

# Is Hillary Just the “Fall Guy” for the Intel Agencies and Their Moneybag Bosses?

By [Mike Whitney](#)

Global Research, November 10, 2017

[CounterPunch](#) 9 November 2017

Region: [Russia and FSU, USA](#)

Theme: [Intelligence](#), [Media Disinformation](#)

In-depth Report: [U.S. Elections](#)

*For nearly a year, **Hillary Clinton** failed to admit that her campaign and the Democratic National Committee had provided funding for the notorious dossier that alleged Trump colluded with Russia to win the 2016 presidential election. Then, two weeks ago, the Washington Post published a blockbuster article that proved that Clinton had been misleading the public about her Campaign’s role in producing the report. Here’s a snippet from the article in the Post:*

“The Hillary Clinton campaign and the Democratic National Committee helped fund research that resulted in a now-famous dossier containing allegations about President Trump’s connections to Russia and possible coordination between his campaign and the Kremlin, people familiar with the matter said.”

Following the article’s publication, Clinton went into hiding for more than a week during which time she huddled with her political advisors to settle on a strategy for dealing with the crisis. On Wednesday, she resurfaced on the Daily Show where she was treated with kid gloves; no hardball questions were asked and she was given plenty of time to recite her prepared remarks without challenge. Naturally, she downplayed her role in contributing to the year-long “hacking-collusion” investigation that has tied up both Houses of Congress, implicated the nation’s main law enforcement and intelligence agencies, and deepened divisions between Washington and Moscow. Here’s part of what Hillary said in the interview:

“When Trump got the nomination of the Republican Party, the people ‘doing it’ (gathering raw intelligence for the dossier) came to my campaign lawyer, and said, would you like us to continue it. He said ‘Yes’. He is an experienced lawyer and knows what the law is. He knows what opposition research is. It’s part of what happens in a campaign where you get information that may or may not be useful and you try make sure anything you put out in public arena is accurate. So this thing didn’t come out until after the election and its’ still being evaluated.”

Clinton wasn’t asked why her campaign tried to obfuscate their role in financing the dossier or whether she felt any remorse for the way the Russia hacking allegations had ballooned into 4 major investigations on Capitol Hill. She wasn’t even asked to comment on the motives of the people who continued to fund the dossier after the DNC terminated their contract in November 2016. Wasn’t she suspicious that these new financiers might have more nefarious objectives in mind, after all, who continues a smear campaign after the election is over, unless, of course, they intend to inflict even more damage on the two main

targets, Trump and Russia? Wouldn't Hillary have figured that out?

Technically speaking, Clinton was right, it was opposition research, which in political parlance means 'digging up dirt on one's opponent.' And, yes, it is perfectly legal. But the Trump dossier was much more than that. It was presented as the work of intelligence professionals who were unattached to any political organization. Had the public known that the dossier was financed by the Clinton campaign, they would have known that it was a "malicious and defamatory" hit-piece aimed at improving Clinton's chances of winning the election.

And when Hillary opines that the dossier was not released before the election, it is certainly not from lack of trying. Her colleagues made every effort to shop the piece to their friends in the media before the balloting, but all of them backed away. The report was simply too lurid and far-fetched to be believed. (In October, just weeks before the election, former M16 agent, Christopher Steele, who authored the dossier, met with reporters from The New York Times, The Washington Post, and Yahoo News.)

The Democrat leaders have not won any friends in the media by concealing their support for the dossier. According to an article at The Hill:

"The New York Times senior White House correspondent **Maggie Haberman** and reporter **Kenneth Vogel** are slamming Hillary Clinton's campaign and the Democratic National Committee (DNC), saying they lied about funding for the so-called Trump dossier....

"Folks involved in funding this lied about it, and with sanctimony, for a year," Haberman tweeted to her more than 650,000 followers on Tuesday....

(NYT journalist **Kenneth Vogel** offered this comment on Twitter) "When I tried to report this story, Clinton campaign lawyer @marceelias pushed back vigorously, saying 'You (or your sources) are wrong,' " Vogel tweeted, referring to Clinton campaign lawyer Marc Elias. ("New York Times reporters blast Dems over Trump dossier funding claims", The Hill)

Clearly, Clinton did not want the American people to know the real origins of the dossier for fear that they would dismiss its findings as politically-motivated and unreliable. So they lied, and by lying, they helped to fuel the anti-Russia hysteria that's swept across the country sabotaging any chance for rapprochement between the two nuclear-armed superpowers.

But, why? Why would Hillary persist with the "hacking-collusion" meme after she had already lost the election and had nothing to gain by smearing Trump?

