Extent

19 folders, approximately 1,291 pages

Summary

This collection consists of records related to meetings with Serbian American businessman Obrad Kesic and Reverend Jesse Jackson in April and May 1999 regarding the NATO bombing campaign in Kosovo. This collection consists of emails, cables, memoranda, and talking points regarding the meetings and the airstrikes in Kosovo.

Scope and Content Note

The materials in FOIA 2008-1489-F are a selective body of documents responsive to the topic of the FOIA. Researchers should consult the archivist about related materials. In March 1999, during the NATO bombing campaign in Kosovo, the government of Yugoslavia captured three American soldiers while they were out on patrol. Staff Sergeant Andrew Ramirez, Staff Sergeant Christopher Stone, and Specialist Steven Gonzalez were held in military prison for more than a month, until civil rights leader Reverend Jesse Jackson, accompanied by Serbian-American Congressman Rod Blagojevich of Illinois, personally secured their release in a meeting with Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic. Jackson's humanitarian mission was unofficial; the White House told him they could not guarantee his safety. Nonetheless, Jackson persuaded Milosevic to release the three prisoners on May 1. In return, Jackson carried a letter from Milosevic to President Clinton, which he presented in a private meeting upon his return to the United States. While NATO did not alter its demands or scale back the air strikes in response to the prisoners' release, there were some Americans who opposed the bombing and criticized the number of civilian casualties. A group of Serbian Americans, including businessman Obrad Kesic met with the President on April 14 to air their concerns. Reverend Jackson also called for an end to the airstrikes following the release of the prisoners,

though President Clinton did not alter his position in their May 3 meeting. On the same day as the meeting with Reverend Jackson, Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin also met with President Clinton to discuss the airstrikes. NATO continued the bombing until June 10, 1999, when Yugoslav forces withdrew from Kosovo. Many of the records responsive to this FOIA are located in various electronic databases. The Automated Records Management System (ARMS) Emails and the Tape Restoration Project (TRP) Emails include transcripts of news shows, interviews, and press conferences that mention Jesse Jackson's trip and the release of the POWs. There are also discussions between White House staffers regarding the meetings with Reverend Jackson and Obrad Kesic. The NSC Cables contain State department talking points and press clippings from international media regarding the POW release. The NSC Emails contain press materials and correspondence between White House staff regarding Reverend Jackson and Congress Blagojevich's travel to Belgrade, the POW release, and the Presidential meetings with Serbian Americans, Reverend Jackson, and Prime Minister Chernomyrdin. In addition to these electronic records, NSC Records Management numbered document 9903311 consists of briefing memos and talking points for the President's meeting with Jesse Jackson. Furthermore, the extra copies of the President's briefing books maintained by the Executive Office of the President contain copies of the briefing memos for both meetings.

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: ARMS Emails, 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 documents 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) 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 7 sub-series of email records called “Buckets.” The buckets include NPR, OPD, POTUS, WHO, CEA, Default, and NSC. ARMS emails are arranged chronologically by creation date. The Tape Restoration Project (TRP) is a database consisting of restored email records from the Automated Records Management System from July 1994 – June 2000. The TRP is a database that contains email from the Executive Office of the President. This system maintains unclassified Presidential record email. The TRP dataset is comprised of 7 sub-series of email records called “Buckets.” The buckets include NPR, OPD, POTUS, WHO, CEA, Default, and NSC. TRP 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 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).

Processed by

Staff Archivist, 2012 - 2013. Previously restricted materials are added as they are released

Last Modified Date

2015-03-02

Container List

The following is a list of documents and folders processed in response to FOIA 2008-1489-F:
Box 1
Clinton Presidential Records: White House Staff and Office Files
Executive Office of the President
[Extra Copies of Briefing Books: April 1999: Meeting with Serbian American Leaders, April 14,
1999] [OA/ID CF 1093]
[Extra Copies of Briefing Books: May 1999: Meeting with Reverend Jesse Jackson, May 3,
1999] [OA/ID CF 1097]
Clinton Presidential Records: Automated Records Management System [Email]
NSC [OA/ID 1200000]
[Jesse Jackson]
[04/07/1999 – 04/26/1999]
[04/28/1999 – 04/30/1999]
[05/03/1999]
[05/04/1999 – 05/05/1999]
[05/06/1999 – 05/12/1999]
[Kesic]
[04/13/1999]

Clinton Presidential Records: Tape Restoration Project [Email]
NSC [OA/ID 1200000]
[Jesse Jackson]
[04/26/1999 – 04/30/1999]
[05/09/1999 – 05/12/1999]
Clinton Presidential Records: NSC Cable, Email, and Records Management System
NSC Cables
Jan 1999 – Dec 2000
[Jesse Jackson]
[04/24/1999 – 05/03/1999] [OA/ID 530000]
Box 2
[05/04/1999 – 05/05/1999] [OA/ID 530000]
NSC Emails
Exchange – Record (Sept 97 – Jan 01)
[Jesse Jackson]
[04/05/1999 – 04/27/1999] [OA/ID 620000]
[04/28/1999 – 04/30/1999] [OA/ID 620000]
[05/01/1999 – 05/04/1999] [OA/ID 620000]
[05/04/1999 – 05/13/1999] [OA/ID 620000]
[Kesic]
[04/03/1999 – 04/14/1999] [OA/ID 620000]
Exchange – Non-Record (Mar 97 – Jan 01)
[Jesse Jackson]
[04/21/1999 – 05/12/1999] [OA/ID 630000]
Clinton Presidential Records: NSC Cable, Email, and Records Management System
NSC Records Management System
[Jesse Jackson]
9903311 [OA/ID 2726]