



Sims, Robert B .: Files, 1983-1985

Finding Aid Type

White House Staff and Office File Collections

Subtitle/Office

Press Secretary, Office of the

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Record Type

Textual

Biography

Biography

Robert Bell Sims (November 26, 1934-September 10, 2003) was a public and press affairs official for the Navy, the National Security Council, and the White House Press Office. Outside of government service Sims was a working reporter, editor, publisher, and executive with the National Geographic Society.

Robert Sims was born in Alamo, Tennessee, a small town near Jackson, Tennessee, on November 26, 1934. He graduated from Union University in Jackson in 1956. He continued his employment as a reporter with the local paper, the *Jackson Sun*, from 1956-1957. Named as a National Rotary Foundation Fellow in international relations, Sims spent 1957 at the University of Sydney, Australia. In 1958, Sims was working as the Director of Public Relations for Union College when he entered the U.S. Navy as an Ensign after completing the Officer's Candidate School at Newport, Rhode Island.

During his naval career, Sims served in the Mediterranean, California, Wisconsin, and Vietnam. Sims served as a public affairs specialist. He was Special Assistant for Public Affairs to the Secretary of the Navy, 1974-1978, and Deputy Chief of Information for the Navy Department, 1978-1981. While in the Navy, Sims furthered his education earning a double master's degree at the University of Wisconsin in political science and journalism. He also graduated from the National War College.

Sims was a Senior Research Fellow at the National Defense University before joining the Ronald Reagan White House National Security Council staff. In April 1982 Sims was named a Special Assistant to the President for Press Relations. After a structural reorganization at the NSC, Sims was Special Assistant to the President and Director of Public Affairs for the National Security Council. He formally served in this post from June 1983-October 1983. He was then appointed Special Assistant to the President and Deputy Press Secretary for Foreign Affairs in November 1983. However, he continued to serve the NSC until April 1984 when Karna Small was officially appointed full-time to replace Sims in his position.

Following his time in the White House, Sims returned to the Navy, this time as a civilian. In 1984, Sims resigned his naval commission having achieved the rank of Captain. Sims was appointed as Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs from 1985-1987. He often acted as a spokesperson for Secretary of Defense Caspar

Weinberger.

Leaving government service, Sims joined the National Geographic Society in 1987 as their first vice-president for communications. In 1989, he became a senior vice president and the head of all advertising for the National Geographic publications. Sims reorganized all the National Geographic publications into a single entity and at his retirement in 2001 Sims was the president of this magazine group.

Sims was accorded many accolades for his career including selection to the Board of Trustees for the National Geographic Society, a Distinguished Service Award from Union University, selected as a member of the Magazine Publishers Association Board and appointed as a member of the Board of Visitors for the University of Tennessee's College of Arts and Sciences.

Sims published a book in 1983, *The Pentagon Reporters*. The book was based on numerous interviews Sims had with reporters he worked with in Washington, DC regarding how they covered national defense issues.

Sims married Patricia Lytton in 1961 and they had four children and numerous grandchildren.

Robert Sims died from cancer on September 10, 2003, at the age of 68 in Jackson, Tennessee.

Scope and Content Note

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The Robert B. Sims collection consists of material regarding press relations, press releases, press briefings, interview requests, and general reference focused on foreign affairs and the foreign press for 1983-1985 of the Reagan Administration. Material includes completed interview requests in general and specific publication requests and their completed articles. Most of the publication requests are from western European titles. The collection also contains subject material regarding Economic Summits; the 1984 presidential campaign debates; Central America; and general reference on Reagan and foreign policy issues.

Work product for Mort Allin and Les Janka were found within the Sims material. The Allin material was transferred to the [Mort Allin](#) collection. A [Les Janka](#) collection was created from the small amount of his work product found with the Sims collection.

The Robert B. Sims collection within the White House Office of the Press Secretary consists of five series: SERIES I: Chronological File, SERIES II: Interviews; SERIES III: Press Conferences, SERIES IV: Subject File, and SERIES V: Publications.

Series List

SERIES I: Chronological File

SERIES II: Interviews

SERIES III: Press Conferences

SERIES IV: Subject Files

SERIES V: Publications

Last Modified Date

2024-02-26

SERIES I: Chronological File

OA 10196

Status	Title
CLOSED	Sims Chron December 1983-February 1984
CLOSED	Sims Chron March 1984
CLOSED	Sims Chron April 1984-May 1984
CLOSED	Sims Chron June 1984-July 1984
CLOSED	[Sims Chron July 1984-December 1984]
CLOSED	[Sims Chron January 1985-July 1985]

SERIES II: Interviews

OA 10197

Status	Title
CLOSED	Foreign Interview Requests
CLOSED	Completed Interview Requests: Australia

