



Written by [Joe Wolverton, II, J.D.](#) on July 28, 2016

NSA Whistleblowers Doubt DNC's Claim of Russian Role in Damaging E-mail Leaks

Anyone listening to the mainstream media is convinced that Russian hackers released the thousands of Democratic National Committee (DNC) e-mails made public by WikiLeaks. Even Donald Trump mused about the possibility of Putin's people being behind the breach.

Those a little more familiar with the workings of the federal government and issues of cybersecurity wonder if the "The Russians did it!" isn't a ruse concocted by a coterie of collaborators closer to home.



Edward Snowden, the NSA whistleblower currently in exile in Russia, claimed that the NSA could solve the mystery because it assuredly knows who hacked the DNC, and he tweeted on July 25 that "Evidence that could publicly attribute responsibility for the DNC hack certainly exists at [#NSA](#), but DNI [Director of National Intelligence] traditionally objects to sharing."

An "expert" quoted in an article published in *Business Insider* contradicts Snowden's claim, however. *Business Insider* reports:

"I mean, it's essentially impossible, 100%, given the advanced tactics these guys can deploy," said Will Ackerly, a former cloud security architect at the National Security Agency and cofounder of the data security company Virtru. "It is relatively straightforward to design a misattribution system, where it looks like the attack is coming from somewhere else."

Given the battle of the experts, the blog Zero Hedge turned to another former NSA frontline guy to settle the dispute.

From the Zero Hedge blog post:

[The blog] asked the highest-level NSA whistleblower in history, William Binney — the NSA executive who created the agency's mass surveillance program for digital information, who served as the senior technical director within the agency, who managed six thousand NSA employees, the 36-year NSA veteran widely regarded as a "legend" within the agency and the NSA's best-ever analyst and code-breaker, who mapped out the Soviet command-and-control structure before anyone else knew how, and so predicted Soviet invasions before they happened ("in the 1970s, he decrypted the Soviet Union's command system, which provided the US and its allies with real-time surveillance of all Soviet troop movements and Russian atomic weapons") — what he thinks of such claims:

And here is Binney's response to the row, as quoted in the Zero Hedge piece:

Snowden is right and the MSM is clueless. Here's what I said to Ray McGovern and VIPS with a little humor at the end. [McGovern is a 27-year CIA veteran, who chaired National Intelligence Estimates and personally delivered intelligence briefings to Presidents Ronald Reagan and George



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H.W. Bush, their vice presidents, secretaries of state, the joint chiefs of staff, and many other senior government officials. McGovern is co-founder of Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity (“VIPS” for short).]

Ray, I am suspicious that they may have looked for known hacking code (used by Russians). And, I’m sure they were one probably of many to hack her stuff. But, does that mean that they checked to see if others also hacked in?

Further, do they have evidence that the Russians downloaded and later forwarded those emails to wikileaks [sic]? Seems to me that they need to answer those questions to be sure that their assertion is correct. Otherwise, HRC [Hillary Rodham Clinton] and her political activities are and I am sure have been prime targets for the Russians (as well as many others) but without intent of course.

I would add that we proposed to do a program that would monitor all activity on the world-wide NSA network back in 1991/92. We called it “Wellgrounded.” NSA did not want anyone (especially congress [sic]) to know what was going on inside NSA and therefore rejected that proposal. I have not read what Ed has said, but, I do know that every line of code that goes across the network is logged in the network log. This is where a little software could scan, analyze and find the intruders initially and then compile all the code sent by them to determine the type of attack. This is what we wanted to do back in 1991/92.

In other words, the U.S. government’s own cybersurveillance apparatus could prettily easily determine if the DNC hack was committed by the Russians or by some other group, foreign or domestic.

The mouthpiece media, however, is promoting the Putin angle for one simple reason: tying Trump to the Russians is an easy way to distinguish him from the DNC’s own candidate, Hillary Clinton. Clinton, they say, is concerned about the threats to American security from all over the globe, including Russia. Donald Trump, on the other hand, is anxious to cozy up to the madman in Moscow and to offer the peace and prosperity of our country as a goodwill gift to his formerly communist colleague.

Here’s how the venerable *New York Times* [trumpets the Trump-Putin partnership](#) party line:

Now the question has emerged in the United States election campaign whether Mr. Putin has opted — directly or covertly — to throw Russia’s support behind Mr. Trump. The [conclusion by cybersecurity experts](#) that Russian intelligence agencies breached the [Democratic National Committee](#) and released thousands of emails on the eve of the party’s convention prompted accusations from Democrats and some Republicans that Mr. Trump was a kind of “Siberian candidate,” bolstered from abroad to undermine the nation.

“Given Donald Trump’s well-known admiration for Putin and his belittling of NATO, the Russians have both the means and the motive to engage in a hack of the D.N.C. and the dump of its emails prior to the [Democratic convention](#),” Rep. Adam Schiff of California, a Democrat who is the ranking member of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, said in a statement on Monday.

“That foreign actors may be trying to influence our election — let alone a powerful adversary like Russia — should concern all Americans of any party,” he added.

The first paragraph of that story does, however, admit that it is not known whether Messrs. Trump and Putin have ever actually met. But such admissions against interest are irrelevant when you’ve got an agenda to promote and an angle to work.



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Later in the Zero Hedge story, Binney describes several software solutions in the possession of the NSA and other allied spy agencies around the world that could easily trace the signals that came into the DNC at the time of the hack. He suspects that the DNC would prefer not to know the true identity of the intruder as that might interfere with their ability to pin the pilfering on Putin. "They [the DNC] don't care to fix weakness [in their network security] probably because they want to use these weaknesses to their own advantage," Binney opined.

At the end of the day, though, the leaks happened, regardless of who caused them, and the e-mails reveal a level of collusion between candidate and party to rig the electoral process that is unethical at best and likely illegal.

What's more, as *The New American's* [C. Mitchell Shaw reported](#), the e-mails "show that at least some major donors were slated for federal appointments in a glaring example of *quid pro quo*."

Shaw explains that the leaked material contained a spreadsheet that "shows the names of 23 high-level DNC donors who were slated for federal appointments if the Democrat candidate (who had not yet been chosen) were to win the presidential race. The vast majority of the people whose names appear on the list are also donors to the Clinton campaign."

So, while Hillary Clinton, the DNC, and their partners in the press run around screaming "The Russians are coming!" the fact is that regardless of his alleged role in masterminding the hack of the DNC, Vladimir Putin had nothing to do with rigging U.S. elections or giving federal jobs to Hillary Clinton's campaign donors.

What the hack proves beyond any shadowy allegation, however, is that Hillary Clinton and the Democratic National Committee conspired to deny Americans the right to elect their own leaders and to place its own people in positions of power, despite qualifications or adequate vetting.

That, not Trump's relationship with Putin, is the true threat to national security.



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