



Written by [C. Mitchell Shaw](#) on February 20, 2017

Published in the February 20, 2017 issue of [the New American](#) magazine. Vol. 33, No. 04

# From Russia With Love: Did Putin Put Trump in the White House?

**Hillary Clinton and many in the media accused Russia of interfering in the 2016 election in order to get Donald Trump in the White House. What really happened?**



Both leading up to and following what has been easily the most contentious election in recent history, Donald Trump's enemies in politics, the intelligence community, and the liberal mainstream media have claimed that Russian President Vladimir Putin directed a campaign to interfere with the election. His goal? To assure the defeat of Hillary Clinton and the victory of Trump. His reason? As Clinton expressed it in the third and final debate with Trump in October: "Well, that's because he'd rather have a puppet as president of the United States."

The primary tactic employed the political establishment of both major parties, the intelligence community, and the liberal media to trash Trump was one of misdirection. By focusing the attention of the American people on speculative allegations about Trump's connections *to* and control *by* the Russian government, his enemies attempted — by sleight-of-hand — to take the attention away from the illegal and immoral conduct that the Democratic National Committee (DNC) and Clinton campaign had been shown to have done, though that's where the focus should have been.

## The WikiLeaks Disclosures

The allegations that Putin sought to influence the election in favor of Trump — who would then serve as his "puppet" — grew out of the broader allegations that Russian state-sponsored hackers were responsible for the embarrassing and damning leaks of documents and e-mails from the DNC in July of 2016. As Clinton prepared to accept the nomination from her party, WikiLeaks released nearly 20,000 e-mails from the DNC showing a clear pattern demonstrating that Clinton's nomination was engineered by the DNC rigging the process to assure that Clinton's name would appear on the ticket. The DNC e-mails show that there was — in the highest ranks of the DNC — a concerted effort to hurt the campaign of Senator Bernie Sanders (D-Vt.) even as he was continuing to gain steam in the primaries. Those e-mails showed — in the clear and unambiguous language conspirators use only when they feel certain that their communications are safe — that in the weeks and months leading up to the nomination, Clinton was not only the nominee-presumptive, but that the leadership of the DNC had pulled out all the stops to promote her and discredit Sanders — in direct violation of the DNC charter, which requires that it remain neutral during the primary cycle.

As a direct result of those leaked e-mails, the DNC went into damage control mode. The fallout was



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immediate. DNC chairperson Representative Deborah Wasserman Schultz (D-Fla.) — who was shown by several e-mail threads to be intricately involved in the DNC scheme to guarantee a Clinton nomination — was forced to resign from the chair ahead of the convention. She resisted, and capitulated only after receiving a call from President Obama.

Even as the DNC and Clinton campaign were still reeling from the initial scandal related to WikiLeaks' publication of those e-mails, the second wave hit. It was discovered that the e-mails also showed that at least some major donors were slated for federal appointments in a glaring example of *quid pro quo*. Of course, those planned appointments assumed a Clinton victory.

## The Russian Bogeyman

Having attempted — and failed — to extinguish the fires of scandal by offering up Wasserman Schultz on the altar of damage control, both the DNC and the Clinton campaign accused Russia of hacking DNC servers and leaking the information to WikiLeaks in an effort to help Trump win the White House. The implication was that Trump was Putin's choice for the U.S. presidency, and the American people should therefore reject him in favor of Clinton. In a classic example of Left-think, the DNC and Clinton campaign — who had been caught red-handed manipulating an election and playing a rousing game of *quid pro quo* — accused Russia and Trump of *attempting* to do what they had been *caught* doing while offering exactly zero evidence either that Russia was involved or that Trump was the intended beneficiary.

