

February 24, 2015

Time to have a Hillary day. We'll let the mainstream left start us out. Here's [Maureen Dowd](#).

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Hillary hasn’t announced a 2016 campaign yet. She’s busy polling more than 200 policy experts on how to show that she really cares about the poor while courting the banks. Yet her shadow campaign is already in a déjà-vu-all-over-again shark fight over control of the candidate and her money. It’s the same old story: The killer organization that, even with all its ruthless hired guns, can’t quite shoot straight. ...

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[Kimberley Strassel](#) wants to call a spade a spade. She says the Clinton Foundation is just a political action committee or PAC.

Republican presidential aspirants are already launching political-action committees, gearing up for the expensive elections to come. They’ll be hard-pressed to compete with the campaign vehicle [Hillary Clinton](#) has been erecting these past 14 years. You know, the Clinton Foundation.

With the news this week that Mrs. Clinton—the would-be occupant of the White House—is landing tens of millions from foreign governments for her shop, it’s long past time to drop the fiction that the Clinton Foundation has ever been a charity. It’s a political shop. Bill and Hillary have simply done with the foundation what they did with cattle futures and Whitewater and the Lincoln Bedroom and Johnny Chung—they’ve exploited the system.

Most family charities exist to allow self-made Americans to disperse their good fortune to philanthropic causes. The Clinton Foundation exists to allow the nation's most powerful couple to use their not-so-subtle persuasion to exact global tribute for a fund that promotes the Clintons.

Oh sure, the foundation doles out grants for this and that cause. But they don't rank next to the annual Bill Clinton show—the Clinton Global Initiative event—to which he summons heads of state and basks for a media week as post-presidential statesman. This is an organization that in 2013 spent \$8.5 million in travel expenses alone, ferrying the Clintons to headliner events. Those keep Mrs. Clinton in the news, which helps when you want to be president.

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Matthew Continetti weighs in.

The Wall Street Journal reported this past week that the Bill, Hillary, and Chelsea Clinton Foundation has quietly dropped its ban on foreign contributions and is accepting donations from the governments of "the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Australia, Germany, and a Canadian government agency promoting the Keystone XL pipeline." The Journal's conclusion: Since 2001 "the foundation has raised at least \$48 million from overseas governments."

Needless to say, the gargantuan troll-like conflict of interest that arises as soon as the foundation of the leading candidate for the presidency of the United States begins accepting money from overseas is apparent to every sentient being on the planet except members of the Clinton family and the growing number of advisers, consultants, strategists, pollsters, groupies, allies, and hangers-on whose livelihood depends on that family's political success. "These contributions," the foundation said in a statement to the Journal, "are helping improve the lives of millions of people across the world, for which we are grateful."

What I love about this statement is its flip shamelessness, the way in which its airy sentimental public relations gobbledygook is both a denial of what is obviously a corrupt practice and an implicit endorsement of it. ...

Jennifer Rubin too.

... Clinton behaves as she does because the press enables her by playing down the significance of her ethical obtuseness. Why stop if she can get away with virtually anything? It's not a double standard so much as no standards being applied to her. She is sui generis and therefore is not only coddled but also praised for philanthropy and ultimately endorsed as the great defender of the weak and poor. All ethical judgment is suspended by those who whip themselves into outrage over the most trivial offense by other pols. In some parallel universe, some liberal pundit would declare that years of ethical slumming and unbridled greed make Clinton unfit for high office. Period.

This is a test of sorts for the Democratic Party: Is it so afraid of the Clintons and so lacking in any reasonable alternative to Hillary Clinton's candidacy that it and all potential rivals will remain mum about this? Oh, let's not kid ourselves. The people who raised a stink about Mitt Romney's blind trust that had Cayman Islands mutual funds will continue to treat her as political royalty.

And Rubin says it is Hillary that should be disqualified, not Scott Walker.

... I have not heard Hillary Clinton denounce the leaks from the administration badmouthing the prime minister of Israel. She has not criticized the president for misleading Americans that they could keep their health-care insurance and their doctors. She did not decry the president's assertion that gunning down Jews in a kosher market in France was "random." She never condemned the remarks of former Middle East negotiator Martin Indyk blaming Israel for the breakdown in peace talks or of her successor in suggesting that America couldn't protect Israel or stave off boycotts of Israel if it didn't make peace with the Palestinians. And let's not get started on all the idiotic utterances Vice President Joe Biden has made. While President George W. Bush was in office, Clinton never denounced a host of comments questioning his motives, honesty, etc. Frankly, she has not been asked about such things because, well, why would she have to answer for everyone in her party who ever said something off-putting? If they can drag her into an interview, the media should ask her all these questions and more. If she refuses to answer, out of the race, they must declare! Yeah. Right.

