

Biden, the Media and CIA Labeled Hunter Biden Emails "Russian Disinformation." *There is Still No Evidence.*

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The same factions that constantly claim to abhor Fake News and disinformation continue to be the most aggressive and shameless propagators of it -- *especially the media.*



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Congressman Adam Schiff, the Chairman of the House Intelligence Committee and, not coincidentally, the single most shameless pathological liar in the U.S. Congress by a good margin, appeared on CNN with Wolf Blitzer on October 16 to discuss *The New York Post* story about Hunter Biden's emails. The CNN host asked him a rhetorical question embedded with baseless assumptions: "does it surprise you at all that this information Rudy Giuliani is peddling very well could be connected to some sort of Russian government disinformation campaign?"

Schiff stated definitively that it is: "***we know that this whole smear on Joe Biden comes from the Kremlin,***" adding: "clearly, the origins of this whole smear are from the Kremlin, and the President is only too happy to have Kremlin help in amplifying it." Referencing Trump's promotion of *The New York Post* reporting while at his White House desk, Schiff said: "there it is in the Oval Office: another wonderful propaganda coup for Vladimir Putin, seeing the President of the United States holding up a newspaper **promoting Kremlin propaganda.**"



Rep. Adam Schiff (D-WA), Chairman of the House Intelligence Committee,
with CNN's Wolf Blitzer, Oct. 16, 2020

Schiff, as he usually does when he moves his mouth, was lying: exploiting CNN's notorious willingness to allow Democratic officials to spread disinformation over its airwaves without the slightest challenge. Schiff claimed certainty about something *for which there was and still is no evidence*: that the Russians played a role in the procurement and publication of the contents of Hunter Biden's laptop.

As he also usually does when he publicly lies, Schiff was merely echoing the propaganda of current and former operatives of the CIA and other arms of the intelligence community who abuse their power to interfere in U.S. domestic politics: the very factions over which the Intelligence Committee run by Schiff is supposed to exercise oversight supervision, not serve as their parrot. During the same week as Schiff's CNN appearance, as *Politico* reported, "more than 50 former senior intelligence officials signed on to a letter outlining their belief that the recent disclosure of emails allegedly belonging to Joe Biden's son 'has all the classic earmarks of a Russian information operation.'"

NATIONAL SECURITY

Hunter Biden story is Russian disinfo, dozens of former intel officials say

More than 50 former intelligence officials signed a letter casting doubt on the provenance of a New York Post story on the former vice president's son.



More than 50 former senior intelligence officials have signed on to a letter outlining their belief that the recent disclosure of emails allegedly belonging to Hunter Biden, pictured here, "has all the classic earmarks of a Russian information operation." | Handout/DNCC via Getty Images

In that letter from intelligence operatives about *The New York Post* story — signed by Obama's former CIA chief John Brennan now of MSNBC (repeatedly caught lying), Obama's former Director of National Intelligence James Clapper now of CNN (who got caught lying to the Senate about NSA domestic spying), Bush's former NSA and CIA chief Micheal Hayden now of CNN (who served during 9/11 and the Iraq War), and dozens of other similar professional disinformation agents — the intelligence operatives announced "our view that the Russians are involved in the Hunter Biden email issue," adding "that our experience makes us deeply suspicious that the Russian government played a significant role in this case."

With these ex-CIA officials and their servant Adam Schiff disseminating this narrative into U.S. public, both the Biden campaign and their captive media outlets began asserting this rank speculation as truth. They did so despite the fact that even the intelligence officials were cautious enough to acknowledge: "We want to emphasize that ... **we do not have evidence of Russian involvement**" — a rather crucial fact that numerous outlets omitted when laundering this CIA propaganda and which the Biden campaign and Adam Schiff completely ignored when treating the claims as proven truth.

It is for all these reasons that we write to say that the arrival on the US political scene of emails purportedly belonging to Vice President Biden's son Hunter, much of it related to his time serving on the Board of the Ukrainian gas company Burisma, has all the classic earmarks of a Russian information operation.

We want to emphasize that we do not know if the emails, provided to the New York Post by President Trump's personal attorney Rudy Giuliani, are genuine or not and that we do not have evidence of Russian involvement -- just that our experience makes us deeply suspicious that the Russian government played a significant role in this case.

If we are right, this is Russia trying to influence how Americans vote in this election, and we believe strongly that Americans need to be aware of this.

Letter from 50 former intelligence officials about *The New York Post*
reporting on Hunter Biden's laptop, Oct. 19, 2020

The Biden campaign immediately embraced this evidence-free claim about Russia from Schiff and the intelligence community to justify its refusal to answer questions about the revelations from this reporting. "I think we need to be very, very clear that what he's doing here is amplifying Russian misinformation," said Biden Deputy Campaign Manager Kate Bedingfield when asked about the possibility that Trump would cite the Hunter emails at the last presidential debate. Biden's senior advisor Symone Sanders similarly warned on MSNBC: "if the president decides to amplify these latest smears against the vice president and his only living son, that is Russian disinformation."

