Extent

3 folders, approximately 22 pages

Summary

This collection contains records related to the Brooklyn Bridge shooting on March 1, 1994. During this incident, gunman Rashid Baz opened fire on a van carrying Hasidic Jewish students, killing 15 year old Ari Halberstam and injuring 3 others. The open material in this collection is a State Department cable containing the U.S. government's response to Bessam Reyati's letter to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. Reyati was the uncle of Baz and the wonder of the car Baz was driving. He was convicted of concealing evidence and, as a Jordanian citizen with U.S. permanent resident status, faced deportation due to his conviction.

Scope and Content Note

The materials in FOIA 2023-0608-F are a selective body of documents responsive to the topic of the FOIA. Researchers should consult the archivist about related material. This FOIA case contains records related to the Brooklyn Bridge shooting on March 1, 1994. At 10:24 AM, Lebanese-born gunman Rashid Baz opened fire on a van carrying 15 Hasidic Jewish students as it crossed the Brooklyn Bridge from Manhattan. Fifteen year old Ari Halberstam was killed, and 3 additional students were injured. In December 1994, Baz was convicted and sentenced to a 141 year prison term. Two other individuals were eventually arrested and convicted for concealing evidence in the investigation. His uncle, Bessam Reyati, owned the car Baz was driving, and Hilal Abd Al-Aziz Muhammad owned the repair shop that Baz used to conceal damage to his car. In 1999, the United States Department of Justice (DOJ) and the FBI reopened the investigation to look for links between Baz and terrorist organizations. Although the investigation concluded that Baz was acting alone, the DOJ did reclassify the incident as "the crimes of a terrorist." Devorah Halberstam, Ari's mother, became an activist and helped author the first New York

state counter-terrorism laws. The Brooklyn Bridge ramp where the attack occurred has been named the Ari Halberstam Memorial Ramp. The records responsive to this request include a State Department cable containing the U.S. government's response to Bessam Reyati's letter to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. Reyati, a Jordanian citizen with U.S. permanent resident status, was facing deportation due to his conviction. The majority of records related to this FOIA case are closed for national security reasons.

Record Type

Textual

System of Arrangement

Records that are responsive to this FOIA request were found in these collection areas— Clinton Presidential Records: NSC Cable, Email, and Records Management Systems.

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

Documents in this collection that were prepared by officials of the United States government as part of their official duties are in the public domain. Researchers are advised to consult the copyright law of the United States (17 U.S.C. Chapter 1) which governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material.

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, 2023. Previously restricted materials are added as they are released.

Last Modified Date

2024-03-15

Container List

The following is a list of documents and folders processed in response to FOIA 2023-0608-F:
Box 1
Clinton Presidential Records: NSC Cable, Email, and Records Management System
NSC Cables
Jan 1993-Dec 1994 [OA/ID 505000]
[Ari Halberstam…]
[03/02/1994 – 08/16/1994]
Jan 1999-Dec 2000 [OA/ID 530000]
[Ari Halberstam…]
[06/26/2000]
NSC Email
A1-Record (Jan 93-Sept 94) [OA/ID 570000]
[Ari Halberstam…]
[03/05/1994]