Status	Title
CLOSED	[Completed Interview Requests: Brazil]
CLOSED	Completed Interview Requests: England
CLOSED	Completed Interview Requests: France
CLOSED	Completed Interview Requests: Germany
CLOSED	Completed Interview Requests: Ireland
CLOSED	[Interview Requests: Middle East]
CLOSED	Completed Interview Requests: Norway
CLOSED	[Interview Requests: South Africa]
OPEN	Completed Interview Requests: Sweden
CLOSED	Completed Interview Requests: Switzerland
CLOSED	[Interview Requests: United States]
CLOSED	ABC, Madrid, Spain April 1985 (1)-(2)
CLOSED	<i>Agence France Presse</i> 03/19/1984
CLOSED	[Ann Devroy Interview Points, 01/16/1985]
CLOSED	BBC [Interview, 01/07/1985]
CLOSED	Presidential Message for <i>Berliner Morgenpost</i> , December 1984
CLOSED	<i>Cambio 16</i> Madrid, Spain April 1985
CLOSED	Chinese Journalists 04/17/1984
CLOSED	<i>Les Derniers Nouvelles D'Alsace</i> , France April 1985
CLOSED	<i>Diario De Noticias</i> , Lisbon, Portugal April 1985
CLOSED	<i>Die Welt</i> 05/23/1984
CLOSED	Economic Summit (Bonn) April 1985: Pre-Summit Print Interview
CLOSED	Economic Summit (Bonn) April 1985: Pre-Summit TV Interview
CLOSED	<i>EFE</i> , Spanish News Agency, April 1985
CLOSED	<i>El Pais</i> , Madrid, April 1985
CLOSED	<i>Far Eastern Economic Review</i> 05/09/1984
OPEN	<i>Far Eastern Economic Review</i> [Interview Requests, 1984] (1)-(2)
CLOSED	[Foreign Questions for Radio Interview Prebrief 01/25/1985]

Status	Title
CLOSED	<i>France SOIR Magazine</i> [11/03/1984]
CLOSED	<i>Hurriyet</i> , Turkey 03/29/1985
CLOSED	<i>Il Gironale</i> , Italy 06/01/1984
CLOSED	<i>Il Resto Del Carlino</i> , Italy 03/26/1985
CLOSED	<i>Il Tempo</i> , Rome 05/23/1985
CLOSED	<i>La Libre Belgique</i> , Interview, Belgium 01/11/1985
OPEN	<i>La Republica</i> Interview Request
CLOSED	Interview- <i>La Republica</i> (Italy) 11/03/1984

OA 11012

Status	Title
CLOSED	<i>La Vanguardia</i> , Spain, April 1985 (1)-(2)
CLOSED	<i>Le Figaro Magazine</i> Interview 01/07/1984
CLOSED	<i>Le Monde</i> [Interview, March 1984]
CLOSED	London Summit Interviews, May 1984
CLOSED	<i>Sunday Times</i> of London 09/09/1984 (1)-(2)
CLOSED	London <i>Sunday Times</i> 03/18/1985
CLOSED	<i>Times</i> of London, April 1985 (1)-(2)
CLOSED	<i>Maclean's Magazine</i> , Canada 03/11/1985
CLOSED	Middle East Interview with Nasser Eddin Nashashibi 06/11/1985
CLOSED	Military Service Journals, February 1984
CLOSED	[<i>Newsweek</i> Interview Questions, 03/04/1985]
CLOSED	<i>NHK</i> [<i>Japan Broadcasting Corporation</i> , January 1985]
OPEN	<i>Oslobodjenje</i> (Yugoslavia) February 1984
CLOSED	<i>Pacific Magazine</i> [1984]
CLOSED	[Prep for <i>New York Times</i> Interview, February 1985]
CLOSED	<i>Popular Mechanics</i> , September 1984
CLOSED	<i>Quotidien De Paris</i> , France, April 1985
CLOSED	Radio Free Europe Interview, 06/14/1985
CLOSED	Spain and Portugal Interviews, April 1985
CLOSED	<i>Stern Magazine</i> [Interview Request, 1985]
CLOSED	Interviews: <i>U.S. News and World Reports</i> , 10/09/1984

Status	Title
CLOSED	<i>Yomiuri Shimbun</i> , 12/28/1984

SERIES III: Press Conferences

OA 11012

Status	Title
CLOSED	Presidential Press Conference 12/20/1983
CLOSED	State of the Union 01/25/1984
CLOSED	Presidential Press Conference 02/22/1984
CLOSED	Presidential Press Conference 04/04/1984
CLOSED	Presidential Q and A with Press 05/14/1984

