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## Inventory of the Newton R. Russell Papers

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## Inventory of the Newton R. Russell Papers

### Collection number: LP457

California State Archives  
Office of the Secretary of State  
Sacramento, California

Processed by:

Sam Skow

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Paul Rendes

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### Descriptive Summary

**Title:** Newton R. Russell Papers

**Dates:** 1965-1996

**Collection number:** LP457

**Creator:** Newton R. Russell, California Legislator

**Collection Size:** 35 cubic feet

**Repository:** California State Archives

Sacramento, California

**Abstract:** California legislator Newton R. Russell served as a State Assembly Member from 1965-1974, and as a State Senator from 1975-1996. The Russell Papers consist of 35 cubic feet of records reflecting the interests and political activities of Russell during his career in the California State Legislature. The records contain 12 record series covering the years 1965-1996.

**Physical location:** California State Archives

**Languages:** Languages represented in the collection: English

### Access

While the majority of the records are open for research, any access restrictions are noted in the record series descriptions.

### Publication Rights

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### Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Newton R. Russell Papers, LP457:[folder number], California State Archives, Office of the Secretary of State, Sacramento, California.

### Acquisition and Custodial History

The California State Archives acquired the Newton R. Russell Papers following his final term in the State Legislature.

### Biography

Newton R. Russell, a Republican, served in the California Legislature from 1965 to 1996. He was first elected to the California State Assembly in 1964, and later elected to the State Senate in a 1974 special election. As an Assembly Member, Russell represented the 62nd District, which included the cities of El Segundo, Hawthorne, Lawndale, and Inglewood; part of Gardena; the Los Angeles communities of Venice and Westchester; and census-designated places including Del Aire, Lennox, Marina del Rey, West Athens, and Westmont. As a Senator, he represented the 21st District, which included the cities of Burbank, Glendale, La Cañada Flintridge, Pasadena, San Marino, South Pasadena, Temple City; and Los Angeles communities of Altadena, La Crescenta, Los Feliz, Montrose, Silver Lake, Verdugo City, and Griffith Park. Russell retained his Senate seat until 1996 when he stepped down due to term limits.

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Newton R. Russell was born on June 25, 1927, in Los Angeles, California. A fourth-generation Californian, Russell graduated from Webb School in Claremont, where he was senior class president. After serving in the Navy during World War II, he attended the University of Southern California where he received his bachelor's degree in business administration in 1951. He later pursued graduate studies at the University of California, Los Angeles, and Georgetown University in Washington, D. C. Prior to his election to the State Assembly in 1964, Russell worked for the Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company for twelve years as a special agent.

Russell first ventured into politics as a volunteer for Richard Nixon's 1960 presidential campaign. Four years later, he won a seat in the State Assembly after a failed first try. In 1968, Russell planned to run for a congressional seat, but decided against it after Governor Ronald Reagan urged him to stay in the Assembly to retain the Republican majority there. In 1974, Russell lost a primary race by a slim margin to Assembly Member Michael Antonovich. But, less than two weeks later, Russell defeated Los Angeles City Councilman Arthur K. Snyder in a special election when a midterm resignation left an opening in the Senate. He served for another twenty-two years before term limits forced him to leave office in 1996. Russell died in May 2013 from lung cancer at his home in La Cañada Flintridge at the age of 85.

Over the course of his thirty-two year career in the Legislature, Russell focused primarily on issues related to the public pension system and various social issues. As Chairman of the Senate Public Employment and Retirement Committee, he became the acknowledged expert on public pensions among his fellow legislators, drafting several bills to close loopholes and to eliminate wasteful spending. In addition to his efforts to reform the state retirement system, Russell also led a longtime charge to regulate the pornography industry, writing legislation that effectively restricted pornographers from distributing their products in areas frequented by children or broadcasting videos via basic cable. Opposed to vice in other areas, he also fought to more strictly regulate "happy hour" promotions in bars, as well as to restrict-unsuccesfully-the sale of drug paraphernalia. Like most public officials in the 1980s, Russell was also concerned by the rise and spread of the AIDS virus. A religious conservative, he staunchly supported abstinence-only education, wrote legislation to require AIDS-testing prior to marriage, and opposed civil equality for homosexuals.