That's not a question that can be easily answered, but I suspect it has less to do with Hillary's presidential ambitions than it does with the way her campaign found common cause with powerful members of the intelligence community who wanted to use the hacking narrative to pursue their own geopolitical strategy of isolating, punishing and demonizing Russia. "Russian meddling" became the perfect rallying cry for the CIA's broader information operation (IO) that was designed to poison public opinion against "Russian aggression" and to reign in Trump's plans to normalize relations with Moscow. The fact that the CIA had essentially extracted a credible narrative from sections of the notorious dossier, left Hillary with no other option except to play-along even after the votes had been counted. As a result, Clinton became the "fall guy" in a darker, deep-state propaganda campaign for

which she is only partially responsible. Here's a little background from Joe Lauria's "must read" article "The Democratic Money Behind Russia-gate":

"...the Steele dossier was shared with the FBI at some point in the summer of 2016 and apparently became the basis for the FBI to seek Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act warrants against members of Trump's campaign. More alarmingly, it may have formed the basis for much of the Jan. 6 intelligence "assessment" by those "hand-picked" analysts from three U.S. intelligence agencies - the CIA, the FBI and the NSA - not all 17 agencies that Hillary Clinton continues to insist were involved....

**If in fact the Steele memos were a primary basis for the Russia collusion allegations against Trump, then there may be no credible evidence at all." (Consortium News)**

So, were "the Steele memos the primary basis for the Russia collusion allegations against Trump"? This is the pivotal question that still remains largely unanswered. As Lauria notes, the FBI did in fact use the "salacious and unverified" dossier to obtain at least one FISA warrant. This is from The Hill:

"The FBI used the dossier alleging Russian ties to President Trump's campaign associates to help convince a judge to grant a warrant to secretly monitor former campaign aide Carter Page, CNN reports.

FBI **Director James Comey** has cited the dossier in some of his briefings with lawmakers in recent weeks as one of the information sources used by his bureau to bolster its probe, U.S. officials briefed on the investigation told CNN." ("FBI used Trump dossier to help get warrant to monitor ex-aide: report", The Hill)

The article proves that the nation's premier law enforcement agency was using parts of a discredited "raw intelligence" report that was paid for by the DNC and was clearly commissioned as a part of a smear campaign- to spy on members of the opposition party. Clearly, one could easily make the case that the FBI was abusing its extraordinary police-state powers to subvert the democratic process.

The FBI, under James Comey, also attempted to use agent Steele for future research but abandoned the idea after parts of the dossier began to surface in the media making it politically impossible to maintain the relationship. This is from a February article in the Washington Post:

"The former British spy who authored a controversial dossier on behalf of Donald Trump's political opponents alleging ties between Trump and Russia reached an agreement with the FBI a few weeks before the election for the bureau to pay him to continue his work, according to several people familiar with the arrangement. The agreement to compensate former MI6 agent **Christopher Steele** came as U.S. intelligence agencies reached a consensus that the Russians had interfered in the presidential election by orchestrating hacks of Democratic Party email accounts.....

Ultimately, the FBI did not pay Steele. Communications between the bureau and the former

spy were interrupted as Steele's now-famous dossier became the subject of news stories, congressional inquiries and presidential denials, according to the people familiar with the arrangement, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the matter." ("FBI once planned to pay former British spy who authored controversial Trump dossier", Washington Post)

The fact that the FBI was willing to build its investigation on the sensational and unverified claims in the DNC-bought-and-paid-for dossier, suggests that the real motive was not to reveal collusion between Trump and Moscow or even to uncover evidence related to the hacking claims. The real goal was to vilify Russia and derail Trump's efforts at détente.

It's also worth noting, that Steele's earliest report implausibly alleges that the "Russian authorities had been cultivating and supporting US presidential candidate Trump for at least 5 years." (No one had any idea that Trump would run for president 5 years ago.) The report also details perverted sexual acts involving Trump and urinating prostitutes in a hotel in Moscow. (All fake, of course) The point we are trying to make, is that Steele's first report focused on corruption, perversion and blackmail, whereas, his second installment completely changed direction to cyber-espionage operations on foreign targets.

Why?

It was because, on July 22, 2016, just days before the Democratic National Convention, WikiLeaks published 20,000 emails hacked from DNC computers revealing the corrupt inner-workings of the Democratic establishment. In response, Steele decided to craft a story that would support the Dems plan to blame the Russians for the moral cesspit they-alone had created. In other words, his report was a way of "passing the buck".

Steele's July report helped to prop up the threadbare "hacking" storyline that was further reinforced by the dubious cyber-forensic analysis of DNC servers performed by CrowdStrike, "a private company co-founded by a virulently anti-Putin Russian."

