transcripts, press releases and printed materials from private and government organizations. Topics include abortion, child care, ERA, sex discrimination in employment, education, social security, credit and the enforcement and legislation thereof.

Jeanne Holm Speeches, Apr.-Dec. 1976.

Copies of speeches given to women's organizations.

Karen Keesling Speeches, 1974 1976.

Correspondence, speeches, schedules, printed material, notes, lists, maps, travel requests related to speeches given to women's organizations.

Administration Statements on Women's Issues, 1974 1977.

Correspondence, memoranda, briefing papers, Q's and A's, press releases, proclamations, background and printed material. Topics include State of the Union inserts, Women's Equality Day Proclamations and Mrs. Ford's views on women's issues.

International Women's Year Conference, Mexico City, June-July, 1975.

Correspondence, reports, background materials, agenda items, draft resolutions and reports, statements, U.S. position book, an international bibliography, newsclippings and press releases. Topics include proceedings of the Conference, U.S. resolutions, the adjacent Tribune Conference and related events.

National Commission for International Women's Year, 1974 1976.

Correspondence and memoranda, draft executive orders, budget estimates, agendas, committee reports, papers, proposals, progress reports, background material, speeches, press releases, newsletters, printed material, lists and resumes. Topics include the goals, staffing, funding and meetings of the Commission and the U.S. Center for International Women's Year.

Women's Organizations File, 1974 1976.

Correspondence, press releases, newsletters, printed material and membership lists submitted by national organizations concerning their views on women's issues and related national policy.

Federal Government Reference File, 1972 1976.

Correspondence and memoranda, guidelines, reports, studies, draft proposals and resolutions, agendas, speeches, minutes, notes, newsclippings, newsletters and press releases, printed materials and publications. Topics include regulation of public law in the federal workplace, administration policy on women's civil rights, departmental plans and events for International Women's Year, and international conferences on issues of interest to women.

Chronological File, 1974 1977.

Correspondence and memoranda, option and briefing papers, and schedule proposals from Armstrong, Lindh, Holm and Keesling. Topics include program planning, outreach activities, and the administration's view on ERA.