Extent

46 folders, approximately 1,535 pages

Summary

This collection consists of records relating to Les Aspin and his work as Chairman of the President’s Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board. Records relating to Les Aspin and his service on the PFIAB consist of email, memorandum, and administrative paperwork. The records relate to Aspin’s nomination on the PFIAB and to his service on the PFIAB. Many email consist of press guidance on various foreign policy positions. A number of these records relate to Aspin’s participation in a review of the roles and responsibilities of the intelligence community.

Scope and Content Note

The materials in FOIA 2006-0999-F are a selective body of documents responsive to the topic of the FOIA. Researchers should consult the archivist about related materials. Les Aspin was a well respected and highly qualified Chairman of the President’s Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board. Aspin, a Democrat, was elected to represent the 1st Congressional District of Wisconsin in 1971. Once in office, Aspin was highly critical of the Defense Department and of the war effort in Vietnam. This led to an increasing interest in Defense and Intelligence matters and by 1985, Aspin was Chairman of the House Committee on Armed Services where he became recognized as a leading authority on defense matters. During Bill Clinton’s 1992 presidential campaign Aspin was selected to be an advisor on defense matters. Later he was selected by President Clinton to be Secretary of Defense and confirmed by the Senate in early 1993. His tenure as Secretary of Defense was marked by some of the most contentious battles the department ever faced. His regulations on homosexuals in the military—the famous “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy—wounded both Aspin and Clinton politically. A number of actions and policies including his complete review of Defense Department budgets and priorities, cuts to the defense

budget, the ongoing base closure program, and the police actions in Haiti, Bosnia, and Somalia; brought intense pressure from both supporters and detractors. It was following the well publicized loss of three Army helicopters and the lives of eighteen military personnel in Somalia that Aspin stepped down as Secretary of Defense. Though there was a strong call from members of Congress for his resignation, officially Aspin's December 15, 1993 resignation was for health reasons. Aspin served until the confirmation of his replacement and ended his term as Secretary of Defense on February 3, 1994. He was appointed as Chair of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board on May 26, 1994. Clinton Presidential Records relating to Les Aspin and his service on the PFIAB consist of emails, memorandum, and administrative paperwork. The records relate to Aspin's nomination on the PFIAB and to his service on the PFIAB though there are few records directly from Aspin. Many of the NSC emails consist of press guidance on various foreign policy positions. A number of these records relate to Aspin's participation in a review of the roles and responsibilities of the intelligence community. Many of the records produced for this FOIA were from personnel files which resulted in many closures related to personal privacy. Also the nature of the work undertaken by PFIAB resulted in many records closed for national security reasons.

Biographical Note

Les Aspin was born in Milwaukee, WI, July 21, 1938. He graduated from Yale in 1960, was a Rhodes Scholar completing studies at Oxford in 1962, and he received a Ph.D. in mathematics from MIT in 1965. He joined the United States Army in 1966 and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant. Ultimately rising to the rank of Captain, Aspin resigned from the United States Army Reserve in 1970 to run for Congress. That year Aspin won the election for the 1st Congressional District in Wisconsin. Aspin represented Congress in the 92nd and every following Congress until his retirement January 20, 1993. He died unexpectedly, the result of a stroke, at the age of 56 on May 21, 1995

The President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board (PFIAB) was created by President Dwight Eisenhower in 1956. Executive Order 10656, signed February 6, 1956, created the President's Board of Consultants on Foreign Intelligence Activities. Eisenhower believed that this board of respected and knowledgeable citizens could

provide him with unbiased and candid appraisals of United States' intelligence activities. President John Kennedy, by the signing of Executive Order 10938 on May 4, 1961, renamed the Board of Consultants, the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board. Though the name was changed, the board continued to operate in much the same fashion. Executive Order 11460, signed by President Richard Nixon on March 20, 1969, again changed the name of the PFIAB to the President's Advisory Intelligence Board. President Jimmy Carter abolished the board in March of 1977. Carter did, however, retain the Intelligence Oversight Board. The IOB was created by President Gerald Ford in 1976 following a post Watergate investigation by Congress into potential illegal activities of the intelligence agencies. The IOB was tasked with reporting potential illegal activities to the Department of Justice for review. As Ford told Congress in 1976, "I believe [the changes] will eliminate abuses and questionable activities on the part of the foreign intelligence agencies while at the same time allowing them to get on with their vital work of gathering and assessing information." President Ronald Reagan modified the role of the IOB in 1981 and re-established the PFIAB in 1985 by signing Executive Order 12537. President William Jefferson Clinton combined the IOB and the PFIAB, making the IOB a committee rather than an independent organization. President George W. Bush radically modified the role of both the IOB and the PFIAB following the creation of a Director of National Intelligence. The newly named President's Intelligence Advisory Board was designated to oversee the intelligence collection activities of any Federal agency engaged in the collection of intelligence or the production of intelligence policy. President Barack Obama more clearly defined the role of the PIAB and strengthened the IOB with the passage of Executive Order 13516. Under President Clinton the PFIAB had between eleven and twelve members, by law it could be no more than sixteen, whose terms were established by the President. Members were chosen for their independence, knowledge, and experience. The members of the President's Intelligence Advisory Board serve as unpaid observers of the United States intelligence community. Much of their work is highly secret in nature though Presidents have chosen on occasion to make the Board's reports, or portions thereof, public. The members of the Board are appointed by the President and the Director serves at the leisure of the President.

