Extent

13 folders, 1097 pages

Summary

This collection includes materials relating to Viktor Bout (or Butt). The records include cables, email, and other documents related to upcoming meetings related to Bout, copies of United Nations resolutions which Bout is believed to have violated, and various press articles about sanctions against Liberia's diamond exports and a plane crash in Angola in October of 2000. The majority of this FOIA case is currently withheld under PRA and FOIA restrictions.

Scope and Content Note

The materials in FOIA 2006-0686-F are a selective, not necessarily all inclusive, body of documents responsive to the topic of the FOIA. Researchers should consult the archivist about related materials. In the last years the of the Clinton Administration, several directorates from the National Security Council (which included Transnational Threats, TNT, under Lee Wolosky) attempted to build a case against Viktor Bout (or Butt), a high profile air cargo supplier and suspected international arms smuggler.The White House Staff and Office Files contain documents related to the crash of an Antonov 24 airplane in Angola on October 31, 2000, as covered by the press, and copies of United Nations resolutions which Victor Bout is believed to have violated. FOIA request 2006-0686-F also contains electronic records in the form of emails and cables. It should be noted that because of sensitivities associated with Bout and arms trafficking the majority of this FOIA request is closed in full. The few documents that are open are notifications of upcoming NSC meetings regarding Viktor Bout and the mention of a press article about sanctions on Liberia’s diamond exports.

Biographical Note

The so-called “Merchant of Death,” Viktor Bout made his money, at least initially, selling weapons in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Angola. Later on, his markets included Afghanistan, Lebanon, and Colombia. According to a recent magazine article, Bout escaped capture for so long because he supplied useful information to among others, the Americans, in exchange for protection. But all of this ended when Bout was apprehended in Bangkok, Thailand in March 2008. His arrest came about as the result of an undercover DEA operation. In a press release the United States government said it planned to extradite Bout from Thailand. However, on August 11, 2009, Thai Court ruled in favor of Viktor Bout, denying the U.S. its request for extradition based on the lack of legal basis and political motivation behind the case. The U.S. appealed that ruling, and on August 20, 2010, a higher Thai court ruled that Bout could, in fact, be extradited to the United States. On November 16, Bout was extradited to the United States.

Record Type

Textual

System of Arrangement

Records that were responsive to this FOIA request were found in two collection areas—Clinton Presidential Records: White House Staff and Office Files and Clinton Presidential Records: NSC Cable, Email, and Records Management Systems. As policy, 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.

Access

Collection is open to all researchers. Access to Clinton Presidential Records is governed by the Presidential Records Act (PRA) (44 USC 2201) 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 (Title 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).

Person Names

Bout, Viktor

Topical Subjects

Illegal arms transfers

Processed by

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

Last Modified Date

2011-04-13

Container List

Box 1
Clinton Presidential Records: White House Staff and Office Files
National Security Council
Transnational Threats – Wolosky, Lee
Victor Butt Organization [1] [OA/ID 4044]
Victor Butt Organization [2] [OA/ID 4044]
Victor Butt Organization: Christiana Briggs [1] [OA/ID 4044]
Victor Butt Organization: Christiana Briggs [2] [OA/ID 4044]
Clinton Presidential Records: NSC Cable, Email, and Records Management Systems
NSC Cables
Jan 1999-Dec 2000
[Butt and Wolosky…]
[06/12/2000-12/22/2000] [OA/ID 530000]
NSC Emails
Exchange-Record (Sept 97-Jan 01)
[Butt and Wolosky…]
[07/11/2000-09/12/2000] [OA/ID 620000]
[09/28/2000-11/01/2000] [OA/ID 620000]
[11/03/2000-12/01/2000] [OA/ID 620000]
Exchange-Non-Record (Mar 97-Jan 01)
[Butt and Wolosky…]
[07/19/2000-09/01/2000] [OA/ID 630000]
[09/07/2000-09/29/2000] [OA/ID 630000]
NSC Emails (continued)
[10/02/2000-10/31/2000] [OA/ID 630000]
[11/01/2000-12/02/2000] [OA/ID 630000]
[12/05/2000-01/12/2001] [OA/ID 630000