Records of Edward (Ted) Widmer, Foreign Policy Speechwriter for President Clinton from 1997-2000

Extent
250 folders, 10,167 pages

Access
Collection is open to all researchers. Access to Clinton Presidential Records is governed by the Presidential Records Act (PRA) (44 USC 2201) and the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 USC 552, as amended) and therefore records may be restricted in whole or in part in accordance with legal exemptions.

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Provenance
Official records of William Jefferson Clinton’s presidency are housed at the Clinton Presidential Library and administered by the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) under the provisions of the Presidential Records Act (PRA).

Processed by
Staff Archivist, 2009. Previously restricted materials are added as they are released.

Scope and Content
The materials in FOIA 2006-0471-F are a selective body of documents responsive to the topic of the FOIA. Researchers should consult the archivist about related materials.

Edward (Ted) Widmer served as President Clinton’s chief foreign policy speechwriter from 1997-2000. In this capacity he worked on remarks for a wide variety of subjects dealing with countries such as China, Korea, Argentina, Ghana, Canada, the Czech Republic, Northern Ireland, Kosovo, Russia, and Venezuela. For a few months at the tail end of the Clinton Administration, Widmer filled the position of senior advisor to the President for special projects. He dealt mainly with matters related to history and the awarding of scholarships.

After Clinton left office, Widmer spent his time writing books and holding a series of academic posts. He became the first director of the C.V. Starr Center for the Study of the American Experience, and on July 1, 2006 was named the head of the John Carter Brown Library at Brown University. He received
the 2001 Washington Irving Prize for *Young America: The Flowering of Democracy in New York City*. His most recent work is *Ark of the Liberties: America and the World*, a history of U.S. foreign policy. It should also be noted that Widmer conducted interviews with Clinton while Clinton was in the process of writing his autobiography, *My Life*.

FOIA request 2006-0471-F consists of speech drafts, memoranda, handwritten notes, newspaper articles, publications, schedules, reports, and papers. Many of the speech drafts are marked up with extensive critical comments and suggested revisions. Widmer’s handwritten notes can be found on scraps of paper, napkins, and the back of other records. In many cases, he seems to be writing out speeches with phone numbers, obscure references, and assorted data thrown into the mix. Widmer clearly knew a lot about foreign policy and supplied President Clinton with any number of astute speeches on difficult subjects.

**System of Arrangement**

Records that were responsive to this FOIA request were found in this collection area—Clinton Presidential Records: White House Staff and Office Files.

Staff and Office Files are processed at the folder level by staff members within their individual offices and document all levels of administration activity.

**Box 1**

*Clinton Presidential Records: White House Staff and Office Files*

National Security Council

Speechwriting – Widmer, Ted

Aachen – Small [OA/ID 2188]
Aachen [OA/ID 2188]
Africa – Ghana [OA/ID 2188]
Africa – Goree [1] [OA/ID 2188]
Africa – Goree [2] [OA/ID 2188]
Africa – Goree [3] [OA/ID 2188]
Africa – Goree [4] [OA/ID 2188]
Goree Background [OA/ID 2188]
Africa Senegal President [OA/ID 2188]
Africa Op-Ed [OA/ID 2188]
Africa – Ministerial, 3/16/99 [OA/ID 2188]
Africa – Samuel R. Berger (SRB) [OA/ID 2188]
African Summit, 2/17/00 [OA/ID 2188]
Africa – South Africa Embassy [OA/ID 2188]

**Box 2**

Africa Background [1] [OA/ID 2188]
Africa Background [2] [OA/ID 2188]
Africa Background [3] [OA/ID 2188]
Africa Background [4] [OA/ID 2188]
Africa Background [5] [OA/ID 2188]
Arab American Institute, 5/7/98 [OA/ID 2188]
Argentina – Wreath Laying [OA/ID 2188]
Argentina – San Carlos de Bariloche [OA/ID 2188]
Argentina – Menem Visit, 1/99 [OA/ID 2188]
Bailyn, [Bernard] [OA/ID 2188]
Baltics [OA/ID 2188]
Samuel R. Berger (SRB) – American Muslim Council (AMC), 5/2/99 [OA/ID 2188]
Samuel R. Berger (SRB) – Bouchard and Kelly [OA/ID 2188]
Samuel R. Berger (SRB) – Christmas [OA/ID 2188]
Samuel R. Berger (SRB) – Cornell [1] [OA/ID 2188]
Samuel R. Berger (SRB) – Cornell [2] [OA/ID 2188]
Samuel R. Berger (SRB) – Cornell [3] [OA/ID 2188]