Record Type

Textual

System of Arrangement

Records that are responsive to this FOIA request were found in four collections areas—Clinton Presidential Records: WHORM Subject File, Clinton Presidential Records: White House Staff and Office Files, Clinton Presidential Records: ARMS Emails, and Clinton Presidential Records: NSC Cable, NSC Email, and NSC Records Management System. The White House Office of Records Management (WHORM) contains a variety of series created to organize and track documents and correspondence. The WHORM Subject File was compiled by the White House Office of Records Management and is a series of categories designated by a letter/number combination. In addition there are WHORM, WHORM Counsel, WHORM (CL), WHORM (OP), WHORM (Too Late), WHORM (Various Offices), and WHORM Alpha Project series. White House Staff and Office Files were maintained at the folder level by staff members within their individual offices and documents all levels of administrative activity. WHORM files are processed at the document level; whereas, 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) is a database that contains email records of the Executive Office of the President. This system maintained unclassified Presidential Records email. The ARMS dataset is comprised of 6 sub-series of email records called “Buckets.” The buckets include NPR, OPD, POTUS, WHO, CEA, and Default. ARMS emails are arranged 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 USC Chapter 22) and the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 USC 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 USC 101) 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).

Subject Headings

United States. President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board

Person Names

Aspin, Les

Processed by

Staff Archivist, 2010. Previously restricted materials are added as they are released.

Last Modified Date

2012-04-25

Container List

The following is a list of documents and folders processed in response to FOIA 2006-0999-F:

Box 1

Clinton Presidential Records: White House Office of Records Management: Subject File

Category Case Number

CO054 Case Number: 115724SS

ME001-03 Case Number: 112813

PP010-02 Case Number: 112949

Clinton Presidential Records: White House Staff and Office Files

Cabinet Affairs

Caplan, Phil

Aspin Service 6/13/95 [OA/ID 6210]

Counsel’s Office

[Appointee] Aspin, Les [OA/ID CF 1458]

Aspin, Les [OA/ID CF 1458]

Counsel’s Office

Schaffner, Jane

Aspin, Les [OA/ID CF 1595]

National Security Council

Speechwriting

Blinkin, Anthony

Aspin Memorial June 13, 1995 [OA/ID 3379]

Security Office

Easley, Chuck

Aspin, Les [OA/ID CF 1259]

Speechwriting

Aspin Memorial 6/13 [OA/ID 6489]

Clinton Presidential Records: Automated Records Management System [Email]

OPD [OA/ID 250000]

[Les Aspin]

[06/06/1995]

WHO [OA/ID 500000]

[Les Aspin]

[05/26/1994-05/22/1995]

Default [OA/ID 1100000]

[Les Aspin]
[05/26/1994-01/11/1996]
NSC [OA/ID 1200000]
[Les Aspin]
[11/10/1998]
Clinton Presidential Records: NSC Cable, Email, and Records Management System
NSC Cables
Jan 1993-Dec 1994
[Aspin]
[11/07/1994-11/10/1994] [OA/ID 505000]
Clinton Presidential Records: NSC Cable, Email, and Records Management System (continued)
NSC Emails
A1-Record (Jan 93-Sept 94)
[Les Aspin]
[05/19/1993-09/02/1994] [OA/ID 570000]
A1-Non-Record (Apr 94-Sept 94)
[Les Aspin]
[08/09/1994-09/08/1994] [OA/ID 580000]
MSMail-Record (Sept 94-Sept 97)
[Les Aspin]
[09/28/1994-09/29/1994] [OA/ID 590000]
[10/14/1994] [OA/ID 590000]
[10/19/1994] [OA/ID 590000]
[11/01/1994] [OA/ID 590000]
[11/04/1994] [1] [OA/ID 590000]
[11/04/1994] [2] [OA/ID 590000]
[11/04/1994] [3] [OA/ID 590000]
Box 2
Clinton Presidential Records: NSC Cable, Email, and Records Management System (continued)
NSC Emails
MSMail-Record (Sept 94-Sept 97)
[Les Aspin]
[11/04/1994-11/07/1994] [OA/ID 590000]
[11/29/1994-03/22/1995] [OA/ID 590000]
[03/22/1995-05/22/1995] [OA/ID 590000]

[05/22/1995-10/05/1995] [OA/ID 590000]
MSMail-Non-Record (Sept 94-Sept 97)
[Les Aspin]
[09/28/1994-10/12/1994] [OA/ID 605000]
[10/27/1994] [OA/ID 605000]
[10/28/1994] [OA/ID 605000]
[10/31/1994] [OA/ID 605000]
[11/01/1994] [OA/ID 605000]
[11/02/1994] [OA/ID 605000]
[11/03/1994] [OA/ID 605000]
[11/04/1994] [OA/ID 605000]
[11/04/1994-12/09/1994] [OA/ID 605000]
[01/17/1995-04/21/1995] [OA/ID 605000]
[04/25/1995-08/18/1995] [OA/ID 605000]
Box 3
Clinton Presidential Records: NSC Cable, Email, and Records Management System (continued)
NSC Emails
MSMail-Record (Sept 94-Sept 97)
[Les Aspin]
[10/04/1995-04/18/1996] [OA/ID 605000]
NSC Records Management System
[Aspin, Les]
9500216 [OA/ID 559]
9502269 [OA/ID 572]
9502587 [OA/ID 574]
9520132 [OA/ID 4118]
9520300 [OA/ID 4118]
9520570 [OA/ID 4118]