The hacking theme was also aided by the deluge of unsourced, evidence-lite articles cropping up in the media, like this gem in the Washington Post:

"Russian government hackers penetrated the computer network of the Democratic National Committee and gained access to the entire database of opposition research on GOP presidential candidate **Donald Trump**, according to committee officials and security experts who responded to the breach.

The intruders so thoroughly compromised the DNC's system that they also were able to read all email and chat traffic, said DNC officials and the security experts.

The intrusion into the DNC was one of several targeting American political organizations. The networks of presidential candidates Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump were also targeted by Russian spies..." ("Russian government hackers penetrated DNC, stole opposition research on Trump", Washington Post)

What's remarkable about the above excerpt is that it follows the same basic approach to propaganda as nearly all the other pieces on the topic. Unlike the lead-up to the Iraq War, where journalists at the New York Times made every effort to create a believable storyline

that included references to aluminum tubes, Niger uranium, mobile weapons labs, etc. The media no longer tries to support their narrative with evidence or eyewitnesses. The major media now simply tells people what they want them to think and leave it at that. Even so, it doesn't require much critical thinking to see the holes in the Russia hacking story. One merely needs to suspend judgment long enough to see that main claims all emerge from (Democratic) sources who have every reason to mislead the public. Here's an excerpt from **Joe Lauria's** article that sums it up perfectly:

"The two sources that originated the allegations claiming that Russia meddled in the 2016 election...were both paid for by the Democratic National Committee, and in one instance also by the Clinton campaign: the Steele dossier and the CrowdStrike analysis of the DNC servers.

Think about that for a minute....

In other words, possibly all of the Russia-gate allegations, which have been taken on faith by Democratic partisans and members of the anti-Trump Resistance, trace back to claims paid for or generated by Democrats.

If for a moment one could remove the sometimes justified hatred that many people feel toward Trump, it would be impossible to avoid the impression that the scandal may have been cooked up by the DNC and the Clinton camp in league with Obama's intelligence chiefs to serve political and geopolitical aims." ("The Democratic Money Behind Russia-gate", Consortium News)

Russia-gate is entirely a Democratic Party invention. Both sources of information (Crowdstrike and Steele) were chosen by members of the Democratic hierarchy (through their intermediaries) to create stories that coincided with their political objectives. Due to the obvious bias of the people who funded the operations, neither the methods nor the information can be trusted. But that's just part of the story. The bigger story relates to the role played by the nation's premier intelligence and law enforcement agencies. And that's where we see signs of institutional corruption on a truly colossal scale.

As we noted earlier, the Clinton smear campaign would probably have ended after the votes were counted had not the intel agencies, particularly the CIA, decided the hacking story could be used to inflict more damage on Russia. It wasn't Clinton's decision to gather more information for the dossier, but others whose motives have remained largely concealed. Who are they?

According to a timeline in the Daily Caller:

November: The contract between the Democrats, Fusion and Steele ends along with the presidential campaign.

Nov. 18: Arizona **Sen. John McCain** and a former assistant, **David Kramer**, are told about the existence of the dossier by an associate of Steele's, former British diplomat Sir Andrew Wood. Kramer travels to London later that month to meet with Steele and find out more about the dossier. Steele forwards a copy of the dossier to Fusion, Kramer and McCain.

Dec. 9: McCain provides a copy of the dossier to then-FBI Director James Comey during a meeting at the latter's office.

Dec. 13: Steele writes the final memo of the dossier. It alleges that a Russian tech executive used his companies to hack into the DNC's email systems. The executive, **Aleksej Gubarev**, denied the allegations after the dossier was published by BuzzFeed on Jan. 10, 2017. He is suing both BuzzFeed and Steele.

Jan. 6: Comey and other intelligence community officials brief then-President-elect Trump on some of the allegations made in the dossier.

Jan. 10: CNN reports that the briefing of Trump took place four days earlier. Citing that reporting as justification, BuzzFeed publishes the dossier. (The Daily Mail)

John McCain? Is that who we're talking about? Was it McCain who paid former M16 agent Christopher Steele to add another report to the dossier? Why?

Is it that hard to imagine that a Russophobic foreign policy wonk like McCain- who has expressed his vehement hatred for **Vladimir Putin** on the floor of the senate- would hire a mud-slinging free agent like Steele to craft a story that would further demonize Russia, discourage Trump from normalizing relations with Moscow, and reinforce the theory that the Kremlin meddled in the 2016 elections?

Does that mean that McCain may have told Steele (or his intermediaries) precisely what he wanted the final draft to say?