Box 3

Berger – Dartmouth, 10/16/98 [1] [OA/ID 2188]
Berger – Dartmouth, 10/16/98 [2] [OA/ID 2188]
Samuel R. Berger (SRB) – Holbrooke Toast [OA/ID 2188]
Samuel R. Berger (SRB) – Navy [OA/ID 2188]
Samuel R. Berger (SRB) – 1,000 Cuts [1] [OA/ID 2188]
Samuel R. Berger (SRB) – 1,000 Cuts [2] [OA/ID 2188]
Samuel R. Berger (SRB) – 1,000 Cuts [3] [OA/ID 2188]
Biological Weapons [OA/ID 2188]
Blair [1] [OA/ID 2188]
Blair [2] [OA/ID 2188]
Blair [3] [OA/ID 2188]
Bosnia: Sarajevo [OA/ID 2188]
Bosnia [1] [OA/ID 2188]
Bosnia [2] [OA/ID 2188]
Budget ’99 [OA/ID 2188]

Box 4

Canada [OA/ID 2189]
Central America, 2/99 [OA/ID 2189]
Chile [OA/ID 2189]
China [1] [OA/ID 2189]
China [2] [OA/ID 2189]
China [3] [OA/ID 2189]
China – General [OA/ID 2189]
China – Guilin [OA/ID 2189]
China – Xian [OA/ID 2189]
China – Beijing University [OA/ID 2189]
China – Most Favored Nation (MFN) & India/Pakistan, 6/3/98 [OA/ID 2189]
China – Toast [OA/ID 2189]
China – Zhu Visit, 4/8/99 [1] [OA/ID 2189]
Christmas [OA/ID 2189]
Christopher, Warren [OA/ID 2189]
Commander in Chiefs (CINC) Dinner [OA/ID 2189]
Commander in Chiefs (CINC) Trophy [1] [OA/ID 2189]
Commander in Chiefs (CINC) Trophy [2] [OA/ID 2189]
Clinton Doctrine [OA/ID 2189]

Box 5

Colombia, 10/28/98 [OA/ID 2189]
Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) Video [OA/ID 2189]
Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) [OA/ID 2189]
Council of Jewish Federations, 11/18/97 [OA/ID 2189]
[Newspaper Clips] – Crime [OA/ID 2189]
Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) [OA/ID 2189]
Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), 10/5/99 – Pentagon [OA/ID 2189]
Cuba [OA/ID 2189]
Czech Republic [1] [OA/ID 2189]
Czech Republic [2] [OA/ID 2189]
Czech Republic [3] [OA/ID 2189]
Czech Republic [4] [OA/ID 2189]
Czech Republic [5] [OA/ID 2189]
Democracy [OA/ID 2189]
Detroit, 4/16/99 [OA/ID 2189]
Drew Award [1] [OA/ID 2189]
Drew Award [2] [OA/ID 2189]
Drugs [OA/ID 2189]
Economy [OA/ID 2189]
Ellsworth AFB [OA/ID 2189]
Environment [OA/ID 2189]
European Union (EU) [1] [OA/ID 2189]
European Union (EU) [2] [OA/ID 2189]
European Union (EU) [3] [OA/ID 2189]

