

FBI Releases Files on Bill Clinton's Pardon of Fugitive Marc Rich



Washington, November 3 (RHC)-- The U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation, the FBI, has dealt another blow to the campaign of Democratic presidential nominee Hillary Clinton -- this time by releasing documents concerning her husband, former President Bill Clinton.

With less than one week away from Election Day, the FBI released 129 pages of documents related to a controversial pardon Bill Clinton granted fugitive trader Marc Rich on his last day in office almost 16 years ago.

The disclosure of the heavily redacted report over the pardon of Rich, an investigation that was closed in 2005 without charges, further angered Democrats who are already outraged by the FBI's probe into hundreds of thousands of newly uncovered e-mails linked to the former first lady.

The FBI released the Bill Clinton files earlier this week, which received little attention, but the agency drew more attention two days later when it posted a statement on Twitter.

"This initial release consists of material from the FBI's files related to the William J. Clinton Foundation, a

non-profit 501(c)(3) organization," reads the statement on the FBI records vault website. "The bulk of these records come from a 2001 FBI investigation into the pardon of Marc Rich (1934-2013), aka Marcell David Reich, by President Clinton in 2001; it was closed in 2005. The material is heavily redacted due to personal privacy protections and grand jury secrecy rules."

Rich, who died in 2013, was a financier who fled to Switzerland after being indicted on numerous federal charges, including tax evasion, wire fraud and racketeering in 1983. The former president's motive for pardoning Rich was questioned because Rich's ex-wife, Denise Rich, was an affluent Democratic donor who donated \$450,000 to Clinton's presidential library foundation and more than \$100,000 to Hillary Clinton's Senate campaign.

The FBI said that material requested three or more times under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) is automatically made public online. "The FBI's Records Management Division receives thousands of FOIA requests annually which are processed on a first in, first out (FIFO) basis," it said in a statement.

"Per the standard procedure for FOIA, these materials became available for release and were posted automatically and electronically to the FBI's public reading room in accordance with the law and established procedures."

Clinton's campaign criticized the shocking move, with her spokesman Brian Fallon saying that "absent a FOIA litigation deadline, this is odd." Referring to Republican nominee Donald Trump, Fallon asked, "Will FBI be posting docs on Trump's housing discrimination in '70s?"

According to a new ABC News/Washington Post tracking poll released Tuesday, Trump has edged past Clinton for the first time since May, leading her 46 to 45 percent.

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