Extent

34 folders, approximately 2,589 pages

Summary

The researcher submitted a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request for records related to Harold James Nicholson. Records opened in this collection include press guidance, talking points, transcripts of television shows, and unclassified records related to the arrest of Harold James Nicholson for espionage. Records to be opened are from Staff and Office Files, Automated Records Management System [Email] and the National Security Council’s Cable, Email, and Records Management System. The collection dates from November 1996 to July 1998.

Scope and Content Note

The materials in FOIA 2020-0406-F are a selective body of documents responsive to the topic of the FOIA. Researchers should consult the archivist about related material. The researcher submitted a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request for records related to Harold James Nicholson. Records opened in this collection include press guidance, talking points, transcripts of television shows, and unclassified records related to the arrest of Harold James Nicholson for espionage. Records to be opened are from Staff and Office Files, Automated Records Management System [Email] and the National Security Council’s Cable, Email, and Records Management System. The collection dates from November 1996 to July 1998. A majority of records in this collection remain closed for national security reasons. Open records include transcripts of press briefings, press articles, and memorandum related to the arrest of Nicholson on November 18, 1996. Harold James Nicholson was arrested for espionage on November 18, 1996. Nicholson, a 16-year employee of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), was apprehended by the Federal Bureau of Investigation at the airport. Nicholson spent much of his career in postings to Asia. He was, to that point, the highest-ranking CIA employee arrested for espionage. Nicholson plead

guilty to spying for the Russians in 1997 and was sentenced to 23 years in prison. In 2009, Nicholson was arraigned and later convicted of conspiracy to commit espionage by recruiting his son Nathaniel to spy for the Russians.

Record Type

Textual

System of Arrangement

Records that are responsive to this FOIA request were found in these collection areas—Clinton Presidential Records: Staff & Office Files, Clinton Presidential Records: ARMS emails, and Clinton Presidential Records: NSC Cable, Email, and Records Management Systems. Staff and Office files were maintained at the folder level by staff members within their individual offices and document all levels of administration activity. The Automated Records Management System (ARMS) was a database that contained email records of the Executive Office of the President. This system held, and allowed access to, unclassified Presidential email. The ARMS database was comprised of seven sub-series of email records called "buckets." The buckets generally represented a specific White House office. The buckets were titled: NPR for National Performance Review, NSC for National Security Council, OPD for Office of Policy Development, POTUS for President of the United States, WHO for White House Office, CEA for Council of Economic Advisers, and Default for emails not associated with an office. In 2022, the National Archives and Records Administration transferred the majority of Clinton ARMS and TRP records to a records management and access system called ERA. This changed the processing of ARMS and TRP records however, for technical reasons NSC emails remained in their own “bucket”. ARMS emails are arranged by topic, there-under by bucket, and there-under chronologically by creation date.

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, 2022. Previously restricted materials are added as they are released.

Last Modified Date

2023-04-07

Container List

The following is a list of documents and folders processed in response to FOIA 2020-0406-F (seg 1):
Box 1
Clinton Presidential Records: White House Staff and Office Files
National Security Council
Intelligence Programs

Almon, Timothy
[Russia] [1] [1] [OA/ID W-041]
[Russia] [1] [2] [OA/ID W-041]
[Russia] [1] [3] [OA/ID W-041]
Clinton Presidential Records: Automated Records Management System [Email]
NSC [OA/ID 1200000]
[Harold Nicholson]
[11/20/1996-11/25/1996]
[11/26/1996-12/03/1996]
Clinton Presidential Records: NSC Cable, Email, and Records Management System (continued)
NSC Cables
Jan 1995-Dec 1996 [OA/ID 510000]
[Harold Nicholson]
[11/18/1996-12/31/1996]
Jan 1999-Dec 2000 [OA/ID 530000]
[Harold Nicholson]
[01/30/1997-04/20/1998]
NSC Emails
MSMail-Record (Sept 94-Sept 97) [OA/ID 590000]
[Harold Nicholson]
[11/18/1996]
[11/19/1996] [1]
[11/19/1996] [2]
[11/19/1996] [3]
[11/19/1996] [4]
[11/20/1996] [1]
[11/20/1996] [2]
[11/20/1996] [3]
Box 2
[11/21/1996] [1]
[11/21/1996] [2]
[11/21/1996-11/22/1996]
[11/22/1996] [1]
[11/22/1996] [2]
[11/23/1996]
[11/23/1996-11/25/1996]

[11/25/1996] [1]
[11/25/1996] [2]
[11/25/1996-11/26/1996]
[11/26/1996] [1]
[11/26/1996] [2]
Box 3
MSMail-Record (Sept 94-Sept 97) [OA/ID 590000]
[Harold Nicholson]
[11/27/1996-02/05/1997]
MSMail-Non-Record (Sept 94-Sept 97) [OA/ID 605000]
[Harold Nicholson]
[12/19/1996-01/30/1997]
Exchange-Record (Sept 97-Jan 01) [OA/ID 620000]
[Harold Nicholson]
[04/03/1998]
Exchange-Non-Record (Mar 97-Jan 01) [OA/ID 630000]
[Harold Nicholson]
[09/18/1997-01/15/1998]
[03/06/1998-04/10/1998]
Clinton Presidential Records: NSC Cable, Email, and Records Management System (continued)
[07/03/1998]
NSC Records Management System
[Harold Nicholson]
9630319 [OA/ID W-003]