



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on December 15, 2022

Former Deputy DNI Recounts Effort to Stop “Russian Disinformation” Lie About Hunter Biden Laptop. Politico Reporter Refused to Listen

Even after a top intelligence official told a *Politico* reporter that Hunter Biden’s laptop was not Russian disinformation, the reporter relied on the 51 former U.S. intelligence officials who lied about the laptop’s origin. The reason they lied: to protect Joe Biden’s wounded presidential campaign.

In October 2020, Cliff Sims, then deputy director of national intelligence for strategy and communications, told Natasha Bertrand that the laptop was authentic. Sims cited DNI John Ratcliffe’s public statement.

But in a one-sided pro-Biden story about the open letter those 51 officials signed, Bertrand pushed the disinformation that the laptop was disinformation. It wasn’t. Only two years later did the the leftist mainstream media confess the truth it suppressed.

Sims outlined his interaction with Bertrand, and her editor, Blake Hounshell, in a Twitter thread. He fingers the two for colluding with Deep Staters and pro-Biden Democrats to sink the story.



deepblue4you/iStock/Getty Images Plus

Oct. 19, then-[@politico](#) reporter @NatashBertrand preps a story about 50 former Intel officials claiming the Biden laptop story is Russian disinfo.

I warn her that it is NOT and point her to Ratcliffe's statements.

She writes it anyway and gives Democrats the headline they want.
pic.twitter.com/W3otv7GUTy

— Cliff Sims (@Cliff_Sims) [December 15, 2022](#)

Bertrand Warned

That story was this: The *New York Post* published a story about the laptop, which Hunter Biden left at a repair shop in Delaware. The contents disclosed that [Joe Biden lied](#) when he said he knew nothing of his son’s business dealings.

[Twitter squelched](#) the story, as did the pro-Biden leftist media.

Then came [the letter from](#) the 51 intel officials, who either played Bertrand like a fiddle, or knew they



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had a pro-Biden propagandist at *Politico* who would do their bidding. [Forget the truth](#). Forget that “democracy dies in darkness,” as the *Washington Post*’s risible [motto avers](#).

In either case, Bertrand swallowed their claim. She spit it out like a trained parrot with a story under this headline: “Hunter Biden story is Russian disinfo, dozens of former intel officials say.”

But not before she knew the truth, Sims tweeted yesterday.

“Oct. 19, then-@politico reporter @NatashBertrand preps a story about 50 former Intel officials claiming the Biden laptop story is Russian disinfo,” [Sims wrote](#):

I warn her that it is NOT and point her to Ratcliffe’s statements.

She writes it anyway and gives Democrats the headline they want.

That same day, [Ratcliffe had appeared](#) on Maria Bartiromo’s Fox News show to say the laptop was not “Russian disinformation.” Hate-Trump Democrat Adam Schiff, House Intelligence Committee chairman, wrongly said intelligence officials believe as much.

“Let me be clear: the intelligence community doesn’t believe that because there is no intelligence that supports that,” Ratcliffe said:

And we have shared no intelligence with Chairman Schiff, or any member of Congress, that Hunter Biden’s laptop is part of some Russian disinformation campaign.

It’s simply not true.

But Bertrand was determined, as was Hounshell, her editor at *Politico*. They not only published the falsehood, but also included just one line that paraphrased Ratcliffe’s appearance.

Threat From Iran

But that pro-Biden propaganda wasn’t *Politico*’s only crime.

A week later, Ratcliffe “warns the country in a primetime press conference that several foreign countries were seeking to influence the 2020 election,” [Sims continued](#).

One of those countries was Iran, but Bertrand called Sims to say Ratcliffe “went off script,” which suggested that Iran wasn’t trying to undermine Trump:

She had two anonymous “senior officials” as sources.

I push back hard with two main points...

1. The intelligence was clear about Iran’s intention to hurt Trump. The country’s top counter-intel official had even called them out publicly months before. Here’s his statement from Aug. 7, 2020, relaying the Intelligence Community’s assessment of what Iran was up to.

2. How could Ratcliffe go “off script” when it’s his script? We were still writing his remarks in the motorcade on the way to the press conference, right up until moments before he went on stage.

The whole angle of the story made no sense.



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— Cliff Sims (@Cliff_Sims) [December 15, 2022](#)

So Sims went to Bertrand's editor, Hounshell.

When Sims told the pro-Biden leftist "that the truth didn't seem to matter when @NatashaBertrand was fixated on building a narrative, I snapped and said it was 'garbage reporting,'" [Sims explained](#):

@blakehounshell replied that I was a "garbage person."

And @politico published another misleading story.

March 2021, Biden's own Office of the DNI released the Intelligence Community's Assessment of foreign threats to the 2020 election.

As I'd told @NatashaBertrand and @blakehounshell back in 2020, they assessed that Iran sought to hurt Trump.

Proven right, again.

But @CNN hired @NatashaBertrand and the @nytimes hired @blakehounshell.

None of them — Schiff, the former Intel officials who lied about the laptop...the journalists involved — have ever admitted they were wrong.

And these headlines remains on @politico to this day

At some point, exasperated that the truth didn't seem to matter when [@NatashaBertrand](#) was fixated on building a narrative, I snapped and said it was "garbage reporting." [@blakehounshell](#) replied that I was a "garbage person."

And [@politico](#) published another misleading story. pic.twitter.com/6Y2GzDPRCd

— Cliff Sims (@Cliff_Sims) [December 15, 2022](#)

So *Politico* played a major role in spreading the lie that the laptop was "Russian disinformation." The [leftist mainstream media dutifully suppressed](#) the story in the weeks leading up to the 2020 election.

That support, with the original claim from the 51 intelligence officials, gave Biden and the Democrats the cover they needed to lie about the laptop as well.

Biden repeatedly called it "Russian disinformation," citing those 51 intelligence officials.

Here's Biden saying the incriminating emails on Hunter's laptop were just "a smear campaign" and "a bunch of garbage" pic.twitter.com/K3Ojf3SyIg

— RNC Research (@RNCResearch) [March 17, 2022](#)

The laptop was a "Russian plant" and a "bunch of garbage," Biden claimed.



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“There’s overwhelming evidence from the intelligence community that the Russians are engaged,” he averred.

No, there wasn’t. And Biden knew it.

This was the evidence — from the laptop: [Joe Biden was elbow deep](#) in his son’s suspiciously successful global business empire, which included high level links to Chinese Reds.

No matter. *Politico* published a story its reporter and editor had to have known was false. But any story that helped keep Donald Trump from a second term was acceptable.



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