During his term in the California Legislature, Russell served on the following committees and commissions according to the *California Legislature at Sacramento (Handbooks), Assembly Final History, Senate Final History, and Pocket Directory of the California Legislature*:

Standing Committees

Education, 1969-1974

Elections and Reapportionment, 1971-1972

Employment and Public Employees, 1973

Finance and Insurance, 1965-1968, 1972-1974

Government Administration, 1970-1974

\*Chair, 1970-1974

Local Government, 1971

Military and Veterans Affairs, 1965-1966

\*Vice Chair, 1965-1966

Public Employees and Retirement, 1973-1974

Public Health, 1965-1966

Revenue and Taxation, 1969-1970

Rules, 1967-1970

Urban Affairs and Housing, 1969

Water, 1965-1968

Select Committees

Campus Disturbances, 1969

Industrial Safety, 1971-1974

Juvenile Violence, 1973-1974

\*Vice Chair, 1973-1974

Manpower Development, 1971-1974

Service Station Franchising and Petroleum Product Practices, 1973-1974

Special Committees

General Research, 1965-1966

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Joint Committees

Building Space Needs, 1968  
Educational Evaluation, 1969-1970  
Educational Goals and Evaluation, 1972-1973  
Legislative Organization, 1967-1970  
Public Domain, 1969-1970  
\*Chair, 1969-1970

Commissions

American Revolution Bicentennial of California, 1973-1974  
Economic Development, 1972-1974  
Educational Innovation Advisory, 1969-1971  
Educational Innovation and Planning, 1972-1974  
Indian Affairs Advisory, 1965-1967

**California State Senate, 1974-1996**

Standing Committees

Banking and Commerce, 1981-1990  
\*Vice Chair, 1985-1990  
Banking, Commerce, and International Trade, 1991-1994  
\*Vice Chair, 1991-1994  
Budget and Fiscal Review, 1985-1986  
Energy and Public Utilities, 1979-1994  
\*Vice Chair, 1983-1994  
Energy, Utilities, and Communications, 1995-1996  
\*Vice Chair, 1995-1996  
Finance, Investment, and International Trade, 1993-1996  
\*Vice Chair, 1993-1996  
Industrial Relations, 1975-1984  
\*Vice Chair, 1981-1982  
Insurance, 1993-1996  
Insurance and Financial Institutions, 1975-1976, 1979-1980  
Insurance, Claims, and Corporations, 1991-1994  
Legislative Ethics, 1993-1996  
Local Government, 1985-1996  
Public Employment and Retirement, 1975-1982  
\*Vice Chair, 1975-1976  
\*Chair, 1977-1982  
Public Utilities, Transit, and Energy, 1975-1978  
Transportation, 1987-1996

Subcommittees

Cable Television (Energy and Public Utilities), 1983-1984  
Cal-OSHA (Industrial Relations), 1977-1980  
\*Chair, 1977-1978  
Energy (Public Utilities, Transit, and Energy), 1977-1980  
\*Chair, 1977-1980  
Energy (Energy and Public Utilities), 1981-1984  
\*Chair, 1981-1984  
Energy Costs and Industrial Development (Energy and Public Utilities), 1985-1990  
Health Care Reform (Insurance), 1995-1996

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Justice, Corrections, Resources, and Agriculture, No. 2 (Budget and Fiscal Review), 1985-1986  
Nuclear Facility Safety and Emergency Preparedness (Energy and Public Utilities), 1985-1986  
The Americas (Finance, Investment, and International Trade), 1995-1996  
Vice Chair, 1995-1996  
Women in the Workforce (Industrial Relations), 1983-1984

Select Committees

California's Wine Industry, 1987-1996  
Children and Youth, 1975-1994  
Department of Insurance as a Consumer Protection Agency, 1989-1990  
Information Services in State Government, 1995-1996  
Insurance Reform, 1993-1994  
Interstate Banking, 1983-1984  
Investment Priorities and Objectives, 1977-1980  
Mediation, 1995-1996  
\*Chair, 1995-1996  
Northridge Earthquake, 1995-1996  
Pacific Rim, 1987-1994  
Vehicle Design and Performance, 1975-1976