Far worse were the numerous media outlets that spread this evidence-free claim of Kremlin involvement in lieu of reporting on the contents of the emails. Just watch how *CBS Evening News with Norah O'Donnell* purported to "report" on this story — an emphasis on the Russian origins of the materials, featuring a former "FBI operative" who admitted he had no evidence for the speculation CBS nonetheless aired, all with no mention of the serious questions raised by the revelations themselves:

As I noted when I announced my resignation from *The Intercept*, a major reason I harbored so much cynicism and scorn for their claim that my story on the Hunter Biden emails had failed to meet their high-minded, rigorous editorial and fact-checking scrutiny was because that same publication was just was one of the many anti-Trump news outlets which, in the name of manipulating the outcome of the election on behalf of the Democratic Party, had mindlessly laundered the CIA/Schiff narrative without the slightest adversarial skepticism or, worse, without a whiff of evidence.

Just one week before they refused to publish my own article, they published this remarkable disinformation, featuring an utterly reckless paragraph that was nothing more than stenographic servitude to the intelligence community and Adam Schiff. Just marvel at what was approved by the fastidious editorial and fact-checking machinery of that "adversarial" publication concerning claims by ex-CIA operatives:

Their latest falsehood once again involves Biden, Ukraine, and a laptop mysteriously discovered in a computer repair shop and passed to the New York Post, thanks to Trump crony Rudy Giuliani. The New York Post story was so rancid that at least one reporter refused to put his byline on it. **The U.S. intelligence community had previously warned the White House that Giuliani has been the target of a Russian intelligence operation to disseminate disinformation about Biden, and the FBI has been investigating whether the strange story about the Biden laptop is part of a Russian disinformation campaign. This week, a group of former intelligence officials issued a letter saying that the Giuliani laptop story has the classic trademarks of Russian disinformation.**

Numerous other media outlets disseminated the same CIA propaganda — including *The Economist* (“Marc Polymeropoulos, the CIA’s former acting chief of operations for the Europe and Eurasia Mission Centre...notes that ‘the use of actual material is a hallmark of Russian disinformation campaigns’”) and (needless to say) MSNBC’s Joy Reid program (“Hunter Biden story an ‘obvious Russian plot’ McFaul believes”).



Now that this disinformation campaign has done its job — allowing Biden to get past the election without having to answer any real questions about those emails and his family’s work in Ukraine and China — the truth has emerged that there is not, and never was, any evidence for the disinformation that these materials came from the Kremlin. Some media outlets, though not all, have at least had the integrity to admit this, now that it no longer matters.

“Director of National Intelligence John Ratcliffe said Monday that recently published emails purporting to document the business dealings of Hunter Biden are not connected to a Russian disinformation effort,” *USA Today* acknowledged. “Hunter Biden's laptop is not part of some Russian disinformation campaign,” Ratcliffe added.

On October 20, the FBI sent a letter to Sen. Ron Johnson — in response to his request for any information showing Kremlin involvement in the *New York Post* story — in which they, too, made clear they were not aware of any such evidence:

The FBI is the primary investigative agency responsible for the integrity and security of the 2020 election, and as such, we are focused on an array of threats, including the threat of malign foreign influence operations. Regarding the subject of your letter, we have nothing to add at this time to the October 19th public statement by the Director of National Intelligence about the available actionable intelligence. If actionable intelligence is developed, the FBI in consultation with the Intelligence Community will evaluate the need to provide defensive briefings to you and the Committee pursuant to the established notification framework.

Numerous outlets which had originally noted suspicions of Kremlin involvement and an FBI investigation to determine possible Russian responsibility ultimately updated their stories or published new articles noting the FBI's admission (though *The Intercept* never did: its story about Kremlin involvement stands).

In *The Washington Post*, Thomas Rid wrote this Hall of Fame sentence: **“We must treat the Hunter Biden leaks as if they were a foreign intelligence operation — even if they probably aren't.”** As *The New York Times* columnist Ross Douthat summarized: “At this point we can **posit with some certainty that The Post's story was not some sort of sweeping Russian disinformation plot** but a more normal example of late-dropping opposition research, filtered through a partisan lens and a tabloid sensibility, weaving genuine facts into contestable conclusions.”

The pronouncements of DNI Ratcliffe and the FBI should no more be treated as gospel than the accusations of Kremlin involvement by Adam Schiff, John Brennan and their CIA friends. But that is exactly what the bulk of the U.S. media did with the obvious goal of shielding Joe Biden from questions about the revelations in the emails of his son: they deceived Americans into believing that the whole story was a Kremlin “disinformation” plot and therefore should be ignored.

Whatever else is true about this whole sordid affair, no evidence has emerged — *none* — that the Russians have played any role in any of this. It is of course possible that one day such evidence may be found of involvement by the Russians — or the Chinese, or the Iranians, or the Venezuelans, or the Saudis, or any other state or non-state actor your imagination might conjure. One cannot prove the negative that this did not happen.

But journalism, in its minimally healthy form, requires *evidence* before spreading inflammatory accusations about a nuclear-armed power and, even more so, speculation designed to discredit evidence of possible misconduct by the front-running candidate for the U.S. presidency. But here we have yet another case where purported news outlets — knowing that there is no price to pay professionally or reputationally for publishing evidence-free intelligence agency propaganda as long as it benefits the Party and advances the ideology which they all embrace — casually spread disinformation without the slightest evidentiary basis.

Yet again we find that the most prolific propagators of Fake News and disinformation are not the enemies of the mainstream U.S. media. It is the mainstream U.S. media itself that deceives, propagandizes and spreads disinformation on behalf of the coalition of the intelligence community and the Democratic Party far more than any other faction or entity.

Where is the evidence that Russia was involved in this *New York Post* story? And how can media outlets who endorsed and spread this and now refuse any self-critique expect anything but distrust and scorn from the public when they do this?
