White House Conference on Food, Nutrition and Health, White House Central Files, 1969-1971

1969-1971
Descriptive Summary

Title: White House Conference on Food, Nutrition and Health, White House Central Files, 1969-1971
Dates: 1969-1971
Collection Number: 5573996
Creator/Collector: White House Conference on Food, Nutrition and Health
Extent: 32 linear feet, 10 linear inches; 75 boxes
Repository: Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum

Abstract: The White House Conference on Food, Nutrition and Health was convened at the behest of President Richard M. Nixon to focus national attention on the nutritional needs and problems of all Americans. The goal of the conference was to lay a foundation for a national nutrition policy. The records include pre-conference, conference and post-conference material.

Language of Material: English

Access

Collection is open for research. Some materials may be unavailable based upon categories of materials exempt from public release established in the Presidential Recordings and Materials Preservation Act of 1974.

Publication Rights

Most government records are in the public domain; however, this series includes commercial materials, such as newspaper clippings, that may be subject to copyright restrictions. Researchers should contact the copyright holder for information.

Preferred Citation


Acquisition Information

These materials are in the custody of the National Archives and Records 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.

Scope and Content of Collection

The White House Conference on Food, Nutrition and Health was convened at the behest of President Richard M. Nixon to focus national attention on the nutritional needs and problems of all Americans. This first White House conference of the Nixon administration was designed to advise the President on how best to end hunger and malnutrition among the poor in the United States. The goal of the conference was to lay a foundation for a national nutrition policy. The records of the White House Conference on Food, Nutrition and Health date from 1969-1971 and include pre-conference, conference and post-conference material. The collection is divided into four series: Subject Files, Conference Working Files, Staff Member Office Files and Printed Materials. The bulk of the collection is arranged by subject, which is then further segmented chronologically. The conference was directed and organized by Dr. Jean Mayer, Special Consultant to the President, and was held on December 2, 3 and 4, 1969 at the Sheraton-Park Hotel in Washington, DC. Prior to December, a series of meetings and workshops in preparation for the conference were scheduled in cities across the country. President Nixon outlined five questions for consideration by conference participants: How do we ensure a continuing surveillance of the nutritional health of the American people? What should be done to improve the nutrition of the more vulnerable groups of Americans-the very poor, pregnant and nursing mothers, children and adolescents, adults prone to heart disease, the aging and those groups (such as Indians, Eskimos and migrant workers) for whom the federal government has a special responsibility? As we develop new technologies of food production, processing and packaging, how do we monitor the wholesomeness and nutritional value of our foods? And how do we make certain that the poor, and in fact all Americans, get the greatest amount of nutrients for their money? How do we improve nutrition teaching in our schools-from Head Start to medical schools? And what programs of popular education are needed to better inform Americans, the poor and affluent alike, of proper food buying and food consumption habits? What should be done to improve federal programs that affect nutrition-either directly as in the Armed Forces and the Veterans Administration or indirectly through such programs as the food stamp, commodity distribution and school lunch programs? Conference participants included educators, scientists, medical and health professionals, representatives of agriculture and the food industry, federal, state and local government officials, religious denominations, women's and professional organizations and spokesmen for consumer and social-action groups, including the poor. Actual work for the conference began in the summer of 1969 when 26 advisory panels were organized with 475 of the conference participants. The function of the panels was to draft sets of preliminary recommendations. Another eight community-action task forces, using an additional 300 participants, reviewed the panel recommendations and made their own observations. The actual conference in December yielded over 2,500 participants organized into 20 working sessions that met simultaneously. The conclusions of the conference were to be translated into a
plan of action to be implemented by the administration. Panel and task force recommendations are included in these sections: (1) Surveillance and Evaluation of the State of Nutrition of the American People, (2) Establishing Guidelines for the Nutrition of Vulnerable Groups with Special Reference to the Poor, (3) The Provision of Food as It Affects the Consumer: Guidelines for Federal Action, (4) Nutrition Teaching and Nutrition Education, (5) Food Delivery and Distribution as a System, and (6) Voluntary Action to Help the Poor. Persons of note in the collection associated with the Nixon Administration include Jean Mayer, Special Consultant to the President; Kenneth E. BeLieu, Deputy Assistant to the President; William E. Casselman, Deputy Special Assistant to the President; William E. Timmons, Deputy Assistant to the President; Virginia Knauer, Special Assistant to the President for Consumer Affairs; Donald Baldwin, Special Assistant for Congressional Relations; John Edwards, Director, Information and Education; James D. Grant, Deputy to Jean Mayer, Special Consultant to the President; Judith Cooke, Staff Assistant; Christopher DeMuth, Staff Assistant to the President; Mary McCausland, Secretary to Jean Mayer; Benjamin Neufeld, Conference Liaison Staff; Clifton G. Metzner, Administrative Officer; Howard Zimmerman, Staff Assistant; and Elizabeth Woodlock, Staff Assistant.

Additional Finding Aid