Special Committees

Developmental Disabilities and Mental Health, 1991-1996  
Entertainment Industry, 1993-1994  
Global Competition and International Trade, 1991-1992

Joint Committees

Educational Goals and Evaluation, 1975-1976  
Energy Policy and Implementation, 1977-1981  
Energy Regulation and the Environment, 1989-1992  
Job Development, 1977-1981  
Legislative Retirement, 1983-1990  
Mental Health Research, 1989-1992  
\*Vice Chair, 1989-1992  
Motor Vehicle Inspections, 1975-1976  
Oversight on Lowering Cost of Electric Services, 1993-1996  
Peace Officers Classifications, 1977-1982  
Public Pension Fund Investments, 1981-1982, 1987-1988  
Rules, 1981-1996  
State's Economy, 1977-1992  
Tort Liability, 1977-1981  
Worker's Compensation Study, 1983-1984

Commissions

Corporate Governance, Shareholder Rights, and Securities Transactions, 1989-1992  
Debt Advisory, 1987-1990

In addition to his many committee appointments, Newton R. Russell was also a member of the Executive Committee (1965-1972) and the Republican State Central Committee (1965-1972). He also served as Senate Minority Whip (1986-1996).

**Scope and Content**

The Newton R. Russell papers consist of 35 cubic feet of textual records and audio/visual materials and cover the years 1965-1996. The records are organized into 12 record series: Bill Files, 1966-1996; Pastor-Prayer Subject Files, 1990-1995; Speech Subject Files, 1991-1994; Pornography Research Files, 1975-1987; Senate Select Committee on Mediation Files,

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1988-1996; Subject Files, 1971-1991; Antelope Valley Files, 1983-1992; Newsletters, 1965-1987; Press Clippings, 1993-1995; Press Releases, 1974-1995; AIDS Subject Files, 1983-1988; and Rose Bird Recall Files, 1982-1986.

The Bill Files series comprises the bulk of the collection and provide the strongest evidence of Russell's primary legislative interests. These files demonstrate his concerted and consistent focus on: the public pension system, drug and alcoholic beverage regulation, pornography regulation, and AIDS.

Supplementing the Bill Files, the collection's other series reveal Russell's politically conservative outlook and his activism while in office. A longtime foe of pornography, the Pornography Research Files provide access to Russell's legislative influences and models from around the country as he drafted his own legislation in California. Similarly, the AIDS Subject Files document Russell's battle to combat the controversial disease in accordance with their political-religious principles. More than anything, this series illustrates the fiercely contentious atmosphere surrounding AIDS in the 1980s.

In addition to those record series that illuminate Russell's career as a legislator, several also provide insight into his career as a politician. Pastor-Prayer Subject Files illustrate his efforts to reach California's conservative religious communities in the early 1990s. Likewise, Newsletters and Press Releases, spanning most of his career, track Russell's outreach efforts toward his Southern California constituents in general. Even more locally, the Antelope Valley Files document his interest in and efforts for one specific constituent community. Throughout his career, Russell was in constant communication with those he represented and worked hard to serve their needs.

#### **Accruals**

No further accruals are expected.

#### **Related Material at the California State Archives**

John Doolittle Papers

Senate Public Employment and Retirement Committee

#### **Indexing Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

Russell, Newton R.

Alcohol-Law and legislation

Drugs-Law and legislation-California

AIDS(Disease)

Crime prevention-California

Early childhood education-California

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LP457:1-635

Series 1 **Bill Files 1966-1996**

**Physical Description:** 635 file folders, 3 audiocassette tapes, and 1 videocassette tape  
**Arrangement**

Arranged chronologically by legislative session, then numerically by bill number.

**Access Information**

Access to audiovisual material requires the production of use copies.

