



ArchivesSpace

George N. Zenovich

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Table of Contents

Summary Information	3
Biographical / Historical	3
Scope and Contents	4
Administrative Information	5
Collection Inventory	6
Campaign	6
Judicial	6
Legislative work	6
Newspaper clippings and articles	8
Personal	9
Press Releases	9
Multimedia	10
Photographs	10
Artifacts	12

Summary Information

Repository:	Special Collections Research Center
Title:	George N. Zenovich
ID:	Pol.1005
Date [inclusive]:	1942-1995 (bulk 1961-1986)
Physical Description:	7.5 Linear Feet
Language of the Material:	English

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Biographical / Historical

George Nicholas Zenovich was born on April 29, 1922 in Fresno, CA to parents Nicholas and Eva who had immigrated to the United States from the former Yugoslavia. He attended high school and college in Fresno. Zenovich was elected student body president at both levels of education. He graduated from Fresno State College with a Political Science degree and earned his law degree from Southwestern College of Law. Zenovich joined the military during World War II. He was enlisted for three years as an Army Air Force Japanese Code Interceptor Operator and then later was part of the Air Force Band playing the stand-up bass. He began practicing law as an attorney in 1953.

In 1956, he was elected to the Fresno County Democratic Central Committee. An early supporter of John F. Kennedy, he became Chairman of the Fresno County Democratic Committee for President John F. Kennedy.

He was then elected to the California State Assembly as an Assemblyman for the 32nd District and served from 1963 to 1970. During his Assembly tenure, Mr. Zenovich served as Majority Floor Leader and Chairman of the Democratic Caucus under Speaker Jesse Unruh. He also became known as a strong advocate for farming communities in the San Joaquin Valley.

In 1970 he was elected to the State Senate, representing the 16th District. During his eight years as a State Senator, he was instrumental in the passing of three highly influential pieces of legislation. The first was the creation of the California Housing Finance Agency, which provided low-interest housing loans for low income families. The second was the California Agricultural Labor Relations Act: the first law in the nation to establish secret ballots and a machinery for settling farm labor disputes. The third law established the California Arts Council.

Zenovich was appointed by Governor Jerry Brown to be Justice of the 5th District Court of Appeals in 1979. He held that position until he retired in 1984. His interest in politics did not waiver after he left the bench as he continued to be involved in Sacramento as a lobbyist.

Zenovich played the stand-up bass throughout his career. In 1955 he married Vera Sarenac. He had two children, Ninon and Marina and two grandchildren, Nicole and Theo. He passed away in September of 2013 in Fresno.

The new Courthouse for the Fifth Appellate District of the California Court of Appeals is named after him.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Scope and Contents

The George N. Zenovich papers measure 7.5 linear feet and date from 1955 to 1994. The collection is arranged in eight series: Campaign, Judicial, Legislative work, Newspaper clippings and articles, Personal, Press releases, Multimedia, Photographs, and Artifacts.

The **Campaign** series (1962-1978) is made up of papers from both campaigns as an Assemblyman and Senator. This includes correspondence that congratulate Zenovich in his successes, a poster, and various campaign materials. There are also miscellaneous papers that list contributors to his campaigns.

The **Judicial** series (1978-1993) contains newspaper clippings that range from his appointment to the 5th District Court of Appeal to decisions made during Zenovich's career as a justice. It also includes a sample ballot, a resolution, programs, and correspondence that took place during his years as a Justice.

The **Legislative work** series (1962-1995) covers Zenovich's career as Assemblyman and Senator. It is mostly made up of various correspondence. The correspondences are between Zenovich and his colleagues or concerned people involved in politics. The series is broken down into subseries related to agriculture, bills and propositions, and miscellaneous. The series also contains legislative books describing assembly people, legislature, and legislative acts.

The **Newspaper clippings and articles** (1942-1986) contains various newspapers covering George Zenovich during his time as an Assemblyman, Senator, and lobbyist. Some also reference his hobby as a musician and events he participated in such as bringing squirrels back to Sacramento. There are five scrapbooks that have articles that track Zenovich's political career. There are magazine articles as well written by and about him.

The **Personal** series (1960-1992) consists of correspondence between him, family, and friends. There are also papers that show his personal preferences and active duty as president of his church.

The **Press releases** series (1967-1978) are sectioned into indexed and unindexed. This series has various press releases that cover important political issues, events, and legislation.

The **Multimedia** series (1976-1977) contains audio recordings that cover farm labor and Proposition 14. There is also one unidentified VHS tape.