OA 11013

Status	Title
CLOSED	Presidential Press Conference 05/22/1984
CLOSED	Presidential Press Conference 06/10/1984
CLOSED	Presidential Press Conference 06/14/1984
CLOSED	Presidential Press Conference 07/24/1984
CLOSED	Presidential Mini Press Conference 09/11/1984
CLOSED	Presidential Press Conference 11/04/1984
CLOSED	Presidential Press Conference 11/08/1984
CLOSED	Mini Press Conference 12/07/1984
CLOSED	Presidential Press Conference 01/09/1985
CLOSED	Presidential Press Conference 02/21/1985
CLOSED	Presidential Press Conference 03/21/1985
CLOSED	Presidential Press Conference 06/18/1985

SERIES IV: Subject Files

OA 11013

Status	Title
CLOSED	Background Paper: Nicaragua's Military Build-Up and Support for Central American Subversion 07/18/1984
CLOSED	Breger, Marshall
CLOSED	Briefing Book: Background Information on Central America
OPEN	Briefing Book: Central America Democracy, Peace and Development Initiative

OA 11014

Status	Title
OPEN	Briefing Book: Central America Democracy, Peace and Development Initiative February 1984
OPEN	Canada Trip, 03/17/1985-03/18/1985 (1)(2)
CLOSED	Canada Trip 03/17/1985-03/18/1985
CLOSED	Caribbean Island Leaders Conference 07/17/1984-07/19/1984
OPEN	Correspondence-Re: Debates 1984
OPEN	Debate Prep (1)-(3)
CLOSED	Department of State
CLOSED	Economic Summit (Bonn) April 1985: Economic Summit
OPEN	Europe Trip [Bonn Summit, 1985] (1)-(4)
CLOSED	Food for Peace
CLOSED	Genealogical Information (President Reagan)
OPEN	Holocaust Remarks
OPEN	[International Court of Justice Nicaragua Decision-Public Diplomacy]
CLOSED	Kissinger Report of Central America
OPEN	Korean Airliner, 09/01/1983 (1)-(14)
CLOSED	La Rouche, Lyndon
CLOSED	Latin America Outreach Program
OPEN	League of Women Voters 1984 Presidential Debates Press Kit

OA 11622

Status	Title
CLOSED	McFarlane, Robert C.
OPEN	Media-General
CLOSED	Mondale on Defense
CLOSED	NASA Information Kit 01/28/1984
CLOSED	News Briefing on Intelligence Information on External Support of the Guerrillas in El Salvador 08/08/1984
CLOSED	NSC

Status	Title
OPEN	Presidential Debate Materials November 1984
CLOSED	Presidential Quotes
CLOSED	Presidential Statements/Misinterpretations [1984]
CLOSED	President's Trip to Ireland, France, and the London Economic Summit 06/01/1984-06/10/1984
CLOSED	Press Book: Trip of President Reagan to Quebec City, Canada 03/17/1985-03/18/1985

OA 11623

Status	Title
CLOSED	Public Diplomacy
OPEN	Radio Marti (1)-(2)
CLOSED	Reed, Thomas C.
CLOSED	Report of the National Bipartisan Commission on Central America January 1984
CLOSED	Schultz, George P. (1)-(3)
OPEN	Security (Combating Leaks) (1)-(4)
CLOSED	Selected National Security Issues September 1984
OPEN	[Space]
OPEN	Strategic Defense Systems (1)-(13)
OPEN	Thatcher Visit 12/22/1984
CLOSED	[Third World Foundation for Social and Economic Studies Publications, 1983, 1984]
OPEN	Transcript of League of Women Voters 1984 Presidential Debate between the President and Former Vice President Mondale
OPEN	Transcript of Presidential Campaign Debate 09/21/1980
OPEN	TWA Hijacking/Hostages, June 1985 (1)-(9)
OPEN	USIA (1)-(8)
CLOSED	U.S. Relations in Poland 10/11/1984
CLOSED	Vice President Bush (1)-(2)
CLOSED	World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers 1972-1982, April 1984

SERIES V: Publications

OA 11623

Status	Title
CLOSED	The Candidates: Reagan vs. Mondale, Where They Stand 1984
CLOSED	<i>Defense Magazine: The Nuclear Issue, Preserving the Peace, May 1984</i>
CLOSED	The Intelligent Layperson's Guide to the Nuclear Freeze and Peace Debate, 1983
CLOSED	North Atlantic Council Meets in Washington 05/29/1984-05/31/1984
CLOSED	Realism, Strength, Negotiations: Key Foreign Policy Statements of the Reagan Administration May 1984
CLOSED	Talking Points on Domestic Issues and the Economy
CLOSED	Whence the Threat to Peace, 1984
CLOSED	<i>The World Factbook, 1983</i>