



Written by [C. Mitchell Shaw](#) on January 31, 2016

Hillary's Campaign in "Damage Control" Mode Ahead of Caucuses

Hillary Clinton's campaign switched to full "damage control" mode in response to the latest release of e-mails from her private, unsecured server. The e-mails were released Friday evening, barely three days ahead of the Iowa Caucuses. The State Department says 22 of the e-mails from the new batch contain information that is Top Secret and will not be released along with the others.



The State Department has redacted many of the e-mails it has released before this batch — some of them quite heavily — in order to do what Mrs. Clinton failed to do as secretary of state: protect national security. This batch of e-mails, though, contained information so sensitive and secret that seven e-mail threads — 37 pages in total — are being withheld in their entirety. This is the first time since the scandal began that the State Department has confirmed that the former secretary of state sent or received emails which included classified information. State Department officials said that withholding the e-mails based on the sensitive information in them is "the prudent, responsible thing to do." Those officials would not discuss what was in the e-mails or whether secretary Clinton was the sender or the recipient, according to a [report](#) by CBS News.

The New American [reported](#) on January 25 that the already-released e-mails showed that she sent or received at least 1,340 messages containing classified information. Some of those 1,340 messages contained information that was Top Secret and above. We also [reported](#) last Thursday that the FBI is ready to recommend that Mrs. Clinton be indicted for mishandling that classified information, according to Tom DeLay.

After the release of the new batch of e-mails and the announcement that 22 containing Top Secret information would be withheld, Brian Fallon, spokesman for the Clinton campaign, took to Twitter to say that the campaign wants all of the e-mails released. He tweeted that the decision to not release the seven e-mail threads "is overclassification run amok," and that the campaign opposes "the complete blocking of the release of these emails."



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Of course, as secretary of state, Hillary Clinton sent and/or received the messages in those threads over her unsecured bathroom server. It should come as no surprise that her campaign would publicly call for releasing that same information, since it telegraphs to the public that Clinton believes she did nothing wrong. But whether she really wants the government to release the withheld e-mails is another question entirely.

Fallon also released a longer statement saying, in part, that “in at least one case, the emails appear to involve information from a published news article.” This is not the first time Mrs. Clinton and her campaign have tried to play that card. As *The New American* reported on January 25, the beleaguered candidate told NPR, “How a New York Times public article that goes around the world could be in any way viewed as classified, or the fact that it would be sent to other people off of the New York Times site, I think, is one of the difficulties that people have in understanding what this is about.”

As this writer said then:

While that may pass for a logic in the recesses of the Clintonian mind, the facts — again — are against her. In the wake of WikiLeaks publishing a trove of State Department cables in 2010, many of which were classified, the Office of Management and Budget notified federal employees that they should neither access nor share any of the information WikiLeaks had published. Part of that notice said, “Classified information, whether or not already posted on public websites or disclosed to the media, remains classified, and must be treated as such by federal employees and contractors, until it is declassified by an appropriate U.S. Government authority.”

Since this was during Clinton’s tenure as secretary of state, and considering that she had signed two separate [non-disclosure agreements](#), her claims of innocence based on ignorance ring a little hollow. With the inspector general’s letter to lawmakers pointing out her violation of federal laws regarding the unauthorized disclosure of state secrets, Clinton — who was at one time the nominee-apparent — may actually face charges. Judge Andrew Napolitano appeared on America’s Newsroom with Bill Hemmer last week and said, “It’s hard to believe that the FBI will not recommend indictment of Mrs. Clinton,” adding, “The fact that she failed to safeguard that, that she put it on a non-secured, non-government server after she swore an oath, the same oath that General Petraeus did to secure it makes her a prime candidate for prosecution.”

With the State Department’s decision to withhold the seven e-mail threads rather than release them in redacted form, the announcement of the 1,340 classified e-mails found in the previous batches released, and the possible upcoming FBI recommendation to indict her, Mrs. Clinton is having a tough time selling her mantra that she “never sent or received any e-mail that was deemed classified, that was marked classified.”

Even *if* the information in her e-mails was not “marked classified” at the time she sent and/or received them, she is not out of the woods. As *The New American* previously reported, some intelligence is “born classified,” whether or not it was ever marked as such:

In fact, inherent to her job was the understanding that certain intelligence is “born classified.” In other words, certain information is considered classified by its very nature and the nature of its inception. If she then communicated that information to someone who lacked the appropriate clearance, she would be guilty of violating federal law.

J. William Leonard was the director of the U.S. Information Security Oversight Office from 2002 to 2008. The Washington Free Beacon quotes him, in an interview with [Reuters](#) in August, as saying,



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“If a foreign minister just told the secretary of state something in confidence, by U.S. rules that is classified at the moment it’s in U.S. channels and U.S. possession.” So whether or not it was “marked classified,” any such information that Hillary sent or received over her unsecured, unauthorized, private e-mail server would have been a violation of federal law.

State Department spokesman John Kirby told the Associated Press that the decision to withhold the most sensitive e-mails was “not unusual.” He added that the decision was based on “whether they need to be classified today,” not on whether they were classified when they were sent or received. Those questions, he said, “are being, and will be, handled separately by the State Department,” indicating that the State Department is looking into Mrs. Clinton’s claim that she “never sent or received any e-mail that was deemed classified, that was marked classified.”

No wonder her campaign is in full “damage control” mode. If it is determined that any of the classified information she sent or received was marked that way at the time she sent or received it, her veneer-thin excuses will crumble at a rate faster than that of her campaign.

Photo of Hillary Clinton: AP Images



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