

**Louis Martin Papers**  
**A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress**



**Manuscript Division, Library of Congress**  
**Washington, D.C.**  
**2023**

Contact information: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/mss.contact>

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm00084730>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms003064>

Prepared by Manuscript Division staff

Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2003  
Revised 2023 October

## Collection Summary

**Title:** Louis Martin Papers

**Span Dates:** 1931-1998

**Bulk Dates:** 1977-1993

**ID No.:** MSS84730

**Creator:** Martin, Louis, 1912-1997

**Extent:** 4,525 items

**Extent:** 13 containers

**Extent:** 5.2 linear feet

**Language:** Collection material in English

**Location:** Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

**LC Catalog record:** <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm00084730>

**Summary:** Civil rights activist, political adviser, newspaper columnist, and newspaper publisher. Correspondence, memoranda, subject files, speeches, and writings relating to Martin's civil rights activities, his journalism career, and his role as an adviser to presidents John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson, and Jimmy Carter.

## Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

### People

Brown, Ronald Harmon, 1941-1996--Correspondence.

Carter, Jimmy, 1924-

Carter, Jimmy, 1924- --Correspondence.

Johnson, Lyndon B. (Lyndon Baines), 1908-1973

Johnson, Lyndon B. (Lyndon Baines), 1908-1973--Correspondence.

Jordan, Vernon E. (Vernon Eulion), Jr., 1935-2021--Correspondence.

Kelly, Sharon Pratt, 1944- --Correspondence.

Kennedy, John F. (John Fitzgerald), 1917-1963.

King, Martin Luther, Jr., 1929-1968--Correspondence.

Martin, Louis, 1912-1997.

Mondale, Walter F., 1928- --Correspondence.

Shriver, Sargent, 1915-2011--Correspondence.

Voorde, Frances M.--Correspondence.

Watson, Jack H., 1938- --Correspondence.

Wise, Phil--Correspondence.

### Organizations

Calmar Communications.

Democratic Party (U.S.)

### Subjects

African American newspapers.

African American politicians.

African Americans--Civil rights.

African Americans--Politics and government.

Civil rights.

### Places

United States--Politics and government--1945-1989.

### Occupations

Political activists.

Presidential advisors.

Publishers.

## Acquisition Information

The papers of Louis Martin, political adviser, civil rights activist, and newspaper columnist and publisher, were given to the Library of Congress in 2000 by his wife, Gertrude Martin.

## Processing History

The papers of Louis Martin were arranged and described by Connie L. Cartledge in 2000. The finding aid was updated in 2023 by Maria Farmer as part of a division-wide remediation project by the Inclusive Description Working Group.

## Transfers

Photographs have been transferred to the Library's Prints and Photographs Division where they are identified as part of these papers. A biography of Martin by Louis Poinsett entitled *Walking with Presidents* has been removed from the papers and made available as part of the Manuscript Division Reading Room's reference collection.

## Copyright Status

Copyright in the unpublished writings of Louis Martin in these papers and in other collections in the custody of the Library of Congress is reserved. Consult a reference librarian in the Manuscript Division for further information.

## Access and Restrictions

The papers of Louis Martin are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

## Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Louis Martin Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

## Biographical Note

Date	Event
1912, Nov. 18	Born, Shelbyville, Tenn.
1934	A.B., University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich.
1936	Reporter, <i>Chicago Defender</i>
1936-1947	Editor and publisher, <i>Michigan Chronicle</i>
1937	Married Gertrude Scott Martin
1947-1959	Editor-in-chief, <i>Chicago Daily Defender</i>
1949-1952	President, National Newspaper Publishers Association
1959-1960	Editorial advisor, Amalgamated Press, Ltd., Nigeria
1961-1969	Deputy chairman, Democratic National Committee, Washington, D.C.
1969-1976	Vice president and editorial director, Sengstacke Newspaper chain, Chicago, Ill.
1970-1979	Chairman, Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, Washington, D.C.
1976-1978	President, Sengstacke Newspaper chain, Chicago, Ill.

1978-1981	Special assistant to the President of the United States
1981-1987	Assistant vice president of communications, Howard University, Washington, D.C.
1987-circa 1993	Chairman, Calmar Communications, Inc., Chicago, Ill.
1997, Jan. 27	Died, Orange, Calif.

## Scope and Content Note

The papers of Louis Emanuel Martin (1912-1997) span the years 1931-1998 with the bulk of the material dating from 1977 to 1993. Most of the collection consists of papers documenting Martin's service as special assistant to President Jimmy Carter and writings, including articles, newspaper columns, and memoirs. Early material concerns Martin's activities as adviser and civil rights liaison during the administrations of presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson. While serving as a presidential adviser and as deputy chairman of the Democratic Committee, Martin helped to establish African Americans as a political power in the Democratic Party and encouraged their appointment to policy-making government positions. The papers are organized in the following series: [Correspondence](#), [Subject File](#), and [Speeches and Writings File](#).

