Extent

28 folders, approximately 1,392 pages

Summary

This collection consists of memoranda, emails, cables, notes, and forms related to Joe Cahill’s (and others) application process to obtain a visa to enter the United States. These records are primarily related to the visa application and waiver process. Joe Cahill was one of the founders of the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA). Cahill had a criminal record, convicted in British courts, and was once deported from the United States for entering illegally. As part of the Clinton administration efforts toward peace in Northern Ireland the administration considered visa waivers for a number of IRA and Loyalist supporters with criminal records. It was part of a good faith effort to encourage IRA and Loyalists to the negotiating table. Cahill first received a visa waiver in 1994 and then was able to make several follow-on trips to the United States, primarily to attend the annual conference of the Irish Northern Aid Committee (NORAID).

Scope and Content Note

The materials in FOIA 2024-0172-F are a selective body of documents responsive to the topic of the FOIA. Researchers should consult the archivist about related material. Researchers interested in this collection should also see 2011-0355-F Nancy Soderberg’s Records on the Northern Ireland Peace Process. As part of the middle to late 1990s Irish peace process a number of both Irish Republican Army (IRA) and Loyalists actors attempted to obtain visas to come to the United States. Primarily to raise support among expatriates and native American supporters. Many with arrest records in Ireland, Great Britain, or the United States were denied under the Immigration and Naturalization Act. They were required to apply for waivers under section 212(D)(3)(A) of that act—codified at 8 U.S.C. 1182(d)(3)(A). Given the importance that the Clinton administration placed on finding a way to peace in

Ireland, many of these waiver applications rose to the level of Presidential action; unusual for a process typically handled at the consular level. This collection is not comprehensive in regard to visa issues writ large; rather it is primarily related to specific visa and waiver requests. A list of names is included below. This collection serves as a good introduction into the visa and waiver process while also highlighting the importance that the Clinton administration placed using visas as a tool for negotiation toward peace. Records opened in this collection include memoranda, cables, emails, notes, and forms related to the visa and waiver process. Seosamh Ó Cathail, Joseph Cahill, or more often known as Joe Cahill, was one of the founding members of the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA). Cahill was born in Belfast in 1920. The son of a printer, he attended Catholic school until the age of fourteen when he left to go work in the print shop. In 1937, Cahill joined Na Fianna Eireann which some refer to as the Junior Irish Republican Army. Cahill joined the Irish Republican Army (IRA) in 1938 and by 1942 was the second in command of his local brigade. Cahill was imprisoned in 1942 after a gunfight with officers of the Royal Ulster Constabulary and sentenced to death for participating in a crime for which another man claimed guilt. Following pressure by the Vatican and United States, Cahill and his conspirators' sentences were reduced to life in prison. Cahill was released following the 1945 ceasefire declared by the IRA and lived a relatively quiet life and started a family. In 1956 the IRA renewed action against the British and Cahill was again arrested and sent to prison. Around 1962, Cahill was displeased with the direction of the IRA—the border campaign was failing, and the IRA was becoming more Marxists—and he resigned. Cahill joined with Mac Stíofáin, Ruairí Ó Brádaigh, Paddy Mulcahy, Sean Tracey, Leo Martin, and Dáithí Ó Conaill to form the PIRA in 1969. Nineteen seventy and seventy-one were particularly violent periods in the conflict for Irish independence. In 1971, the British began or renewed a program to arrest people for nothing more than being a member of the IRA and in 1971 the PIRA leader Billy McKee was arrested and imprisoned. Joe Cahill became commander of the Belfast brigade of the PIRA. In 1971 and 1972, Cahill would be part of intergovernmental talks, become Chief of Staff of the PIRA and the liaison to the Irish Northern Aid Committee (NORAID). In 1972 Cahill was put in charge of procuring arms for the IRA which didn't last long as he was arrested in 1973 and charged with importing weapons and bomb making materials from Libya. He served another term in prison and following his release he traveled to the United States to attend a NORAID meeting. It was discovered that he entered the United States illegally and he was deported. Both his 1973 arrest and imprisonment and his 1984 deportation

