

# Documents show how White House defended Clinton

October 11 2014, by Ken Thomas

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The White House made a public push to defend President Bill Clinton during a series of investigations related to his affair with intern Monica Lewinsky and other matters, according to thousands of pages of documents released by the National Archives. The papers did not appear to reveal any new information that might affect a potential Hillary Rodham Clinton presidential campaign in 2016.

The documents, part of 10,000 pages of records from the Clinton administration released Friday, focused on a number of painful chapters in the former first lady's time in the White House and described how the president's aides sought to defend her husband against impeachment.

The possibility of a [presidential campaign](#) has heightened interest in the documents by media organizations, political opposition researchers and historians.

Many records involving Lewinsky are redacted. Behind the scenes, Clinton officials were adamant that they were not trying to discredit her.

"There is no evidence whatsoever that the White House was directing or involved in any campaign against her," Clinton aide Sidney Blumenthal wrote in a January 1999 memo.

But the case caused political tensions. An aide notes in one document that one Democratic governor explained "why he felt he needed to distance himself" from Clinton.

The papers also touch on the Whitewater investigation into Bill and Hillary Clinton's land dealings in Arkansas and the pardons Bill Clinton granted in his final hours as president.

The Clintons were never implicated in the Whitewater case, but their real estate partners, Jim and Susan McDougal, were convicted in a trial that also resulted in the conviction of then-Arkansas governor.

The documents touch on financier Marc Rich, who was indicted on fraud and other charges in 1983. He fled to Switzerland and was later pardoned on Clinton's last day in office. Jack Quinn, who had left his role as White House counsel by then, suggests in a handwritten note that Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak discussed a pardon directly with Clinton.

With these documents, the National Archives will have released about 30,000 pages of papers since February. Both the Obama White House and the Clinton Presidential Library in Arkansas signed off on their release.

Past installments of the [documents](#) have offered an unvarnished look at Clinton's two terms, including the shaping of his wife's public image.

Hillary Clinton's influence in the White House is explored in this latest installment, from her role in Clinton's unsuccessful health care overhaul plan to her 2000 Senate campaign in New York. Bill Clinton left office in January 2001.

Hillary Clinton, who went on to serve as President Barack Obama's secretary of state, now is a powerful advocate for Democrats in the midterm elections in November and the leading Democratic prospect for president in 2016.

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