Box 6

Flipper, Henry Ossian [OA/ID 2189]
Foreign Policy [1] [OA/ID 2189]
Foreign Policy [2] [OA/ID 2189]
France – Embassy [OA/ID 2189]
France – French-American Business Council (FABC) [OA/ID 2189]
Fuerth, Leon [OA/ID 2189]
Germany – Berlin Airlift [1] [OA/ID 2189]
Germany – Berlin Airlift [2] [OA/ID 2189]
Germany – Berlin Airlift [3] [OA/ID 2189]
Germany – Toast, Etc. [OA/ID 2189]
Germany – Bonn, US-EU [OA/ID 2189]
Germany – Spangdahlem AB [OA/ID 2189]
Ghana – Rawlings Arrival, 2/24/99 [OA/ID 2189]
Ghana – Rawlings Press Conference, 2/24/99 [1] [OA/ID 2189]
Greece [OA/ID 2189]
Guatemala [OA/ID 2189]
Haiti [OA/ID 2189]
Honduras – Soto Cano [OA/ID 2189]
Human Rights [1] [OA/ID 2189]
Human Rights [2] [OA/ID 2189]

Box 7

Hurricane Mitch [1] [OA/ID 2189]
Hurricane Mitch [2] [OA/ID 2189]
Hurricane Mitch [3] [OA/ID 2189]
Hussein [King of Jordan] [1] [OA/ID 2189]
Hussein [King of Jordan] [2] [OA/ID 2189]
Hussein [King of Jordan] [3] [OA/ID 2189]
India [OA/ID 2189]
International Rescue Committee (IRC) [OA/ID 2190]
Iraq [OA/ID 2190]
Ireland – Ahern [OA/ID 2190]
Ireland – Dublin [1] [OA/ID 2190]
Ireland – Dublin [2] [OA/ID 2190]
Ireland – Limerick [OA/ID 2190]
Ireland, Northern – Armagh [OA/ID 2190]
Ireland, Northern – Omagh [OA/ID 2190]
Ireland – St. Patrick’s [OA/ID 2190]
Ireland – Russia [OA/ID 2190]

Box 8

Irish American Event, 9/11/98 [OA/ID 2190]
Islam [1] [OA/ID 2190]
Islam [2] [OA/ID 2190]
Israel – Samuel R. Berger (SRB), 4/30/98 [OA/ID 2190]
Israel – 12/98 [OA/ID 2190]
Italy [1] [OA/ID 2190]
Italy [2] [OA/ID 2190]
Italy – Aviano [OA/ID 2190]
Japan [OA/ID 2190]
Japan – Obuchi Arrival, 5/3/99 [OA/ID 2190]
Japan – Toast [OA/ID 2190]
Joint Chiefs of Staff [OA/ID 2190]
Kerrick, [General Donald L.] [1] [OA/ID 2190]
Kerrick, [General Donald L.] [2] [OA/ID 2190]
Kohl, [German Chancellor Helmut] [OA/ID 2190]
Korea [1] [OA/ID 2190]
Korea [2] [OA/ID 2190]
Korea [3] [OA/ID 2190]

Box 9

Korea [4] [OA/ID 2190]
Korea [5] [OA/ID 2190]
Korean War [OA/ID 2190]
Kosovo [1] [OA/ID 2190]
Kosovo [2] [OA/ID 2190]
Kosovo [3] [OA/ID 2190]
Kosovo Radio, 3/22/99 [OA/ID 2190]
Kosovo – Bondsteel [OA/ID 2190]
Lake, Anthony [OA/ID 2190]
Medal of Honor – Rascon, 2/8/00 [OA/ID 2190]
Medal of Honor [Society] [OA/ID 2190]
Memorial Day [1] [OA/ID 2190]
Memorial Day [2] [OA/ID 2190]
Mexico – Consulate [OA/ID 2190]
Mexico [1] [OA/ID 2190]
Mexico [2] [OA/ID 2190]
Mexico – Extra [OA/ID 2190]
Middle East [OA/ID 2190]
Middle East Donors [OA/ID 2190]

Box 10

Military Events [OA/ID 2190]
North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) [1] [OA/ID 2190]
North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) [2] [OA/ID 2190]
North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) [3] [OA/ID 2190]
North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) – Summit, 4/99 [OA/ID 2190]
National Democratic Institute (NDI) [1] [OA/ID 2190]
National Democratic Institute (NDI) [2] [OA/ID 2190]
National Democratic Institute (NDI) [3] [OA/ID 2190]
National Democratic Institute (NDI) [4] [OA/ID 2190]
Net Aid [OA/ID 2191]
Nigeria [1] [OA/ID 2191]
Nigeria [2] [OA/ID 2191]
Norfolk Event [1] [OA/ID 2191]
Norfolk Event [2] [OA/ID 2191]
Northern Ireland [1] [OA/ID 2191]
Northern Ireland [2] [OA/ID 2191]

