Extent

60 Folders, approximately 3300 pages

Summary

This collection consists of material regarding the 2000 Presidential Election recount of votes in Florida. The records include speeches, memoranda, transcripts, and email demonstrating the White House's efforts to chart a course of neutrality during the contested election between Albert Gore, Jr. and George W. Bush.

Scope and Content Note

The materials in FOIA 2006-0221-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. FOIA request 2006-0221-F consists of Automated Records Management System (ARMS) Emails along with materials originating from the White House Office of Records Management (WHORM) Subject Files, the White House Office of Speechwriting, and National Security Council (NSC) Emails. This file holds the final draft of the President’s remarks as well as background research on statements from earlier outgoing Presidents on the results of past elections. It also contains congratulatory statements prepared for both Gore and Bush contingent on the outcome of the election. The Automated Records Management System (ARMS) Emails consist largely of records related to transcripts of press conferences. In these sessions with members of the media, White House Press Secretary Jake Siewert reiterates the official White House position on the election. An example of this stance came during a November 21, 2000 press conference where Siewert responds to a question demanding the President’s opinion on the impact of a Florida Supreme Court decision with the following: “That’s not useful really for us to say what the ultimate decision on this will be at this point, and I think the President has tried very carefully not to get wrapped up in the legal wranglings here, and I think we will continue to do that from this podium.” This conscious effort to stay above the fray in

Florida did not prevent first-hand accounts of voting irregularities in Florida from reaching the White House. A forwarded November 10, 2000 email from the son of a Palm Beach County Precinct Clerk offered a direct analysis of the difficulties employees and voters of that county were having with “butterfly” voting ballots and a voting process designed and administered by Palm Beach County Supervisor of Elections Theresa LePore. In another account from a November 15, 2000 email, a native of Palm Beach County gives his assessment of the ballot and the general lack of organizational efficiency at the polls from a voter’s perspective. The NSC Cable, Email, and Records Management Systems contain transcripts of press conferences and Presidential remarks. Characteristic of this collection is a transcript from a December 9, 2000 session where President Clinton comments on a Florida Supreme Court decision authorizing another recount. In his responses to press questioning, the President states his belief that the effort to get the most accurate result possible will legitimize the electoral process in the eyes of the voters regardless of the winner.

Biographical Note

On November 16, 2000, during an impromptu press session in Brunei, President Clinton offered the following response to questions concerning fallout from the 2000 Presidential Election in the State of Florida: “I don’t think I should be involved in that.” From November 7, 2000 to December 13, 2000, presidential candidates George W. Bush and Albert Gore, Jr. were locked in a bitter political and legal struggle arguing how, when, and where recounts of votes in Florida would take place. President Clinton and the White House charted a course of neutrality in the midst of the ongoing controversy, choosing to focus on other matters as the Gore and Bush campaigns and their political allies fought the issue out in the media and the courts. The White House Office of Records Management (WHORM) Subject Files for this particular request consists of one record. It is President Clinton’s November 11, 2000 radio address. Striking an optimistic tone, the President’s address interpreted the contentious events in Florida as a sign of a resilient and vibrant American political system. The White House Staff and Office Files contain records from the White House Office of Speechwriting. Typical of this collection is a file containing records related to President Clinton’s November 8, 2000 remarks.

Record Type

Textual

System of Arrangement

Records that were responsive to this FOIA request were found in four collection areas—Clinton Presidential Records: WHORM Subject Files, Clinton Presidential Records: White House Staff and Office Files, Clinton Presidential Records: ARMS Emails, and Clinton Presidential Records: NSC Cable, Email, and NSC Records Management Systems. Clinton Presidential Library's web site 2006-0221-F http://www.clintonlibrary.gov 3 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. Staff and Office files were maintained at the folder level by staff members within their individual offices and document all levels of administration 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 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 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 copyright law of the United States (Title 17, USC) 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

Presidents--Election; Contested elections

Person Names

Gore, Al, 1948-

Bush, George W. (George Walker), 1946-

Processed by

Staff Archivist, 2008. Previously restricted materials are added as they are released.

Last Modified Date

2011-06-16

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 2006-0221-F:
Box 1
Clinton Presidential Records: WHORM Subject File
Category Case Number
SP400 Case Number: 435591
Clinton Presidential Records: White House Staff and Office Files
Office of Speechwriting
John Pollack
Election Comments [of BC, notes, etc…12/14/00] [OA/ID 19908]
Jeff Shesol
2000 Election 11/8/00 [Remarks] [OA/ID 21462]
Election Results-Gore Concession 12/14/00 [Remarks] [OA/ID 21462]
Clinton Presidential Records: Automated Records Management System [Email]
OPD 2000/05-2001/01 [OA/ID 400000]
[Florida]
[11/09/2000]
[11/10/2000-11/16/2000]
[Vote]
[11/15/2000]
[Florida]
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[12/04/2000]
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[12/14/2000]
Clinton Presidential Records: Automated Records Management System [Email] (continued)
WHO 2000/10-2001/01 [OA/ID 900000]

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[12/08/2000-12/09/2000]
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Clinton Presidential Records: Automated Records Management System [Email] (continued)
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Default 2000/01-2001/01 [OA/ID 1200000]
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[11/09/2000-12/05/2000]
[Remarks]
[11/16/2000]
[Florida]
[11/24/2000-12/06/2000]
[Remarks]
[12/09/2000-12/11/2000]
Clinton Presidential Records: NSC Cable, Email, and Record Management Systems
NSC Emails
Exchange-Record (Sept 97-Jan 01)
[Vote]
[11/08/2000-12/11/2000] [OA/ID 620000]
[Florida]
[11/09/2000-11/17/2000] [OA/ID 620000]
Exchange-Non-Record (Mar 97-Jan 01)
[Vote]
[11/15/2000-12/09/2000] [OA/ID 630000]

Content Available Online