The [Correspondence](#) series, 1945-1996, consists chiefly of letters concerning Martin's personal and professional interests. Most of the correspondence relates to Martin's work as chairman of Calmar Communications, his interests in politics, and his recollections of the three presidents whom he served. Only a few letters relate to Martin's early political activities. Copies of correspondence pertaining to African American voters and the presidential election of 1964 are attached to a letter of 2 May 1986 from the Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library. A copy of a letter to Martin of 18 September 1962 from Martin Luther King, Jr., introduced Donald Louis Anderson as having creative ideas concerning the possibilities of a liberal Democratic Party in the South composed of Black voters and liberal white voters. An unsigned memorandum of 4 September 1968 to Joseph Napolitan recommended ways to mobilize Black voters for Hubert H. Humphrey, such as utilizing Jackie Robinson in a campaign tour against Richard M. Nixon. The series also includes congratulatory correspondence pertaining to honors bestowed upon Martin.

The [Subject File](#), 1936-1997, includes correspondence, scheduling files, and press materials documenting Martin's service as an adviser and liaison for President Carter to the African American community. While working in the White House from 1978-1981, Martin also periodically sent out a bulletin entitled *Fact Sheet* reporting on the administration's activities and accomplishments of interest to the African American community. The Subject File also includes oral history interviews relating to Martin's civil rights activities and his service with three Democratic presidents. Although Martin was a cofounder of the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, there is no material relating to the founding of that research organization.

The [Speeches and Writings File](#), 1931-1998, consists mainly of speeches made by Martin during the Carter administration, Martin's memoirs, and his newspaper columns. The memoirs provide a detailed account of Martin's early life, his newspaper career, and his activities as a presidential adviser and liaison to the African American community. Photocopies of the originals of draft two are filed with that draft because they contain emendations that do not appear on the original manuscript. Martin's newspaper columns entitled "Up Front" reflect his interest in a variety of topics including American politics, civil rights, and international events. Many of Martin's columns in 1959 and 1960 were written while he was a consultant to Amalgamated Press, Ltd., in Nigeria. Notebooks in the writings file chronicle Martin's travels and his activities in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations.

Among the frequent and prominent correspondents in the collection are Ronald Harmon Brown, Jimmy Carter, Sharon Pratt Kelly, Lyndon B. Johnson, Vernon E. Jordan, Martin Luther King, Jr., Walter F. Mondale, Sargent Shriver, Frances M. Voorde, Jack H. Watson, and Phil Wise.

## Organization of the Papers

The collection is arranged in three series:

- [Correspondence, 1945-1996](#)
- [Subject File, 1936-1997](#)
- [Speeches and Writings File, 1931-1998](#)

## Description of Series

### Container

### Series

BOX 1

#### Correspondence, 1945-1996

Correspondence and memoranda, including attachments, between Martin and friends, acquaintances, and government officials relating to his personal and professional activities. Arranged chronologically.

BOX 1-7

#### Subject File, 1936-1997

Correspondence, memoranda, interview and oral history transcripts, bulletins, reports, scheduling files, invitations, award programs, certificates, newspaper clippings, and printed matter pertaining mainly to Martin's service as special assistant to President Jimmy Carter. Arranged alphabetically by name of person, organization, topic, or type of material and therein chronologically.

BOX 7-13

#### Speeches and Writings File, 1931-1998

Correspondence, speeches and speech material, articles, memoirs, newspaper columns, notebooks, and other writings. Arranged alphabetically by type of material and therein chronologically.