Box 11

Northern Ireland [3] [OA/ID 2191]
Northern Ireland [4] [OA/ID 2191]
Norway Toast [OA/ID 2191]
National Prayer Breakfast, 2/4/99 [OA/ID 2191]
National Security Council (NSC) [1] [OA/ID 2191]
National Security Council (NSC) [2] [OA/ID 2191]
National Security Telecommunications Advisory Committee (NSTAC) – Samuel R. Berger (SRB), 12/11/97 [OA/ID 2191]
Oceans [OA/ID 2191]
Population [OA/ID 2191]
Portugal – Arrival [OA/ID 2191]
Ramadan [OA/ID 2191]
Radio Addresses [OA/ID 2191]
Video Honoring Bill Russell [OA/ID 2191]
Russia [OA/ID 2191]
Russia – Yeltsin Toast [OA/ID 2191]
Russian Speech [OA/ID 2191]
Sanctions [OA/ID 2191]
Sarajevo Speech [OA/ID 2191]
Slovenia – Toast [OA/ID 2191]
South America [OA/ID 2191]
State of the Union [OA/ID 2191]

Box 12

Steinberg, James [1] [OA/ID 2191]
Steinberg, James [2] [OA/ID 2191]
Steinberg, James [3] [OA/ID 2191]
Steinberg, James [4] [OA/ID 2191]
Sudan Radio, 8/21/98 [OA/ID 2191]
Swing, William – Citation [OA/ID 2191]
Timor, East [OA/ID 2191]
USS Truman, Harry S. [1] [OA/ID 2191]
USS Truman, Harry S. [2] [OA/ID 2191]
USS Truman, Harry S. [3] [OA/ID 2191]
USS Truman, Harry S. [4] [OA/ID 2191]
Turkey [1] [OA/ID 2191]
Turkey [2] [OA/ID 2191]
Turkey – Arrival [OA/ID 2191]
Turkey – Assembly [OA/ID 2191]
Turkey – Earthquake [OA/ID 2191]
Turkey – Embassy [OA/ID 2191]
Turkey – Press [OA/ID 2191]

Box 13

Turkey – Toast [OA/ID 2191]
Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) [1] [OA/ID 2191]
Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) [2] [OA/ID 2191]
Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) [3] [OA/ID 2191]
Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) [4] [OA/ID 2191]
UN General Assembly (UNGA), 9/21/98 [1] [OA/ID 2192]
UN General Assembly (UNGA), 9/21/98 [2] [OA/ID 2192]
UN General Assembly (UNGA), 9/21/98 [3] [OA/ID 2192]
UN General Assembly (UNGA), 9/21/98 [4] [OA/ID 2192]
UN General Assembly (UNGA) [Kofi Annan] [OA/ID 2192]
UN General Assembly (UNGA) – Background [1] [OA/ID 2192]
UN General Assembly (UNGA) – Background [2] [OA/ID 2192]
UN General Assembly (UNGA) – Background [3] [OA/ID 2192]
UN General Assembly (UNGA) – Background [4] [OA/ID 2192]
UN General Assembly (UNGA) – Background [5] [OA/ID 2192]
UN General Assembly (UNGA) – Background [6] [OA/ID 2192]

Box 14

Vancouver, 11/25/97 [OA/ID 2192]
Venezuela Arrival [OA/ID 2192]
Venezuela Signing Ceremony [OA/ID 2192]
Venezuela Embassy [OA/ID 2192]
Veteran’s Day – 1997 [1] [OA/ID 2192]
Veteran’s Day – 1997 [2] [OA/ID 2192]
Vietnam [OA/ID 2192]
West, Togo – 12/2/97 [OA/ID 2192]
Whiteman AFB, MO [1] [OA/ID 2192]
Whiteman AFB, MO [2] [OA/ID 2192]
Wiesel, Elie [OA/ID 2192]
Women [OA/ID 2192]
Women in Military [OA/ID 2192]