for illegal entry would factor importantly in later discussions of Cahill's ability to obtain a visa to visit the United States. Ultimately, Cahill would receive a waiver and be allowed a visa for a number of trips to the United States. He died in Belfast, July 23, 2004. While this request was for records relating to Joe Cahill, requests for visas by other IRA and Loyalist members were found in conjunction. This case also contains records related to: Adams, Gerry; Artt, Kevin Barry; Barr, James; Brennan, Pol; Campbell, Brian; Campbell, Paul; Carberry, Ivor; Caufield, Charles; Coyle, Patrick; Crossan, Kevin; Culbert, Michael; Dillon, Patrick; Doherty, Pat; Donaldson, Denis; English, Thomas; Ervine, David; Ferris, Martin; Ferguson, Brian; Finucane, Seamus; Gaynor, Noel; Hartley, Thomas; Howell, Edward; Hutchinson, William; Kelly, Gerard; Keogh, Patrick; Kirby, Terry; Lavery, Robert; McAteer, Aidan; McAuley, Richard; McClinton, Kenny; McErlean, Robert; McGeown, Patrick; McGeough, Gerry; McGuigan, Gerard; McGuinness, Martin; McGuinness, William; McKenna, Brenden; McKeown, Laurence; McLaughlin, Mitchel; Megahey, Gabriel; Mitchell, William Irvine (Billy); Morrison, Danny; Morrison, Matt; O'Doherty, Shane Paul; O'Hanlon, Siobhan; O'Hare, Marguerite (Rita); Quinn, James; Pearson, Brian; Rice, Gerard; Roberts, Thomas; Sands-McKevitt, Bernadette; Smith, Billy; Trainor [Treanor], Patrick; White, John and others. Under 8 U.S.C. 1202(f) records related to the issuance of visas are restricted. There are a significant number of closures in this collection under that statute as much of this collection relates to visa issuance.

Record Type

Textual

System of Arrangement

Records that are responsive to this FOIA request were found in these collection areas—Clinton Presidential Records: White House Staff and Office Files, Clinton Presidential Records: TRP 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. 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. 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. For technical reasons, however, NSC emails remained in their own bucket. NSC ARMS emails are arranged by topic, there-under by bucket, and there-under chronologically by creation date. The Tape Restoration Project (TRP) is a database consisting of restored emails from the Automated Records Management System (ARMS) from July 1994 through June of 2000. The TRP is a database that contains email records of the Executive Office of the President. This system maintained unclassified Presidential record email. The TRP database was comprised of the same seven sub-series of email as in ARMS. NSC TRP 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, 2024. Previously restricted materials are added as they are released.

Last Modified Date

2024-09-10

Container List

View all digitized files in the National Archives Catalog (NAC)

The following is a list of documents and folders processed in response to FOIA 2024-0172-F:
Box 1
Clinton Presidential Records: White House Staff and Office Files
National Security Council
European Affairs
Brown, Keirn
Sinn Fein Visas [Northern Ireland] [1] [OA/ID 2390]
Sinn Fein Visas [Northern Ireland] [2] [OA/ID 2390]
Sinn Fein Visas [Northern Ireland] [3] [OA/ID 2390]
Sinn Fein Visas [Northern Ireland] [4] [OA/ID 2390]
Stephens, Kathleen

Ireland – Visa / Fundraising Issues [1] [OA/ID 340]
Ireland – Visa / Fundraising Issues [2] [OA/ID 340]
Legal Advisor
DeRosa, Mary
IRA [Irish Republican Army] File #7 [1] [OA/ID 3499]
IRA [Irish Republican Army] File #7 [2] [OA/ID 3499]
IRA [Irish Republican Army] File #7 [3] [OA/ID 3499]
Box 2
Clinton Presidential Records: Tape Restoration Project (TRP) [Email]
NSC [OA/ID 1200000]
[Cahill, Joseph, Joe]
[03/15/2000]
Clinton Presidential Records: NSC Cable, Email, and Records Management System
NSC Cables
Jan 1993-Dec 1994 [OA/ID 505000]
[Cahill, Joseph, Joe]
[08/30/1994-11/02/1994]
Jan 1997-Dec 1998 [OA/ID 520000]
[Cahill, Joseph, Joe]
[07/25/1997-03/10/1998]
Jan 1999-Dec 2000 [OA/ID 530000]
[Cahill, Joseph, Joe]
[02/17/1999-12/22/2000]
Jan 2001 [OA/ID 540000]
[Cahill, Joseph, Joe]
[01/16/2001]
NSC Email
A1-Record (Jan 93-Sept 94) [OA/ID 570000]
[Cahill, Joseph, Joe]
[08/31/1994-09/02/1994]
A1-Non-Record (Apr 94-Sept 94) [OA/ID 580000]
[Cahill, Joseph, Joe]
[09/01/1994]
MSMail-Record (Sept 94-Sept 97)
[Cahill, Joseph, Joe]
[09/22/1994-12/05/1994]

[01/31/1995-10/04/1996]
MSMail-Non-Record (Sept 94-Sept 97)
[Cahill, Joseph, Joe]
[09/27/1994-003/28/1995]
Exchange-Record (Sept 97-Jan 01) [OA/ID 620000]
[Cahill, Joseph, Joe]
[04/09/1998-08/10/1998]
Exchange-Non-Record (Mar 97-Jan 01) [OA/ID 630000]
[Cahill, Joseph, Joe]
[07/23/1997-08/05/1997]
[08/11/1997]
[08/19/1997-08/20/1997]
[08/25/1997-09/03/1997]
[04/08/1998-07/07/1999]
NSC Records Management System
[Cahill, Joseph, Joe]
9406963 [OA/ID 480]
9407121 [OA/ID 212]
9502999 [OA/ID 577]

Content Available Online