Extent

134 folders, approximately 9,822 pages, 25 Electronic Files

Summary

This collection consists of records related to Japan-U.S. trade negotiations concerning rice and the negotiations between the U.S., Japan, Canada, and the EU over the General Agreements on Trade and Tariffs (GATT) Agreements on Trade in Goods. It includes correspondence, memoranda, reports, emails, administrative paperwork, transcripts of press briefings, press releases, and foreign press compilations. The collection also includes Framework agreement documents, documents related to negotiations on rice, autos and auto parts, forest products, telecommunications, government procurement, supercomputers, semiconductors, and others.

Scope and Content Note

The materials in FOIA 2016-1119-F are a selective body of documents responsive to the topic of the FOIA. Researchers should consult the archivist about related material. Records responsive to Freedom of Information Act request 2016-1119-F include correspondence, memoranda, reports, emails, administrative paperwork, transcripts of press briefings, press releases, and foreign press compilations. The collection also includes Framework agreement documents, documents related to negotiations on rice, autos and auto parts, forest products, telecommunications, government procurement, supercomputers, semiconductors, and others. While the request for this collection was for 1993 it was not until December 1993 that the Japanese opened their markets in any substantial way to U.S. rice imports. This was largely due to the fact that the Japanese rice harvest failed. Importantly, Japanese Prime Minister Hosokawa’s government agreed to market access for rice just hours before the U.S., Japan, Canada, and the EU signed the General Agreements on Trade and Tariffs (GATT) Agreements on Trade in Goods. The GATT wasn’t finalized until

April 1994. This collection dates from 1993 to 2001 and encompasses the majority of the records related to U.S.-Japan trade in rice. The Japanese have a nickname for the United States—beikoku, or the land of rice, suggesting it is a land of abundance and wealth. Edward Lincoln, a professor of East Asian studies and economics, wrote in his book Troubled Times: U.S.-Japan Trade Relations in the 1990s that, “the two years of negotiations under the Framework Agreement from 1993 to 1995 proved exceptionally noisy and difficult.” The Japan Times newspaper wrote—in a February 1993 article entitled “Japan Waits on Clinton as Trade Talks Stall”—that in the January Uruguay Round talks Japan refused to agree to rice liberalization. This decision brought talks to a stand-still. For sure, the period was tense. The Japanese economy had been growing rapidly prior to 1992. During the period from 1973 to 1992, Japanese economic growth averaged approximately four percent per year. From 1988 to 1992, Japanese growth averaged five percent. The Japanese trade surplus with the world reached an astounding $107 billion in 1992. However in that same year, growth dropped to one percent and by 1993 tumbled to less than one percent. This recession led to higher Japanese exports and reduced imports into Japan. At the start of the Clinton administration negotiators from Japan’s Ministry of International Trade and Industry, often called MITI, were loath to talk of market access and deregulation. However, with U.S. trade surpluses with Japan nearing $39 billion Congress was beginning to demand action. President Clinton, as with both Presidents Reagan and Bush, came into office and developed a new policy toward Japan. Clinton’s plan was to strengthen security arrangements and open Japanese markets to more American goods and materials. The Reagan administration created the Market-Oriented Sector Selective (MOSS) negotiations in 1985 to work with the Japanese on trade issues in very specific sectors. The Bush administration, pushed by pressure from Congress, and following the passage of the Trade Act of 1988, began an intense round of bilateral negotiations with Japan. They also increased the intensity of negotiations in the Uruguay Round of the GATT. Bush’s program was called the Structural Impediments Initiative (SII). This program looked more broadly at general problems with U.S.-Japan trade and not with any particular industry or product. However as Lincoln notes his book, this effort stalled after only one year and the Japanese began to resist “negotiations more stoutly.” The Clinton administration settled on an ambitious trade negotiation that was a combination of Reagan’s MOSS and Bush’s SII. United States Ambassador to Japan, Walter Mondale said in July 1993, “Our most pressing need at this time is to correct the imbalance in our economic relationship.” President Clinton had just attended the Asia-Pacific

Economic Cooperation (APEC) meeting in Tokyo, Japan, where he said on July 9: “we are coming to an understanding that the serious imbalance in trade between our two nations cannot continue...it is not in the interest of either country.” Through the early months of 1993, the governments of Japan and the United States worked diligently on the Joint Statement on the United States-Japan Framework for a New Economic Partnership, more commonly called the Framework Agreement. This agreement set out a broad goal for negotiation of trade and economic issues with Japan. It reaffirmed our commitment to mutual security. It set forth a common agenda toward worldwide issues and it established a series of bilateral negotiations. Under the Framework Agreement the U.S. and Japan agreed to hold bilateral negotiations for macroeconomic issues and certain sectorial issues. While those agreements already being negotiated under GATT would continue under the Uruguay Round. Rice was an issue that was being negotiated under the Uruguay Round along with a larger agricultural agreement. The Japanese, due in large part to the significance of rice as a cultural icon, long refused to accept rice liberalization or rice tariffication. Under GATT the Japanese agreed to a minimum access agreement, allowing foreign countries a small percentage of the total rice market. The Japanese retained the ability to end minimum access and move to tariffs at the end of six years.

Record Type

Electronic Records

System of Arrangement

Records that are responsive to this FOIA request were found in these collection areas— Clinton Presidential Records: White House Office of Records Management (WHORM) Subject Files, Clinton Presidential Records: WHORM Subject Files CF, Clinton Presidential Records: White House Staff and Office Files and Clinton Presidential Records: NSC Cable, Email, and Records Management Systems. The White House Office of Records Management (WHORM) contains a variety of series created to organize and track documents and correspondence. The WHORM Alpha file was compiled by the White House Office of Records Management from 1993 – 1996 and is a series of documents arranged by name of persons, organizations, or

events. The WHORM Subject file was compiled by the White House Office of Records Management and is a series of categories designated by a letter/number combination. In addition, there are WHORM, WHORM Counsel, WHORM (CL), WHORM (OP), WHORM (Too Late); WHORM (Various Offices); and WHORM (Alpha Project) series. Staff and Office files were maintained at the folder level by staff members within their individual offices and document all levels of administration activity. WHORM files are processed at the document level; whereas, Staff and Office files are processed at the folder level, that is, individual documents are not selected and removed from a folder for processing. While this method maintains folder integrity, it frequently results in the incidental processing of documents that are not wholly responsive to the subject area. FOIA 2016-1119-F includes WHORM records from these subject codes: CM003-04 Commodities: Grain-Mill Products-Livestock Feed CO085 Countries: Japan TA003 Trade: Exports.

Access

Collection is open to all researchers. Access to Clinton Presidential Records is governed by the Presidential Records Act (PRA) (44 U.S.C. Chapter 22, as amended) and the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 U.S.C. 552, as amended) and therefore records may be restricted in whole or in part in accordance with legal exemptions.

Copyright

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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, 2017. Previously restricted materials are added as they are released.

Last Modified Date

2018-04-16

Container List

The following is a list of documents and folders processed in response to FOIA 2016-1119-F:
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Records Management
Informal Meeting of APEC Economic Leaders, Seattle, Washington; November 18-20, 1993; Briefing Book [John Podesta] [binder] [OA/ID 817]
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