



Written by [C. Mitchell Shaw](#) on January 16, 2017

In Cold War 2.0, Can the American People Trust the Intelligence Community?

America is in the beginning stages of a new Cold War with Russia. And China. This time around, though, most of the Cold War will be fought along digital, technological lines, with each nation hacking the other for the purposes of espionage and sabotage. In the situation in which the American people and the incoming president find themselves, trusting the intelligence community has never mattered more. Unfortunately, trust must not only be needed; it must be earned. In that area, the intelligence community comes up short.



As *The New American* has recently reported, the intelligence community's inclusion of [a spurious "dossier" on Trump's alleged ties to and control by Russia](#) in its [equally spurious assessment on an alleged plot by the Kremlin to influence recent elections](#) shows just how loose a grasp the agencies involved have on the truth. Having declared war on President-elect Trump, the intelligence community followed the adage that the first casualty of war is the truth. Unfortunately, intel's war with Trump coincides with Cold War 2.0 and distracts from the real issues needing attention, while also undermining any reasonable desire to trust the assessments of the intelligence community.

Case in point: Director of National Intelligence James Clapper (shown) — who is known for famously [lying under oath and on camera in testimony](#) before the Senate in March 2013 about NSA surveillance programs — provided false information to the Senate again earlier this month while testifying (again *under oath and on camera*) about Russian hacking of the DNC and Clinton campaign.

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During Clapper's testimony, Senator John McCain (R-Ariz.) asked him about whether WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange has "any credibility." Clapper replied, "Not in my view." Later in the exchange, Clapper bolstered his previous statement by saying Assange is "holed up in the Ecuadorian embassy in London because he's under indictment — I believe by the Swedish government — for a sexual crime."

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8powSKwsbqI>

There are a couple things in this exchange that need to be unpacked a bit.

First, this Senate hearing was just before Senator McCain admitted to being one of the intelligence community's sources in acquiring the "dossier" on Trump. He told CNN that while he did not know "if it [the "dossier"] is credible or not," "I thought [the information] deserved to be delivered to the FBI, the appropriate agency of government," adding, "It doesn't trouble me because I don't know if it is accurate or not. I have no way of corroborating that. The individual gave me the information. I looked at it. After receiving that information I took it to the FBI." So the loaded question that was used to undermine Assange's credibility in regard to [statements by Assange and WikiLeaks that the source of the leaked](#)



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[DNC and Clinton campaign e-mails was neither Russian nor part of any government](#), was asked by the senator who provided the intelligence community with the “dossier” claiming otherwise.

This looks for all the world like a staged question-and-answer session masquerading as a Senate hearing.

Second, Clapper — who elected to include the unsubstantiated “dossier” (provided by McCain) in the intelligence community’s assessment of Russian hacking to influence the election — said in *sworn testimony* that Julian Assange is “under indictment — I believe by the Swedish government — for a sexual crime.”

In reality, Assange has never been indicted in connection with those allegations. Instead, he was questioned in August 2010 in Sweden, the case was closed, and he was told he was free to leave the country. Three months later, a special prosecutor reopened the case and said she wanted to question Assange again. Assange, fearing that this was a plot to extradite him to the United States to face possible charges of espionage for publishing documents showing illegal activities by the U.S. government, took refuge in the Ecuadorian embassy in London and said he would agree to answer questions there. The prosecutor at first refused to interrogate him either via video link or in person at the embassy, demanding that he come to Sweden. In November 2016, she changed her mind and began questioning Assange at the embassy. In the meantime, the statute of limitations expired on all but one charge — an allegation of “lesser degree rape” — for which he has been questioned, but never indicted.

So in an exchange between two surveillance hawks, who are both involved to one degree or another in having a fake document added to an intelligence report, the conversation conveniently turned to whether Julian Assange — and by extension, WikiLeaks — has any credibility. And Clapper, in an apparent effort to undermine the credibility of Assange, makes yet another false statement under oath.

Given that the intelligence community — Clapper certainly included — is, as this writer said in a [previous article](#), a dysfunctional group of liars and manipulators, it hardly seems that Clapper would be the one to talk about Assange’s credibility.

Any objective comparison between the trustworthiness of the intelligence community (which habitually lies and propagandizes for the purposes of its own political agenda) and WikiLeaks (which has published millions of documents over the last decade and has never been found to fabricate anything) would lead to the conclusion that WikiLeaks is the only organization in that comparison with any credibility. If WikiLeaks said it was raining outside and the intelligence community said it was fair, this writer would pack an umbrella before going out.

The obvious smokescreen about Assange’s alleged sexual crimes seems clearly intended to get the focus off the failures and lies of the intelligence community and on to something more salacious.

Of course the real issue here is not about Assange. This exchange — and the broader story of the fake “dossier” — merely go to show that at a time when America needs to know the truth about foreign powers hacking U.S. systems, as both [Russia](#) and [China](#) have both done, the intelligence community has shown itself an unreliable source of information. As Cold War 2.0 heats up, that lack of reliability runs the very real risk of costing America plenty.



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