The **Photographs** series (1962-1979) consists mostly of framed photographs from throughout Zenovich's political career. The series details his works and speeches with famous political figures such as John F. Kennedy, Robert Kennedy, Governor Jerry Brown, and Cesar Chavez. There are also loose photographs showing Zenovich's senate campaign.

The **Artifacts** series (1975-1984) include campaign stickers, a plaque, a license plate, a matchbook, and a plastic beer bottle cap.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Acquisition

The papers were donated by George N. Zenovich in 2004.

Access

The papers are open for research.

Copyright

Copyright has been transferred to California State University, Fresno.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Collection Inventory

Campaign

Title/Description	Instances
Assemblyman	
Congratulatory letters, 1962, 1966, and undated	box 1
Poster, undated	box 7 oversize
Campaign materials, undated	box 1
Senator	
Campaign statement, 1970	box 1
Congratulatory letters, 1970 and 1978	box 1
Correspondence, 1969-1972	box 1
Memoranda, 1970	box 1
Newspaper clippings, 1970, 1972, and undated	box 1
Sample ballot, 1978	box 1
Miscellaneous, undated	

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Judicial

Title/Description	Instances
Newspaper clippings, 1978-1984, 1993, and undated (2 folders)	box 1
Miscellaneous, 1979, 1982-1986	box 1

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Legislative work

Title/Description	Instances
The American Film Institute membership certificate, undated	box 1
Biographies, 1975, 1978 and undated	box 1
<i>California Blue Book</i> , 1967	box 1
<i>California Legislature</i> , 1974	

	box 1
Capitol memoranda, 1971	box 1
Capitol memoranda, 1972	box 1
Capitol memoranda, 1974	box 1
Constituent mailings	box 1
<i>Report from the Capitol</i> , 1971	box 1
<i>A Report to the People</i> , undated	box 1
<i>Sacramento Newsletter</i> , 1973-1974 and undated	box 1
Correspondence	box 1
Agriculture	box 1
Appointments	box 1
Oppose, 1975 and undated	box 1
Support, 1975	box 1
Farm labor bills, 1974-1975 and undated (2 folders)	box 1
Bills and propositions	box 1
AB 489, 1975 and undated	box 1
Grunsky coastline bill, 1972 and undated	box 1
Housing finance agency, 1975-1977 and undated	box 1
Jarvis initiative, 1977-1978 and undated	box 1
Peripheral canal, 1977-1978	box 1
Thank you letters, 1970-1978 and undated	box 1
Miscellaneous, 1971-1978	box 1
Excuses from meetings, 1971-1977	box 1
Majority floor leader, 1966	box 1
Telegram (copy), 1966	box 2
Thank you letters, 1964-1978, 1995-1996, and undated	box 2
Miscellaneous, 1962, 1965-1978, 1982, 1990-1995, and undated (2 folders)	box 2
Expense claims, 1972 and 1974	box 2
Framed Assembly Bill No.1, 1975	box 7 oversize
The Great Seal of the State of California, undated	box 2
<i>Grower's Handbook to the California Agricultural Labor Relations Act</i> , 1977	box 2

Information pamphlets, 1966-1967, 1971, and 1975	box 2
Kings River, 1973	box 2
Letters of recommendations and resumes, 1958, 1971-1978, and 1994	box 2
Memoranda, 1964, 1967-1971, 1974-1978	box 2
Publication, 1971	box 2
Questionnaires, 1972	box 2
Reapportionment, 1973-1974	box 2
<i>Report of the Workmen's Compensation Study Commission, 1965</i>	box 2
Reports	box 2
<i>1972 Report on the California Legislature by the California AFL-CIO, 1972</i>	box 2
<i>How Long Must I Wait? The Plight of the Soviet Jew: A Report to the People, 1975</i>	box 2
Speeches, 1974-1976 and undated	box 2
Testimonial dinner pamphlets, 1966-1968, 1970, and undated	box 2
Translated press interview, 1968	box 2
Miscellaneous, 1962-1979 and undated	box 2

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Newspaper clippings and articles

Title/Description	Instances
Binder, 1962-1970	box 2
Campaign advertisements, undated	box 3
Captioned photographs, 1962-1978 and undated	box 3
Legislative work	box 3
Assembly, 1962-1970 and undated (2 folders)	box 3
Placard, 1972	box 8 oversize
Senate, 1970-1980 and undated	box 3
Lobbying, 1984-1986	box 3
Magazine articles, 1978, 1982-1983, and undated	box 3

	box 8 oversize
Personal and family, 1955, 1962, 1976, and 1984	box 3
Scrapbooks	
1963-1965	box 9 oversize
1966-1967	box 10 oversize
1967-1969	box 11 oversize
1969	box 12 oversize
1969-1970	box 12 oversize
Miscellaneous, 1942, 1964-1974, 1979-1986, and undated	box 3