**Scope and Content Note**

Bill Files were created by Newton R. Russell while he served as an Assembly Member from 1965 to 1974 and as a State Senator from 1975 to 1996. The files may include bill analyses, amendments, resolutions, letters of support or opposition, author statements, testimonies, press releases, newspaper clippings, correspondence, committee statements that pertain to numerous issues of concern to Russell.

As an Assembly Member and State Senator, Newton R. Russell's legislative interests were varied. Some topics and bills of note include: public pensions (AB3325 and AB3326 (Chapter 1477, Statutes 1973), 1973-1974; SB442, 1977-1978; SB797, 1979-1980; SB1528, 1979-1980; SB45, 1981-1982; SB680, 1981-1982; and SB53 and SB1480, 1993-1994); the industrial revenue bond law (AB4365, 1973-1974); public social services (SB403, 1975-1976); drug and alcoholic beverage regulation (SB1749 (Chapter 457, Statutes 1976), 1975-1976; SB341, 1981-1982; and SB876, 1983-1984); pornography regulation (SB428, 1977-1978; SB393, SB1700, and SB1720, 1981-1982); bilingual issues (SB1232, 1979-1980; and SJR5, 1981-1982); immigration (SB45, 1991-1992; and SB1535, 1993-1994); mediation (SB1643, 1993-1994; and SB271 and SB1429, 1995-1996); and the AIDS virus (SB1239, 1993-1994).

1966: HR201-HR316(1ff) LP457:1

1967: AB302-AB2590; ACA53; ACR113-ACR132;HR175-HR538 (6ff) LP457:2-7

1968: AB333-AB1865; ACR46-ACR151; HR383-HR555 (8ff) LP457:8-15

1969: AB278-AB2343; ACR97-ACR202; HR160-HR238 (7ff) LP457:16-22

1970: AB257-AB2171; ACR114-ACR118; HR235 (8ff) LP457:23-30

1971: AB341-AB2999; ACR7-ACR147; AJR54; HR20-HR135 (11ff) LP457:31-41

1972: AB22-AB2359; ACA4; ACR72; HR80 (13ff) LP457:42-54

1973-1974: AB201-AB4457; ACR71-ACR539; AJR85-AJR124; HR128-HR130 (15ff) LP457:55-79

1975-1976: SB403-SB2130; SCA33; SJR17-SJR59 (44ff) LP457:80-123

1977-1978: SB29-SB2237; SCR37-SCR38; SJR17-SJR50; SR18-SR19 (46ff) LP457:124-169

1979-1980: SB38-SB1831; SCA35; SCR53-SCR83; SJR44; SR16-SR26 (36ff) LP457:170-205

1981-1982: SB45-SB1963; SCR59; SJR5; SR39 (53ff) LP457:206-258

1983-1984: SB183-SB2338 (36ff) LP457:259-294

1985-1986: SB352-SB2588; SCA35-SCA39; SCR65 (36ff) LP457:295-330

1987-1988: SB275-SB2875; SCA32-SCA44; SCR49-SCR67 (38ff) LP457:331-368

1989-1990: SB105-SB2898; SCA3; SCR32-SCR98; SJR2 (58ff) LP457:369-426

1991-1992: SB45-SB2009; SCA37-SCA38; SCR24-SCR61; SJR18; SR7 (53ff) LP457:427-479

1993-1994: SB17-SB2003; SCA20-SCA30; SCR8-SCR51; SJR36; SR15-SR45; SB39X (101ff) LP457:480-580

1995-1996: SB4-SB2129; SCR19; SJR2 (54ff) LP457:581-634

1965-1986: Legislative Summaries (1ff) LP457:635

LP457:636-640

Series 2 **Pastor-Prayer Subject Files 1990-1995**

**Physical Description:** 5 file folders and 17 audiocassette tapes

**Arrangement**

Arranged alphabetically by folder title.

**Access Information**

Access to audiovisual material requires the production of use copies.

**Scope and Content Note**

Pastor-Prayer Subject Files document Russell's numerous efforts to reach out to religious organizations throughout the state during his time in office. This series includes chronologically ordered transcripts and audio recordings from Russell's "Call to Prayer" radio broadcasts, issues of *The Company of the 10,000* newsletter, correspondence with California pastors including letters urging support for specific legislation, and bulletins and other promotional materials related to various prayer meetings. Some subjects include pornography, drugs, teen pregnancy, and gangs.

