

Is Russia Bribing Clinton?

By [Andrew Korybko](#)

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American presidential hopeful Hillary Clinton is embroiled in yet another political scandal, albeit this time one with a sweeping international reach that touches on Russia and Kazakhstan. Peter Schweizer's forthcoming book, "[Clinton Cash](#)", claims to have connected the pieces of the latest Clinton conspiracy, one which allegedly involved then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton essentially 'trading' uranium mines in the US in exchange for financial kickbacks to her family's foundation. It's a bit more convoluted than that, and therein lays the heart of the issue.

To be as concise as possible, the Canadian mining company Uranium One owned assets in the US, and thus, its proposed purchase by Rosatom had to have been approved by the US government due to potential national security concerns. As the US was deliberating whether or not to approve the sale, a Russian investment bank paid Bill Clinton \$500,000 to speak at an event, money which Schweizer sees as a quid pro quo in guaranteeing Hillary's support. Prior to that, Bill accompanied Frank Giustra, one of Uranium One's heads, to Kazakhstan, where he was able to secure a deal that helped position the company as an important player in the industry. Shortly thereafter, Giustra donated over \$30 million to the Clinton Foundation, yet another quid pro quo according to Schweizer's allegations. All told, through the purchase of Uranium One, Rosatom became one of the world's most important uranium players, now controlling up to a fifth of uranium production capacity in the US.

In and of itself, the business deal would not have attracted much attention had it not been for the New Cold War, where anything even remotely associated with Russia is deemed politically poisonous. If any 'funny business' was involved in Rosatom's acquisition, especially if Hillary's fingerprints can be linked to it, then the domestic political reverberations would surely capsize her career and demolish her decades-long legacy. The story, once derided by critics as a "Republican attack" on Hillary, is now gaining traction as more and more journalists are verifying the evidence presented in Schweizer's book and drawing similar conclusions, which even if they can't be entirely proven, are at the very least attracting heaps of unwanted attention and scrutiny on the presidential aspirant.

Prior to reading the below interview, it's recommended to check out the [New York Times](#) piece on the topic and the follow-up story by the [New York Post](#) in order to acquire more details and context about this unfolding scandal.

 The following interview by **Andrew Korybko** originally appeared in Macedonia's leading website and newspaper, [Dnevnik](#), English version exclusive for ORIENTAL REVIEW.

How do the Russian media comment on this?

I haven't read anything thus far in Russian media on the topic, although it doesn't mean that

they haven't reported it. However, I infer that the story hasn't 'broken' here since if it did, Sputnik would have also reported on it, and that's not the case yet. It seems like the story has a lot of potential and is very juicy to have in the midst of an American presidential primary campaign, so I don't expect it to go away anytime soon. It could very well develop into something larger, and what's important for observers like ourselves to do is monitor the reactions of other actors to this scandal, specifically American political forces. This could help reveal insight into which direction the story is going, other than to sideline Clinton's campaign (perhaps there are shades of trying to sabotage the Iranian nuclear deal, too). I'd be interested in seeing what the foreign reactions are to this if the story makes it that far and survives that long.

How do you as a political analyst and journalist interpret this scandal? If it's true, could we see criminal proceedings against Hillary?

My personal view from the little amount of time I've spent examining this story is that there could be something there, but I wouldn't go as far as to allege any Russian government complicity. In my view, businessmen all across the world regardless of nationality try to cavort with those in power and 'sweeten the deal' when lots of money or strategic assets are on the line. I don't think it's any different in this case — there could have been a self-interested businessmen (as all of them are anyhow, by the very nature of their work) who, having gained wind of the Clinton's exorbitant reputation for corruption and behind-the-scenes deals, figured he'd try his own hand in maneuvering to win over Uranium One. Also, it's an open secret among many in the US journalistic community that the Clinton's 'Foundation' has always essentially been a front organization for funneling bribes and paybacks to what could accurately be described as 'America's Royal Family' (politically, socially its unfortunately the Kardashian Clan, but that's a whole other matter!). It doesn't surprise me in the least, actually.



Former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton (L) and former U.S. President Bill Clinton embrace at the opening plenary session of the Clinton Global Initiative (CGI), on September 22, 2014 in New York City. (Photo by John Moore/Getty Images)

In fact, I think there's a lot more to this story, and it stems from Hillary's deleted personal email server, which she shouldn't have been keeping in the first place. This story becomes sensationalized because of politically 'exotic' words like 'Russia', 'uranium', 'Putin', and 'Kazakhstan' in the context of the New Cold War. There are shades of inference that this was some kind of 'Kremlin ploy' to secretly take over American uranium mines, which isn't what it was, as I explained earlier. But, because of this 'Russian connectin' and demonization of President Putin, the story takes on a greater emotional and psychological impact among the American population and journalistic community as opposed to if those suggestions were not involved at all. I personally feel that Hillary's hiding a ton of secrets, hence why she deleted tens of thousands of 'personal' emails. This is just the tip of the iceberg, but it's being sensationalized, as I said, because of the Russia inferences in the context of the New Cold War. Clearly, the reason is to destroy Clinton's presidential run, but I also suspect that a deeper and more nefarious purpose may be to further damage relations between the US and Russia and potentially set the stage for some type of government action against Uranium One.

To address your last inquiry in that question, I feel that the Clintons are a family of criminals

if you look at all the scandals that have followed them for decades, and that this case is no different. Any potential crime doesn't fall on the hands of the Russian government or Russian businessmen that tried to use sly methods to win influence, but with Hillary Clinton herself for breaking American law in getting involved. However, IF Hillary did really commit a crime and she gets indicted (which would likely be for political not legal reasons anyhow, since the Clinton's have avoided any legal consequences for their scandals thus far), the question is this — what happens to the Uranium One deal if it was made on illegal grounds? Can it be nullified and the US government seize its American assets?

THAT'S the real scandal, if you ask me.

What do you know regarding this \$500,000 speech that Bill Clinton gave in Moscow?

About Bill Clinton's speech, I only recently read about it, but again, not on Russian media. It's no secret that Bill has made tens of millions of dollars speaking all across the world. As I mentioned earlier, my feeling is that many of the people or institutions who pay these outrageous rates implicitly understand that it's a mechanism for buying influence with America's Royal Family. I can't say that this was the case in Moscow with the bank that hosted Bill, but in general, this is how it is with others, in my view. It could of course have just been that they wanted the prestige of one of America's most popular icons in the past 50 years speaking at their bank, feeling this would give them new customers and respect. But, I think it's inarguable that anyone paying that much money of course expects some kind of direct or indirect benefit, whether it's actively or passively given by the Clintons (bribes in the case of the allegation, or honor/prestige/bragging rights if one wants to be optimistic about it).

Andrew Korybko is the political analyst and journalist for [Sputnik](#) who currently lives and studies in Moscow, exclusively for *ORIENTAL REVIEW*.

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Articles by: [Andrew Korybko](#)

About the author:

Andrew Korybko is an American Moscow-based political analyst specializing in the relationship between the US strategy in Afro-Eurasia, China's One Belt One Road global vision of New Silk Road connectivity, and Hybrid Warfare. He is a frequent contributor to Global Research.

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