

# A. Ernest Fitzgerald

**Arthur Ernest "Ernie" Fitzgerald** (July 31, 1926 – January 31, 2019) was an American engineer, a member of the Senior Executive Service in the United States Air Force, and a prominent U.S. government whistleblower. <sup>[1][2]</sup>

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## Biography

Fitzgerald was a member of the Senior Executive Service, a management systems deputy, Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Financial Management and Comptroller, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, Washington, D.C. He was responsible for the development of improved management controls generally, specifically including management information control systems, economic cost effectiveness analysis, statistical programs and analysis, cost estimating and analysis, and productivity enhancement and measurement. The latter responsibility includes supervising Air Force performance measurement activities.

Following service in the U.S. Navy, Fitzgerald earned a bachelor of science degree in industrial engineering from the University of Alabama. He is a registered professional engineer and has worked on several successful patents, including one issued in his name. He is the author of "The High Priests of Waste" and "The Pentagonists." Fitzgerald died in Falls Church, Virginia on

**A. Ernest Fitzgerald**



<b>Born</b>	Arthur Ernest Fitzgerald July 31, 1926 Birmingham, Alabama, U.S.
<b>Died</b>	January 31, 2019 (aged 92) Falls Church, Virginia, U.S.
<b>Education</b>	University of Alabama (BS)
<b>Occupation</b>	Engineer
<b>Employer</b>	United States Air Force
<b>Known for</b>	Pentagon whistleblower
	<b>Military career</b>
<b>Allegiance</b>	United States of America
<b>Service/branch</b>	United States Navy

January 31, 2019 at the age of 92.

## Career

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After working for a number of years as an engineer and in management, Fitzgerald was employed by the U.S. Air Force as Deputy for Management Systems in 1965. While employed at the Pentagon Fitzgerald testified to Congress in 1968 and 1969 about the concealed cost overruns and the technical problems of the Lockheed C-5A transport plane. He was accused of revealing classified information and was fired on order of President Richard M. Nixon.

He later successfully appealed to the Civil Service Commission to be reinstated. Furthermore, he was involved in several legal cases that were significant in establishing presidential immunity and defining the rights of government employees, including the U.S. Supreme Court case Nixon v. Fitzgerald.

## Whistleblower

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*United States Civil Service Commission (USCSC)*

In 1968, Fitzgerald reported a \$2.3 billion cost overrun in the Lockheed C-5 aircraft program. As a congressional witness before the Joint Economic Committee, he rejected the advice of Air Force officials and testified with candor and transparency about billions of dollars in avionics program cost overruns and other technical problems.

In response to Fitzgerald's testimony, President Richard M. Nixon directed that he be fired. "It was reported that Nixon told aides to 'get rid of that son of a bitch.'" In executing the president's order, Fitzgerald was ultimately terminated by Defense Secretary Melvin Laird.

Because of his candor and commitment to the truth, Fitzgerald was a driving force for whistleblower protections. Fitzgerald continued to fight a four-decade-long campaign against fraud, waste, and abuse within the department. Consequently, he was instrumental in the enactment of the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978, a precursor to the Whistleblower Protection Act of 1989.

*↑  
False statement*