LP457:641-644

Series 3 **Speech Subject Files 1991-1994**

**Physical Description:** 4 file folders

**Arrangement**

Arranged alphabetically by folder title.

**Scope and Content Note**

Speech Subject Files document Russell's speeches at numerous political engagements on a variety of issues, such as pornography, child molestation, abstinence education, AIDS, homosexuality, rising crime rates, and family values. This series consists of general background information, which includes news clippings, correspondence, newsletters, and memoranda, related to the topics of interest; chronological speeches, which include Russell's speech transcripts; materials from the National Crimes Against Children Conference, which include correspondence, bulletins, programs, and press releases related to the conference, as well as news clippings and speech transcripts concerning Russell's topic at the event, ritualized violence against children; and speech transcripts, press clippings, news bulletins, and correspondence related to the National Day of Prayer in 1993.

LP457:645-658

Series 4 **Pornography Research Files 1975-1987**

**Physical Description:** 14 file folders

**Arrangement**

Arranged alphabetically by folder title.

**Scope and Content Note**

Pornography Research Files compile documents produced by numerous public and private organizations to regulate the production and distribution of pornographic materials. When drafting his own similar legislation, Russell consulted these research materials. Materials include hearing files from both the United States and the California State Senate Judiciary Committees; court transcripts from the California State Supreme Court, State Superior Court, the North Carolina Supreme Court, and the United States Supreme Court; recommendations from the citizens' action group, Citizens for Decency through Law; and a report from the Los Angeles County Commission.



LP457:659-673

Series 5 **Senate Select Committee on Mediation Files 1988-1996**

**Physical Description:** 15 file folders

**Arrangement**

Arranged alphabetically by folder title.

**Scope and Content Note**

During his tenure as Chair of the Senate Select Committee on Mediation, Russell compiled records related to several aspects of legal mediation. This series includes reports, conference programs, pamphlets, bulletins, newsletters, hearing files, court transcripts, memoranda, correspondence, and committee resolutions. Folder titles include: Alternative Dispute Resolution, Ephemera, Hearing Files, Legal Background, and Society of Professionals in Dispute Resolution Reports.

LP457:674-692

Series 6 **Subject Files 1971-1991**

**Physical Description:** 19 file folders

**Arrangement**

Arranged alphabetically by folder title.

**Scope and Content Note**

Subject Files are comprised of correspondence, news clippings, notes, memoranda, resolutions, reports, statements, speech transcripts, bill texts, legislative summaries, and state statutes. Subjects include: the Antelope Valley Poppy Preserve, bilingual education, child abuse, comparable worth, grandparents' rights, Project SEED (Special Elementary Education for the Disadvantaged), issues relating to schools in the 62nd Assembly District, state mandates, and oil severance tax and depletion allowances.

LP457:693-708

Series 7 **Antelope Valley Files 1983-1992**

**Physical Description:** 16 file folders

**Arrangement**

Arranged into two sub series: (1) 50th District Agricultural Association Correspondence and (2) Subject Files.

**Scope and Content Note**

Representing his constituents in Antelope Valley, Russell compiled records related to various topics concerning that region.

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LP457:693-698

Subseries 1 **50th Agricultural Association Correspondence 1983-1986, 1990-1992**

**Physical Description:** 6 file folders

**Arrangement**

Arranged chronologically by date.

**Scope and Content**

The first portion of the series, 50th District Agricultural Association Correspondence, includes records related to board appointments and the Antelope Valley Fair.

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LP457:699-708

Subseries 2 **Subject Files 1986-1992**

**Physical Description:** 10 file folders

**Arrangement**

Arranged alphabetically by folder title.

**Scope and Content**

The series' second portion, Subject Files, includes press releases, correspondence, reports, news clippings, resolutions, activity reports, notes, newsletters, statements, project proposals, memoranda, meeting notes, hearing testimonies, feasibility studies, hearing presentations, irrigation district applications, reconnaissance studies, meeting minutes, court transcripts, and bill texts. Topics include the California-Nevada Super Speed Transportation Commission, Clyde Bailey's activity reports, Highway 138, Little Rock Dam, prison water issues, University of California campus sites, and Volital rocket fuel.