It certainly seems probable. And here's something else to mull over. This is from the Business Insider:

Steele ...gave the dossier to Republican Sen. John McCain. McCain then gave it to the FBI director at the time, James Comey. Comey, along with the former Director of National Intelligence **James Clapper** and former CIA **Director John Brennan**, briefed both **President Barack Obama** and then-President elect Trump on the dossier's allegations in January.

Intelligence officials purposefully omitted the dossier from the public intelligence report they released in January about Russia's election interference because they didn't want to reveal which details they had corroborated, according to CNN." ("Mueller reportedly interviewed the author of the Trump-Russia dossier — here's what it alleges, and how it aligned with reality", Business Insider)

This is a damning admission that the Intelligence Community Assessment (ICA) that was released on January 6, and was supposed to provide rock-solid proof of Russia hacking and collusion, was built (at least, in part) on the thin gruel and specious allegations found in the sketchy "Trump dossier". Former CIA Director John Brennan has refuted this claim, but there's significant circumstantial evidence to suggest that it is true.

On December 9, 2016, The Washington Post reported that the CIA determined that Russian hacking was conducted to boost Trump and hurt Clinton during the presidential campaign. This same theory that was propounded in the ICA report just a month later. It appears that Brennan and his "hand-picked" intelligence analysts decided to carefully comb the dossier cherry-picking the most credible allegations to weave into their dubious intelligence Assessment. So even though large sections of the dossier were scrapped, the report itself was used as the foundation for the ICA.

Brennan spearheaded the anti-Russia campaign from the get-go. As early as August 2016, Brennan was providing classified briefings to ranking members of Congress expressing his conviction that Moscow was helping Trump to win the election. The former Director offered no proof to back up his claims nor has he since then. It was also Brennan who gradually persuaded Clapper, Comey and Morrell to join his anti-Russia jihad, although all were reluctant participants at first. Were they won over by compelling secret evidence that has been withheld from the public?

Not likely. It's more probable that Brennan was merely able to convince them that the powerful foreign policy establishment required their cooperation on an issue that would have grave impact on Washington's imperial plan for Syria, Ukraine, Central Asia and beyond?

Some readers might remember when Brennan testified before Congress way-back on May 23 and boldly stated:

BRENNAN: "I encountered and am aware of information and intelligence that revealed contacts and interactions between Russian officials and U.S. persons involved in the Trump campaign that I was concerned about because of known Russian efforts to suborn such individuals and it raised questions in my mind, again, whether or not the Russians were able to gain the cooperation of those individuals."

It's clear that Brennan had no "information or intelligence" that would lead a reasonable man to think that anyone in Trump's entourage was colluding with Russian officials or agents. The whole story is spun from whole cloth. The disturbing implication however is that Brennan, who was an outspoken supporter of Hillary and equally harsh critic of Trump, was using the CIA's intrusive surveillance powers to spy on a rival political party in the heat of a presidential campaign. If that is not a flagrant example of subverting democracy, then what is? Here's a clip from the Washington Times:

"It was then-CIA Director John O. Brennan, a close confidant of Mr. Obama's, who provided the information — what he termed the "basis" — for the FBI to start the counterintelligence investigation last summer....Mr. Brennan told the House Intelligence Committee on May 23 that the intelligence community was picking up tidbits on Trump associates making contacts with Russians...

But he said he believed the contacts were numerous enough to alert the FBI, which began its probe into Trump associates that same July, according to previous congressional testimony from then-FBI director James B. Comey." (The Washington Times)

It all started with Brennan, he's the ringleader in this dodgy caper. But Brennan was not operating as a free agent pursuing his own malign political agenda, but as a strong-arm facilitator for the powerful foreign policy establishment which includes leaders from Big Oil, Wall Street, and the giant weapons manufacturers. These are the corporate mandarins who pull Brennan's chain and give Brennan his marching orders. This is how power trickles down in America.

So while the moneytrail may lead back to the DNC and Hillary's Campaign, the roots of Russia-gate extend far beyond the politicians to the highest-ranking members of the permanent state.

**Mike Whitney** lives in Washington state. He is a contributor to [Hopeless: Barack Obama and the Politics of Illusion](#) (AK Press). *Hopeless* is also available in a [Kindle edition](#). He can be reached at [fergiewhitney@msn.com](mailto:fergiewhitney@msn.com).

Featured image is from the author.

The original source of this article is [CounterPunch](#)  
Copyright © [Mike Whitney](#), [CounterPunch](#), 2017

---

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: **[Mike Whitney](#)**

**Disclaimer:** The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)

[www.globalresearch.ca](http://www.globalresearch.ca) contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)