

New York Times concocts amalgam to link Trump and Putin in Democrats' email scandal

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In an unscrupulous and provocative media blitz closely coordinated with the Hillary Clinton campaign, the *New York Times* is publishing articles and editorials accusing the Russian government of stealing some 20,000 deeply incriminating Democratic National Committee (DNC) emails and coordinating with WikiLeaks to have them published, in a bid to tilt the US election in favor of the Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump.

The flood of *Times* articles on the subject began with a piece by columnist Paul Krugman last Friday headlined “The Siberian Candidate,” in which Krugman, citing an interview by Trump in which the Republican candidate questioned the US commitment to attack Russia in defense of the Baltic states, accused Trump of being an agent of Russian President Vladimir Putin.

The most glaring feature of Krugman’s column was the absence of any concrete factual evidence to back up his charge, something that has continued to characterize all of the subsequent articles published by the *Times* on this theme.

Krugman’s column appeared the same day that WikiLeaks began to publish DNC emails documenting a conspiracy between the party establishment and the Clinton campaign to subvert the Democratic primary election challenge by Bernie Sanders. While the *Times* and the US media in general have published very little about the content of the emails, what has emerged shows rampant corruption and bureaucratic contempt for the electorate and for democratic procedures.

On Sunday, in an attempt to divert attention from the substance of the emails and turn the narrative into an attack on Trump for being insufficiently aggressive toward Russia, Clinton’s campaign manager Robby Mook told CNN that Russia was responsible for the leak, motivated by a desire to shift the election in favor of supposed Putin ally Donald Trump. Mook provided no evidence for his allegation, merely stating that a “number of experts” had concluded the Russian government was responsible.

Also on Sunday, the *Times*, which functions quite openly

as a mouthpiece for the Clinton campaign and the Democratic Party, published an editorial indicting Trump for being “soft” on Russia and hesitant to expand US military interventions in the Middle East and step up Washington’s aggressive moves against China. It compared favorably Hillary Clinton’s record as a war-hawk and exponent of the US wars in Libya and Syria.

This was followed by front-page articles Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday advancing the narrative of collusion between Trump and Putin to leak the emails in order to damage the Clinton campaign. The newspaper also published an editorial Wednesday reiterating the Trump-Putin conspiracy story. Employing the methodology of a classic witch-hunt, the *Times* wrote:

“But would Mr. Putin really interfere in the American presidential race to help Mr. Trump, the Republican Party nominee, get elected over the Democratic nominee, Hillary Clinton?”

“As odd as that may sound, it is being considered a serious possibility after the release on Friday of nearly 20,000 emails stolen from the Democratic National Committee computer servers, many of them embarrassing to Democratic leaders.”

The article published Wednesday, authored by senior *Times* columnists with close state connections, David Sanger and Eric Schmitt, carries the sensationalist headline “Spy Agency Consensus Grows That Russia Hacked DNC.” Aside from the fact that no intelligence or other government officials are actually named and no concrete evidence is provided, the article makes the admission that Clinton campaign officials “acknowledged that they have no evidence” that Russia is trying to shift the election in Trump’s direction. This fact, which exposes the entire article as a journalistically irresponsible and illegitimate provocation, is buried in the middle of the text and appears on an inside page of the printed edition.

President Barack Obama lent credence to the Trump-Putin

narrative on Tuesday's "NBC Nightly News," stating, "What we do know is that Russians hack our systems, not just government systems, but private systems. But you know, what the motives were in terms of the leaks, all that I can't say directly. What I do know is that Donald Trump has repeatedly expressed admiration for Vladimir Putin."

This entire story is a classic example of an amalgam, that is, a construction concocted by bringing together diverse bits of information without having demonstrated any integral interconnection, usually for the purpose of framing up a targeted party. In this case, the disparate elements are:

- * Trump has made statements deemed either favorable to or insufficiently hostile to Russia and Putin.

- * Putin has made statements deemed friendly toward Trump.

- * Trump's campaign chairman Paul Manafort has ties to Russian businessmen and was at one time an adviser to Viktor Yanukovich, the elected, pro-Russian president of Ukraine who was deposed in the US-backed and fascist-led anti-Russian coup in 2014.

- * WikiLeaks founder and leader Julian Assange has made public criticisms of Hillary Clinton and spoken against her election campaign.

The method employed is to report allegations and opinions from various sources, without examining or establishing their veracity, and weave them, by means of journalistic tricks and sleights of hand, into a "news" story.

In the articles by the *Times* and other media outlets that have picked up the story, the private cybersecurity firm CrowdStrike is cited as the expert authority. The company was hired by the DNC in mid-June amid suspicions that it had been hacked.

The firm was founded by former US Air Force officer Kevin Mandia and is headed by the former head of the FBI's cybercrimes division, George Kurtz. Many other employees and officials are former National Security Agency (NSA) operatives.

According to a statement by CrowdStrike published in June, the hack into the DNC's servers was done by APT 28 and APT 29--also known as FANCY BEAR and COZY BEAR--both of which, according to the firm, are part of the Russian government.

Their claims were based on various pieces of circumstantial evidence, such as the fact that the individual or individuals that attacked the DNC used commonly-available open source tools also allegedly used by APT 28 and APT 29, and that the DNC hackers take Russian holidays off and work roughly on a Russian workday schedule.

To the embarrassment of CrowdStrike, a hacker known as Guccifer 2.0, through a blog post, took responsibility for the

hack of the DNC. He or she responded to CrowdStrike by stating, "I'm very pleased the company appreciated my skills so highly. But, in fact, it was easy, very easy." The blog included documents from the DNC, which Guccifer 2.0 posted before the WikiLeaks release.

The hacker has stated that he or she is from Romania and does not support either Russia or Trump.

NSA whistle-blower Edward Snowden has pointed out that the NSA would be able to tell if a Russian agent carried out the hack. He tweeted, "Even if the attackers try to obfuscate origin, #XKEYSCORE [an NSA program that tracks the source of data] makes following exfiltrated data easy. I did this personally against Chinese ops."

He added that the NSA would have no reason to hide this information since the XKEYSCORE program is now already known.

It cannot be excluded that the Russian government is, in fact, involved in the release of the DNC emails. But there are many other possibilities. What is involved here is bourgeois imperialist politics at the highest levels, with implications for a host of governments and corporate interests all over the world.

A list of potential suspects would have to include the Sanders campaign, other foreign governments, the Obama administration or elements within it, and other US state or intelligence factions. The list could be extended indefinitely.

One thing is certain. This is anything but an innocent and legitimate journalistic exercise. It is motivated by an unstated political agenda. At the very top of this agenda is the preparation of a new administration committed to intensify the military operations of the United States in the Middle East, Central Asia and Africa, and escalate US economic, diplomatic and military pressure against Russia and China, leading inexorably, and perhaps in the near future, to war with nuclear powers that could lead to the annihilation of countless millions of people.

In the pursuit of this agenda, being prepared behind the backs of the American people, the Democratic Party and its main media mouthpiece, the *New York Times*, are managing to attack the semi-fascist Trump from the right.



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