As is par for the course when caught in unethical, illegal, and corrupt behavior, the DNC and Clinton campaign sought to deflect the attention away from *what the e-mails said* by focusing on *how WikiLeaks got them*. By introducing — *from stage left* — the Russia/Trump connection, the Democrat Party got the added benefit of appearing anti-Russian while casting the Republican candidate as pro-Russian. And they stayed that course throughout the election. Whenever either the DNC or Clinton was shown to have broken the law or acted unethically, they would simply trot out the Russian bogeyman and shift the attention away from themselves.

Had the DNC and Clinton campaign acted alone in their attempt to paint Trump red, it would likely have blown over very quickly. But in their bizarre game of Red Scare, Trump's political enemies were joined by his enemies in both the intelligence community and the liberal mainstream media.

An illustration of the media providing the Clinton campaign an assist can be seen in what happened just two days before the second debate between Clinton and Trump on Sunday, October 9, 2016. Two major stories broke on the Friday before that debate. One was about an 11-year-old video of Donald Trump making lewd comments about women. The other big story was that WikiLeaks had just begun dumping leaked e-mails from the account of Clinton Campaign Director John Podesta uncovering a cesspool of corruption within the campaign that was unethical and illegal. Many of the leaked documents showed that Clinton had — as secretary of state — served her own interests and enlarged her own bank accounts by a series of conflicts of interest and illegality.

The liberal media jumped on the story of Trump's remarks and almost completely ignored the Podesta e-mails. Those e-mails came one week after WikiLeaks celebrated its 10th anniversary by holding a news conference. In that press conference, Julian Assange — the founder and public face of the whistleblower website — promised that WikiLeaks would begin a rolling release of documents that he



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described as “significant material on war, arms, oil, Google, the election and mass surveillance” that show “interesting features of U.S. power factions and how they operate.” He said the rolling release would last 10 weeks. The leaked Podesta e-mails were the first installment of Assange’s kept promise. Each new batch of e-mails and documents added to the weight of the evidence against Clinton and dogged her throughout the election.

By *over-reporting* on the Trump video and *under-reporting* on the Podesta e-mails, the liberal media set the stage for Clinton to keep the second debate *away* from the unethical and illegal things she and her cohorts *had done* and on the immoral things Trump *had said*. In the second debate, Clinton used the moment the media had provided her to introduce allegations of a connection between Trump and Russia.

While answering a question related to a leaked e-mail containing a partial transcript of a speech from 2013 — in which she told the National Multi-Housing Council that “you need both a public and a private position” on issues — Clinton told debate moderator Martha Raddatz:

But, you know, let’s talk about what’s really going on here, Martha, because our intelligence community just came out and said in the last few days that the Kremlin, meaning Putin and the Russian government, are directing the attacks, the hacking on American accounts to influence our election. And WikiLeaks is part of that, as are other sites where the Russians hack information, we don’t even know if it’s accurate information, and then they put it out.

We have never in the history of our country been in a situation where an adversary, a foreign power, is working so hard to influence the outcome of the election. And believe me, they’re not doing it to get me elected. They’re doing it to try to influence the election for Donald Trump.

Just a few days later, in the third — and final — debate with Trump, Clinton again used the spectre of Russian interference in the election to deflect a question about an e-mail revealing her agenda — again dealing with a partial speech transcript. This time the subject was her “dream” of open borders. After dodging the question by pretending it was taken out of context, Clinton played a re-run of her previous remarks, telling debate moderator Mike Wallace:

But you are very clearly quoting from WikiLeaks. What is really important about WikiLeaks is that the Russian government has engaged in espionage against Americans. They have hacked American websites, American accounts of private people, of institutions. Then they have given that information to WikiLeaks for the purpose of putting it on the Internet. This has come from the highest levels of the Russian government. Clearly from Putin himself in an effort, as 17 of our intelligence agencies have confirmed, to influence our election. So I actually think the most important question of this evening, Chris, is finally, will Donald Trump admit and condemn that the Russians are doing this, and make it clear that he will not have the help of Putin in this election. That he rejects Russian espionage against Americans, which he actually encouraged in the past. Those are the questions we need answered. We’ve never had anything like this happen in any of our elections before.

