

Gerald R. Ford REDACTED VERSION OF THE FBI INVESTIGATORY REPORT ON GERALD FORD, NOMINEE FOR VICE PRESIDENT (1942, 1948, 1970) 1973

Collection Type

Federal Records

Extent

0.8 linear feet (approximately 1,700 pages)

Record Type

Textual

Access

Open. Some items may be temporarily restricted under terms of the donor's deed of gift, a copy of which is available on request, or under National Archives and Records Administration general restrictions (36 CFR 1256). It is important to note that the Ford Library holds only a redacted copy, and not the original report. It is not possible for the Library to open the redacted portions of the documents. Individuals wishing to make a request for a re-review of the redacted information should submit a FOIA request to the FBI.

Copyright

<p>
Gerald R. Ford donated to the United States of America his copyrights in all of his unpublished writings in National Archives collections. The copyrights to materials written by other individuals or organizations are presumed to remain with

them. Works prepared by U.S. Government employees as part of their official duties are in the public domain.

Processed by

J.P. Schmidt, August 2011

Biography

Gerald R. Ford

July 14, 1913 Born in Omaha, Nebraska, to Leslie and Dorothy King

1935 B.A. in Economics, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

1941 Graduates from Yale Law School

1942-1946 Active duty in the U.S. Navy

1949-1973 U.S. Representative from Michigan

1965-1973 Minority Leader, U.S. House of Representatives

1973-1974 Vice President of the United States

1974-1977 President of the United States

December 26, 2006 Died in Rancho Mirage, California

[More detailed information on the life and career of Gerald R. Ford.](#)

Scope and Content Note

On October 10, 1973, Vice President Spiro T. Agnew resigned from office. Under investigation for multiple charges of alleged conspiracy, extortion and bribery, Agnew agreed to resign, pleading no contest to a single charge of federal income tax evasion. Two days later, President Richard M. Nixon nominated Gerald Ford to become the 40th vice president of the United States.

Ford was the first vice president selected under the provisions of the Twenty fifth Amendment to the Constitution, ratified in 1967. The Amendment governs presidential and vice presidential succession and stipulates that whenever the office of vice president becomes vacant through death, succession to the presidency or resignation, the president shall nominate a vice president to be confirmed by a majority vote of both houses of Congress.

Procedural questions arose concerning which committee would handle the nomination in each chamber. The House decided that the Committee on the Judiciary, chaired by Peter Rodino (D N.J.), would have jurisdiction; the Senate chose the Committee on Rules and Administration, chaired by Howard Cannon (D Nevada). They held separate hearings. Senate proceedings began on November 1, continued for two weeks and ended with a vote to confirm on November 27. The hearings in the House opened on November 15, and that chamber voted to approve the nomination on December 6, 1973.

In order to determine the suitability of Gerald Ford for this high office, the committees looked to investigations by the FBI, IRS, and House and Senate Committee investigators. The FBI investigation, commencing on October 15, 1973, and lasting through November 20th, carried out by hundreds of special agents, consisted of interviews of more than one thousand individuals, checks on financial information, criminal records, employment and education history, personal character, organization membership, marriage, and credit. The investigators were also interested in the background of Ford's family members and associates.

Special agents canvassed Alexandria, Virginia (the location of Ford's home in the Washington, D.C., area), Washington, D.C., and in Michigan, Grand Rapids (Ford's hometown) and Detroit. Inquiries were made with politicians, judges, attorneys, local officials, law enforcement agents, educators, clergy, civil rights and labor leaders, members of organizations Ford was affiliated with, businesspersons and professionals. FBI special agents conducted interviews in 29 other cities as well. The FBI included in the report the field office reports of Gerald Ford's background investigation produced in relation to his unsuccessful 1941 application for appointment as an FBI special agent.

A number of leads developed in the course of the investigation. Featured prominently were allegations that Ford:

- would use his influence to import goods from China, acting as a secret partner in a corporation;
- did not report some campaign contributions;
- exerted his influence to secure Federal contracts for a Grand Rapids furniture firm;
- would provide support for dairy price legislation if contributions were made to indebted Republican House members' campaigns;
- and accepted free air transportation from corporations.

These allegations, mostly founded on rumors, were largely determined to be false or at worst, not illegal. The vast majority of those interviewed could provide nothing derogatory about the appointee and supported the nomination.

The report, which was made available only to select members of the House and Senate committees charged with investigating the nominee, proved to be useful in uncovering areas where further clarification was required by the nominee. The committee however, found nothing alarming in the report. It served to confirm the fact that Gerald Ford had been an upright politician for the entirety of his career.

Finding Aids

The FBI included in the report indexes to names and subjects. The index for the first three parts is located in the first folder of this collection. Indexes for subsequent parts are included at the beginning of each part. Some field office reports also include a table of contents. A master table of contents for the entire collection, created by the Ford Library, is also available.

Related Materials (August 2011)

The Gerald R. Ford Vice-Presidential Papers, (1948) 1973-1974 contains materials compiled related to the Vice-Presidential confirmation hearings.

The original copies of field office reports created in the course of Gerald Ford's special agent application background investigation included in the present

collection are found in the collection: Department of Justice. Federal Bureau of Investigation. Special Agent Application Case File of Gerald R. Ford, Jr., 1941-1942 (1974-1976).

There are also two items from the Ford Library Book Collection that document the hearings:

U.S. Congress. House. 1973. Committee on the Judiciary. Hearings on the Nomination of Gerald R. Ford to be Vice President of the United States. 93rd Cong., 1st sess., November 15-26, 1973. Serial 16. (KF27.J8 1973a); and

U.S. Congress. Senate. 1973. Committee on Rules and Administration. Hearings on the Nomination of Gerald R. Ford of Michigan to be Vice President of the United States. 93rd Cong., 1st sess., November 1-14, 1973. (KF26.R8 1973a).

Last Modified Date

2024-04-09

Boxes 1-2

Redacted Version of the FBI Investigatory Report on Gerald Ford, Nominee for Vice President, (1942, 1948, 1970) 1973. (0.8 linear inches)

Box 1 Redacted Version of the FBI Investigatory Report on Gerald Ford, Nominee for Vice President

Status	Title
OPEN	Index - Parts I, II, III
OPEN	Part I (1-7)
OPEN	Part II (1-2)
OPEN	Part III
OPEN	Part IV (1-3)

Box 2 Redacted Version of the FBI Investigatory Report on Gerald Ford, Nominee for Vice President

Status	Title
OPEN	Part IV (4-7)
OPEN	Part V
OPEN	Part VI (1-2)

Status	Title
OPEN	Part VII (1-3)
OPEN	Part VIII
OPEN	Part IX
OPEN	Supplemental Reports