# Container List

<b>Container</b>	<b>Contents</b>
<b>BOX 1</b>	<b>Correspondence, 1945-1996</b> Correspondence and memoranda, including attachments, between Martin and friends, acquaintances, and government officials relating to his personal and professional activities. Arranged chronologically.
<b>BOX 1</b>	1945-1953, 1959-1996, undated (20 folders)
<b>BOX 1-7</b>	<b>Subject File, 1936-1997</b> Correspondence, memoranda, interview and oral history transcripts, bulletins, reports, scheduling files, invitations, award programs, certificates, newspaper clippings, and printed matter pertaining mainly to Martin's service as special assistant to President Jimmy Carter. Arranged alphabetically by name of person, organization, topic, or type of material and therein chronologically.
<b>BOX 1</b>	Awards and honors Honorary degrees Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass., 1970 (2 folders)
<b>BOX 2</b>	Miscellaneous, 1951, 1979-1980 Lawrence O'Brien Achievement Award, 1992-1993 Miscellaneous, 1948-1953, 1971-1996, undated (2 folders) Biographical file, circa 1976-1990 Carter, Jimmy, administration Correspondence Chronological, 1978-1981 (2 folders) Memoranda Carter, Rosalynn, 1979-1980 Presidential, 1978-1980 (6 folders) White House staff Belford, Tom, 1980 Brzezinski, Zbigniew, 1978-1979 Eizenstat, Stuart, 1978-1979 Jordan, Hamilton, 1978-1980 Kraft, Tim, 1978-1979 Miscellaneous, 1978-1980 Mondale, Walter, 1978-1980 Poston, Gretchen, 1978-1980 (2 folders) Watson, Jack H., 1978-1981
<b>BOX 3</b>	

## Subject File, 1936-1997

### Container

### Contents

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	Weddington, Sarah, 1979-1980
	Wexler, Anne, 1980
	Wise, Phil, and Frances M. Voorde, 1978-1980 (9 folders)
	<i>Fact Sheet</i> , 1978-1980 (2 folders)
BOX 4	Interviews, 1979, undated
	Miscellany, 1978-1981, undated
	Press, 1978-1981, undated (7 folders)
	Scheduling file 1978-1979 (5 folders)
	1980 Jan.-Aug. (4 folders)
BOX 5	Sept.-Dec. (3 folders)
	1981
	Trips, 1978-1980 <i>For additional material see Container 12, Notebooks</i> (2 folders)
	Democratic National Committee, Commission on Party Structure and Delegate Selection, 1969
	Interviews Oral history transcripts <i>For additional material see Container 13, Poinsett, Alex</i> 1966-1969, 1984-1986 (7 folders)
BOX 6	1987 (2 folders)
	<i>Washington Post</i> , 1985
	Invitations Miscellaneous, 1978-1986 Presidential inaugurations, 1949, 1961, 1993
	Johnson, Lyndon B., 1968-1973
	Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, Washington, D.C., 1976-1997 (5 folders)
	Kennedy, John F., administration, 1961-1963, undated
	Miscellany, 1977-1983, 1991-1992, undated (2 folders)
BOX 7	Press, 1936-1997, undated (7 folders)
	Travel, 1976-1977 <i>For additional material see Containers 12-13, Notebooks</i>
BOX 7-13	<b>Speeches and Writings File, 1931-1998</b> Correspondence, speeches and speech material, articles, memoirs, newspaper columns, notebooks, and other writings. Arranged alphabetically by type of material and therein chronologically.
BOX 7	Speech file

## Speeches and Writings File, 1931-1998

### Container

### Contents

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	1961-1983 (9 folders)
BOX 8	1984-1990, undated (5 folders)
	Writings
	By Martin
	Articles, 1931-1944, 1959-1960, 1970-1985, undated (5 folders)
	Memoirs
	Draft 1, undated (2 folders)
	Draft 2, 1977, undated
	Memoir A
	Part I (2 folders)
BOX 9	(2 folders)
	Part II (2 folders)
	Memoirs B-I (6 folders)
BOX 10	Draft 3, undated (2 folders)
	Draft 4, undated (2 folders)
	Miscellany, 1966, 1974, undated (3 folders)
	Miscellaneous, 1953, 1963, 1973, undated
	Newspaper columns, <i>Chicago Defender</i>
	“Big Parade,” 1977, undated
	“Dope and Data,” 1959-1960 (3 folders)
	“Up Front”
	1987
	1988
	Jan.-May
BOX 11	June-Dec. (2 folders)
	1989-1992 (11 folders)
	1993
	Jan.-Aug. (2 folders)
BOX 12	Sept.-Dec. 1994, undated (2 folders)
	Notebooks
	1959-1960, Lagos, Nigeria, trip



## Speeches and Writings File, 1931-1998

### Container

### Contents

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BOX 13

1961-1967, Civil rights; John F. Kennedy administration; Lyndon B. Johnson administration; trips to London, England; Paris, France; and Norway  
1972-1977, Democratic National Convention, Miami, Fla.; trips to Paris, France; Tunis, Tunisia; and China  
1978, Africa and Jimmy Carter administration  
1979-1985, Africa, Senegal, Riggs Bank, and Joseph Allbritton  
Undated  
Africa, United States image of  
China, civil rights, John F. Kennedy, and newspaper column material  
Nigeria and miscellaneous notes  
Notes and fragments, undated  
By others  
Miscellaneous, 1980, 1988, undated  
Poinsett, Alex, 1991-1998  
(4 folders)