Clinton was using the tried-and-true tactic of a strong offense being the best defense. She and her comrades in the DNC had been caught red-handed doing things that were illegal, immoral, and unethical. The e-mails published by WikiLeaks were proof of that, and Clinton had to deflect the attention *away* from herself and *toward* Trump. After all, she had spent almost her entire campaign under investigation for illegally sending, receiving, and storing classified information via her private,



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unsecured server. Just what she and her campaign did *not* need was another batch of scandals related to e-mail. E-mail, it would appear, is her Kryptonite.

Furthermore, by saying of the leaked information, “We don’t even know if it’s accurate information,” Clinton had left the impression that the leaked e-mails and documents were not only the work of Russian state-sponsored hackers, but that they were “fake news” published by WikiLeaks in some type of conspiracy with Putin. If that were the case, there would surely be some evidence that the e-mails had been manufactured. No such evidence has ever been offered.

On the contrary, during the 10 years that it has provided a safe platform for whistleblowers, WikiLeaks has published millions of documents, the authenticity of which has not been refuted. It has also scooped many mainstream media outlets, which have — in turn — used the WikiLeaks releases as source material for their own reporting. Given that Clinton missed what would have been a golden opportunity to *actually* deny that the “information” in the WikiLeaks disclosures was “accurate,” the decision to trust that the e-mails and documents are genuine is an easy one.

Those e-mails and documents serve as a box full of smoking guns against the DNC and Clinton campaign. A quick look at just a few of those smoking guns — any of which *alone* would be damning — illustrates why Clinton (with the help of the liberal media) wanted to keep the attention on the supposed source of the leak, rather than on what the e-mails show about Clinton and her comrades in the DNC:

- The Clinton Foundation accepted more than \$10 million from the government of Saudi Arabia and \$1 million from Qatar, even though Secretary Clinton noted in an e-mail that the Saudis and Qatar “are providing clandestine financial and logistic support to ISIL and other radical Sunni groups in the region.”
- Clinton’s own campaign staff expressed concerns about the Clinton Foundation’s “cozy relationship” with the National Iranian American Council (NIAC), a notorious group with links to Iran’s virulently anti-American regime, and a Clinton fundraising event at the home of NIAC official Michael Chegini.
- Despite Clinton’s repeated denials that she did anything wrong in her handling of classified e-mails, her own staff expressed concerns that her use of a private, unsecured e-mail server as secretary of state “smack[ed] of acting above the law.” Those staffers — including Erika Rottenberg, an attorney with tremendous experience in matters related to the intersection of technology and law — questioned “how it was viewed as ok/secure/appropriate to use a private server for secure documents AND why further Hillary took it upon herself to review them and delete documents without providing anyone outside her circle a chance to weigh in.”
- The lines between the Clinton Foundation and the Clinton State Department were so blurred as to be non-existent. Clinton used her position as secretary of state to have her staff — some of whom worked for her at both the State Department and the Clinton Foundation — solicit “donations” to the Clinton Foundation as a ticket to gain access to the U.S. government.
- As secretary of state, Clinton “reset” relations with Putin’s Russia, which helped the Clinton Foundation and its donors make millions of dollars off a deal that sold the mining company Uranium One (and 25 percent of our strategic uranium production) to Russia.
- John Podesta, Clinton’s campaign manager, is involved in a huge financial/national security scandal involving his position as an executive board member of Joule Global Stichting, a company owned by



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Russian oligarch Viktor Vekselberg and Putin's state-owned RUSNANO corporation.

- Secretary of State Clinton set up multi-billion dollar deals and transfers of U.S. technology to help Vladimir Putin build Skolkovo, Russia's high-tech Silicon Valley, concerning which the FBI has issued "an extraordinary warning" noting that Russia may use this cooperation to obtain America's "sensitive or classified research development facilities and dual-use technologies."