LP457:709-710

Series 8 **Newsletters 1965-1966**

**Physical Description:** 2 file folders

**Arrangement**

Arranged chronologically by release date.

**Scope and Content Note**

As a legislator, Russell sent his Southern California constituents regular newsletters in order to keep them abreast of developments in Sacramento. These newsletters also included a questionnaire section for district members to offer feedback to their representative. Spanning the years 1965 through 1966, and 1974 through 1987, this series documents the legislator's interactions with the public at those times. Some subjects include pornography regulations, energy crises, collective bargaining for public employees, welfare reform, medical malpractice insurance, shoplifting, property tax, Proposition 13, state mandated programs, bilingual education, public employee pensions, education, and child abuse.

LP457:711

Series 9 **Press Clippings 1993-1995**

**Physical Description:** 1 file folder

**Arrangement**

Arranged chronologically by publication date.

**Scope and Content Note**

While in office, Russell collected newspaper clippings related to various topics of interest from several publications throughout the state. This series only spans the later years of his career, 1993 through 1995. Some subjects include environmentalism, child custody laws, rape penalties, immigration enforcement, Medi-Cal restrictions, pension reform, sexual harassment, ritualistic child abuse, and the Republican Party in Southern California.

LP457:712-727

Series 10 **Press Releases 1974-1995**

**Physical Description:** 16 file folders

**Arrangement**

Arranged chronologically by release date.

**Scope and Content Note**

Press Releases were issued by Russell over the course of his career as a State Senator. The subjects covered include introduced legislation, Republican Party news, and issues relevant to his district.

LP457:728-809

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**Series 11 AIDS Subject Files 1983-1988****Physical Description:** 82 file folders**Arrangement**

Arranged alphabetically by folder title.

**Scope and Content Note**

Like many public officials in the 1980s, Russell was concerned by the rise and spread of the AIDS virus throughout the state, the country, and the world. The author of several AIDS-related bills, Russell amassed a substantial collection of research materials, much of which were originally collected and later given to his office by former Republican State Senators H. L. Richardson and John Doolittle. This series is comprised of pamphlets, statements, correspondence, bill summaries, newsletters, press clippings, press releases, speech transcripts, bill texts, memoranda, notes, amendments, resolutions, hearing testimonies, reports, issues of the Center for Disease Control's weekly publication, *The Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, articles from the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, news summaries, statistics charts, and policy statements.

Some subjects include AB1 (1983-1984), AB87 and AB3255 (1987-1988), blood contamination, casual contact with the virus, condoms and other safe-sex measures, confidentiality of victims, education, the AIDS epidemic in foreign countries, heterosexual transmission of the virus, homosexuals and AIDS, hospitals and hospice workers, insurance coverage for AIDS victims, intravenous drug use, law enforcement and emergency workers exposure to the disease, legislation, major policy statements and background, AIDS and the military, infection among ethnic minorities, other diseases and AIDS, conservative activist Paul Gann's contraction of the virus, other prominent infected persons, politics surrounding AIDS, pregnant mothers infected with the virus, AIDS among prisoners, Proposition 102 (1987-1988), public opinion, testing, and treatment of the disease.

LP457:810-815

**Series 12 Rose Bird Recall Files 1982-1986****Physical Description:** 6 file folders**Arrangement**

Arranged per the order established by the records creator.

**Scope and Content Note**

Rose Bird Recall Files document former Senator H. L. Richardson's efforts to unseat California State Supreme Court Chief Justice Rose Bird in the mid-1980s. Accessioned with much of the AIDS Subject Files, this series was most likely created by Richardson and transferred to Russell along with files related to the AIDS virus. This series includes press clippings, correspondence, campaign plans, journal articles, news releases, polls, court transcripts, pamphlets, speech outlines and transcripts, prosecutors' white papers, committee transcripts, and newsletters.