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Personal

Title/Description	Instances
Certificates, 1972 and 1976	box 3
Correspondence, 1960, 1962, 1965-1979, and undated	box 8 oversize
Legal documents, 1971, 1987-1988	box 3
<i>The Messenger: St. Peter the Apostle Serbian Orthodox Church</i> , 1981-1985	box 3
Miscellaneous, 1961, 1978, 1992	box 3

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Press Releases

Title/Description	Instances
Indexed	
1967	box 3
1968	box 3
1969	box 3
1970	box 3

1971	box 3
1972	box 3
1973	box 3
1974	box 3
1975	box 3
1976	box 3
1977	box 3
1978	box 4
Unindexed, 1967-1975	box 4

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Multimedia

Title/Description	Instances
Audio recordings	
Farm labor press conference, undated (reel-to-reel tapes)	box 4
"No" on proposition 14, 1976 (reel-to-reel tapes)	box 7 oversize
Unidentified, undated (reel-to-reel tapes)	box 4
Unidentified videocassette, 1977 (VHS tape)	box 4

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Photographs

Title/Description	Instances
Framed photographs	
Buddy Iwata and Zenovich, 1978	box 4
California State Legislative Inter Religious Study Tour, undated	box 4
Cesar Chavez sitting with Zenovich, undated	box 4
Dinner on occasion of creating an office to help minorities, undated	box 4
Frank Tuck and Zenovich, undated	box 4
General George Edmunds and Zenovich, undated	box 4
George Zenovich, undated	box 4

George Zenovich giving speech, undated	box 4
George Lucas and Zenovich, undated (2 folders)	box 4
Governor Jerry Brown signing Housing Finance Law, undated	box 4
Harry Truman and Zenovich, undated	box 5
Hubert Humphrey and Zenovich, undated	box 5
Hugh Burns and Zenovich, 1962	box 5
Jim Jurkovich, Leroy Greene, and Zenovich, undated	box 5
Joash Paul and Zenovich, undated	box 5
John Burton with Zenovich in assembly, undated	box 5
John F. Kennedy, B.F. Sisk, and Zenovich, undated	box 5
John Thurman, Zenovich, and Dr. Marion Collins, undated	box 5
President Tito of Yugoslavia with Zenovich, undated	box 5
Press conference with Jerry Brown, undated	box 5
Press conference with Jimmy Carter in front of Air Force One, undated	box 5
Robert Kennedy, 1968	box 5
Robert Kennedy and Zenovich, undated (2 folders)	box 5
Robert Kennedy campaigning in Fresno, 1968	box 8 oversize
Ronald Reagan and Zenovich, 1968 and undated (3 folders)	box 5
Ronald Reagan telethon, undated	box 6
Summer Bartholomew, John Thurman, and Zenovich at Miss USA, 1975	box 6
Ted Kennedy and Zenovich at McGovern/Shriver campaign, 1972	box 6
Tom Bradley and Zenovich, undated	box 6
Vernon Sturgeon, John H. Reed, and Zenovich, 1966	box 6
Walter Karabian and Zenovich in front of The Saint Vasily Church in Red Square, undated	box 6
Zenovich and Ed Muskie, undated	box 8 oversize
Zenovich and Lillian Lau at the Asian Art Show, undated	box 6
Zenovich at a conference on the budget, 1963	box 6
Zenovich at Frank Sinatra performance, undated	box 6

Zenovich, Bill Orrick, and Tom Lynch at JFK campaign, undated	box 6
Zenovich, Hugh Burns, and Ernie Mobley, undated	box 6
Zenovich, John Thurman, Carmen Perino, and Dr. Walter Olson dedicating Cal State Stanislaus gymnasium, 1977	box 6
Zenovich with electrical workers, 1962	box 6
Zenovich with the California State Capitol, undated	box 6
Zenovich with unidentified man, undated	box 6
Loose photographs	
California assembly members, 1963	box 8 oversize
Campaign, undated	box 6
Miscellaneous, 1963, 1972, 1979, and undated	box 6
Negatives, 1979	box 6

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Artifacts

Title/Description	Instances
Campaign stickers, undated (4 items)	box 6
Justice George N. Zenovich plaque, 1984	box 7 oversize
License plate, 1975	box 8 oversize
Matchbook, undated	box 6
Plastic beer bottle cap, undated	box 6

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)