Considering what the e-mails show of Clinton's close ties to Russia and Putin, her assertion that Trump is Putin's "puppet" is a classic case of the pot calling the kettle black. Furthermore, it boggles the mind that the woman who delivered U.S. technology into the hands of Russia would then accuse Putin of directing a hacking campaign to help her political opponent. Was it the technology she helped supply that was used to do the hacking?

Almost as soon as Clinton claimed that "17 of our intelligence agencies have confirmed" that "Putin himself" was directing a hacking campaign "to influence our election" in favor of Trump, who would be his "puppet," the liberal media ran with it as if it were a confirmed fact. After a month of the liberal media softening the ground, with reports alleging both a connection between Trump and Russia and Russian hackers being behind the leaked DNC and Clinton campaign e-mails and documents, the CIA concluded in a "secret assessment" presented to President Obama and other senior government officials in early December that Russian state-sponsored hackers had interfered with the presidential election to assure a Trump victory. By this time, though, Clinton's tactic of obfuscation and redirection had failed and — in spite of the help she received from the liberal media — she had lost to Trump in a shocking upset.

## Delegitimizing Trump's Presidency

In the wake of Trump's electoral victory, the liberal mainstream media were only too happy to help smear Trump by following a page from their previous playbook. By *over-reporting* on CIA allegations that Putin was behind the leaking of the damning e-mails and *under-reporting* on the content of the e-mails that was so damning, the liberal media picked up where Clinton had left off in painting Trump as a "puppet" of the Kremlin. While it certainly matters that American servers are being hacked, and knowing the sources of those hacks — if they can be known — is newsworthy, the major emphasis of the media should not have been on where the e-mails *came from*, but on what they *contained*. Instead, the liberal media followed the lead of the DNC and Clinton campaign and kept the focus on allegations of Russian interference despite an astounding lack of proof either in the assessment or the later reports released by the intelligence community.

While the CIA had only claimed that Russia was behind the leaked e-mails and documents, the reporting of the liberal mainstream media — replete with phrases about Russia "hacking the election" — created an impression that caused 50 percent of Clinton voters polled by *The Economist* to believe that "Russia tampered with vote tallies to help Donald Trump."

Of course, overlooked in all of the liberal media pseudo-reporting of the CIA "secret assessment" was the salient fact that it fit seamlessly with Clinton's previously unsubstantiated accusation of Trump being the beneficiary of Russian hacking and her claim that her accusation was "confirmed" by "17 of our intelligence agencies." As the liberal media reported on this new revelation, none ever asked how Clinton knew about the results of a "secret" assessment more than a month before it was completed and





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released. Was the CIA keeping her in the loop as it conducted its “secret assessment,” or was the assessment a dog-and-pony show tailored to benefit Clinton and undermine the legitimacy of a Trump presidency? After all, Clinton seems to live by the maxim, “If you can’t beat them, smear them.” Having failed at her bid for the White House, perhaps the best Clinton — and the insiders who had wanted a Clinton 2.0 presidency — could hope for was to deligitimize Trump’s presidency from its beginning.

Trump had already made enemies within the intelligence community over his criticism of the FBI’s twice-refusal to recommend an indictment against Clinton for her obvious crimes. He certainly added fuel to the fire in the second debate when he said that as president he would “instruct [his] attorney general to get a special prosecutor” to launch a real investigation and put Clinton “in jail.” In response to the CIA assessment, Trump again fueled the feud with the intelligence community when he Tweeted, “Can you imagine if the election results were the opposite and WE tried to play the Russia/CIA card. It would be called conspiracy theory!”

