

Leaked emails show Democratic National Committee targeting Sanders campaign

Isaac Finn
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On July 22, WikiLeaks released almost 20,000 internal emails from Democratic National Committee (DNC) members, casting light on the dirty dealings of the DNC as it worked to undermine the campaign of Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders and assist the campaign of Hillary Clinton.

Throughout the primary, DNC officials were in contact with a number of newspapers, networks and news websites, including the *Washington Post*, the *Wall Street Journal*, CNN, MSNBC, Politico, and RealClearPolitics. At one point, DNC communications director Luis Miranda released an email from Sanders to DNC chairwoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz to the *Wall Street Journal*.

In May, Wasserman Schultz also demanded that someone from the DNC contact MSNBC to pressure the network to apologize for allegations that Wasserman Schultz was unfair to Sanders and should step down from her post. Other DNC officials indicated in the email chain that they had already contacted MSNBC.

The exchange came after the Democratic Party in Nevada organized a rigged convention to ensure a Clinton majority, followed by a campaign to cast Sanders supporters as violent. DNC deputy communications director Mark Paustenbach sent an email to Miranda, stating, “Wondering if there’s a good Bernie narrative for a story, which is that Bernie never ever had his act together, that his campaign was a mess.” He adds later, “It’s not a DNC conspiracy, it’s because they never had their act together.”

Paustenbach also made an “agreement” with Kenneth Vogel, a journalist at Politico, which allowed the deputy communications director to read an article on Clinton’s fundraising operations before Vogel sent it to his editor.

In another email from May 5, Brad Marshall, the chief financial officer of the DNC, apparently speculated about how to use Sanders’ religious views, or lack thereof, against him in the Kentucky and West Virginia primaries. “It might [make] no difference, but for KY and WVA can we get someone to ask his belief,” Marshall wrote. “My Southern Baptist peeps would draw a big difference between a Jew and an atheist.”

Marshall has since denied that he was referring to Sanders.

Sanders, who has endorsed Clinton, has largely downplayed the significance of the emails. In an interview with CNN’s Jack Tapper, he said that the documents were “not a shock” to him, and he repeated previous statements about the need to reform the Democratic Party in order to attract working class and young voters. He also avoided criticizing the Clinton campaign, and reiterated the need for his supporters to block Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump.

On Saturday, members of the DNC agreed that Wasserman Schultz, a close Clinton ally, would not have a major speaking role at the convention. She has since announced that she would resign from her post as chairwoman following the convention because of her leaked emails, saying it was “the best way” for her to help get Clinton elected. This insignificant concession is aimed at facilitating Sanders’ ability to convince his supporters to back Clinton.

Significantly, Clinton and other Democratic Party officials have claimed that the leak was the product of Russian hackers. The hack was initially done in June, when hackers under the name Guccifer 2.0 gained access to the DNC’s database on opposition research on Trump. Despite claims, the DNC has not provided

any specific evidence that the hackers were from Russia.

Robby Mook, Clinton's campaign manager, stated that, "experts are telling us that Russian state actors broke into the DNC, stole these emails, [and are] releasing these emails for the purpose of helping Donald Trump."

Over the last week, Democrats have denounced Trump as the preferred candidate of Moscow. This is in line with Clinton's aim of campaigning in the elections on the basis that she is a more committed and reliable defender of American imperialism.



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