In the weeks between Trump’s election and his inauguration, the intelligence community released two reports to the public claiming that the leaked DNC and Clinton e-mails and documents were the work of Russian state-sponsored hackers and were part of a plot to “discredit” Clinton and the DNC and assure the election of Trump. Almost immediately after releasing the second report, the intelligence community appended a spurious document alleged to be a “dossier” on Trump’s connection to and control by Russian intelligence officials. That “dossier” contained unsubstantiated, salacious accusations of Trump participating in bizarre sexual perversions while in Moscow. It further claimed that he was being controlled by the Kremlin as a form of blackmail and supported by the Kremlin to help in his race against Clinton.

The liberal media again jumped on the story even though the document upon which the story was based had not been — and is incapable of being — verified. (The credibility of that “dossier” and the intelligence reports is covered in detail in my related article “[Intelligence Community Claims on Trump](#).”) Without anything approaching evidence, Trump’s enemies in the Democrat party and the liberal media attacked Trump using a “dossier” added to the most recent intelligence report by his enemies in the intelligence community.

The liberal reporting on this was a bridge too far even for Glenn Greenwald of *The Intercept*. Greenwald — a man no one could accuse of being a Trumpeteer — wrote in an article entitled “The Deep State Goes to War With President-Elect, Using Unverified Claims, as Democrats Cheer” that those who — because of their hatred and distrust of Trump — bought into this without demanding proof are guilty of ignoring President Eisenhower’s farewell address advice to “guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex.”

While expressing his own view — which is shared by many across the political spectrum — that the “dangers posed by a Trump presidency are numerous and manifest,” Greenwald wrote that empowering “the CIA and its shadowy allies” is not the way to ameliorate that danger:

The serious dangers posed by a Trump presidency are numerous and manifest. There are a wide array of legitimate and effective tactics for combating those threats: from bipartisan congressional coalitions and constitutional legal challenges to citizen uprisings and sustained and aggressive civil disobedience. All of those strategies have periodically proven themselves effective in times of political crisis or authoritarian overreach.



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But cheering for the CIA and its shadowy allies to unilaterally subvert the U.S. election and impose its own policy dictates on the elected president is both warped and self-destructive. Empowering the very entities that have produced the most shameful atrocities and systemic deceit over the last six decades is desperation of the worst kind. Demanding that evidence-free, anonymous assertions be instantly venerated as Truth — despite emanating from the very precincts designed to propagandize and lie — is an assault on journalism, democracy, and basic human rationality. And casually branding domestic adversaries who refuse to go along as traitors and disloyal foreign operatives is morally bankrupt and certain to backfire on those doing it.

Greenwald's observation is spot-on. When Democrats (who pretended their candidate was not a serial criminal), establishment Republicans (who, it would appear, would have preferred a Clinton presidency), and the liberal media (whose reporting was more about *creating* the story than reporting on it) assist the intelligence community (which is made up of a group of secretive agencies whose stock in trade is deception and propaganda) in accusing an incoming president of being the "puppet" of a hostile foreign power without demanding any proof, they empower a secret government to rule over all Americans without limit. There is no version of that that ends well.

Regardless of how one feels about President Trump, this particular war on him — waged by the political establishment, the liberal media, and the intelligence community — is a war on all Americans. Even those who voted for Clinton.



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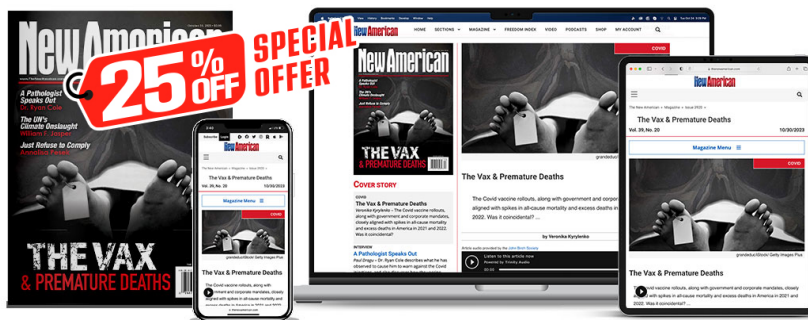
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