Forget comments about others' comments. Clinton won't tell us — for she is in perpetual hiding — what she thinks about the compelling issues of the day. She can't give her opinion on the Keystone XL pipeline. Anyone ask her if she thinks we are winning the war against the Islamic State, if we have improved our standing with Arab allies, if we have violated our promise to Ukraine to provide security in exchange for having given up its nukes, if Iran can be allowed to just "unplug" its centrifuges as the U.S. negotiators are apparently suggesting, or her opinion on any of hundreds of other knotty foreign or domestic issues? Isn't it pure cowardice for her to remain silent about an imminent deal that would leave Iran with thousands of centrifuges? Really, now is the time for candor and leadership. Knowing how untenable a nuclear-armed Iran would be, her silence is irresponsible. I wonder why the media aren't pestering her for her position and decrying her silence as disqualifying for the job as commander in chief. ...

Eliana Johnson has more on the Brock hissy fit.

There isn't even a Hillary Clinton presidential campaign yet, and already the sort of vicious infighting that brought down her 2008 campaign is underway. It sprang to the surface on Monday when David Brock, the founder of the liberal group Media Matters as well as the pro-Clinton PAC American Bridge angrily resigned his board membership at another pro-Clinton super PAC, Priorities USA Action. Like the political-action committees that have been established in recent months by the potential Republican candidates, from Jeb Bush to Chris Christie to Scott Walker, a trio of pro-Clinton groups, Media Matters, American Bridge, and Priorities USA, are together serving as a nascent campaign apparatus, doing fundraising and opposition research and hiring in top Democratic staffers. ...

And we close with the liberal media. **Ron Fournier** gets his licks.

This is sleazy and stupid. Just as Hillary Clinton is getting ready to run for president again, her family's charitable foundation secretly lifted a ban on accepting money from foreign governments.

The Wall Street Journal discovered the ethical breach during a search of donations of more than \$50,000 posted on the foundation's online database. "Recent donors include the United Arab

Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Australia, Germany, and a Canadian government agency promoting the Keystone XL Pipeline," reported James V. Grimaldi and Rebecca Ballhaus.

This is sleazy because of the clear conflicts of interest. What do these foreign countries expect in exchange for their donations? What pressure would Clinton face as president to return financial favors? ..

NY Times
Call Off the Dogs
by Maureen Dowd

I'LL pay for this column.

The Rottweilers will be unleashed.

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Once they had the sly James Carville, fondly known as "serpenthead." Now they have the slippery David Brock, accurately known as a snake.

Brock fits into the Clinton tradition of opportunistic knife-fighters like Dick Morris and Mark Penn.

The silver-haired 52-year-old, who sports colorful designer suits and once wore a monocle, brawled his way into a Times article about the uneasy marriage between Hillary Clinton's veteran attack dogs and the group of advisers who are moving over from Obamaland.

Hillary hasn't announced a 2016 campaign yet. She's busy polling more than 200 policy experts on how to show that she really cares about the poor while courting the banks. Yet her shadow campaign is already in a déjà-vu-all-over-again shark fight over control of the candidate and her money. It's the same old story: The killer organization that, even with all its ruthless hired guns, can't quite shoot straight.

Squabbling competing factions helped Hillary squander a quarter-of-a-billion dollars in 2008.

As Nicholas Confessore and Amy Chozick chronicled, the nasty dispute spilled into public and Brock resigned last week from the board of a pro-Clinton "super-PAC" called Priorities USA Action — whose co-chairman is Jim Messina, Obama's 2012 campaign manager — accusing the political action committee of "an orchestrated political hit job" and "the kind of dirty trick I've witnessed in the right-wing and would not tolerate then."

He should know.

The former “right-wing hit man,” and impresario of “dirty tricks,” as Brock has said of himself, made his living in the '90s sliming Anita Hill as “a little bit nutty and a little bit slutty” and breaking the Troopergate story, which accused Arkansas state troopers of setting up liaisons for Bill Clinton and spurred Paula Jones’s 1994 sexual harassment lawsuit.

He has tried to discredit anyone who disagreed with his ideological hits (myself and reporters I know included). And that’s still the business he’s in, simply on the other side as a Hillary zealot. (His conversion began in 1996 when he published a biography of Hillary that was not a total hit job and that began the thaw.)

Just as Bill Clinton was able to forgive another architect of the vast right-wing conspiracy, Richard Mellon Scaife, once Scaife was charmed by Hillary in person and began giving money to the Clinton foundation, so, too, was Bill won over by Brock’s book, “Blinded by the Right: The Conscience of an Ex-Conservative,” and Brock’s Media Matters and Correct the Record websites, which ferociously push back against any Hillary coverage that isn’t fawning.

With the understood blessing of the Clintons, Brock runs a \$28 million cluster of media monitoring groups and oppo research organizations that are vehicles to rebut and at times discredit and threaten anyone who casts a gimlet eye at Clinton Inc.

As Confessore and Chozick wrote, he uses a fund-raiser named Mary Pat Bonner, whose firm has collected millions of dollars in commissions — a practice many fund-raising experts consider unethical.

Everyone wants to be at the trough for this one because Hillary is likely to raise, and more important, spend more than \$1 billion on her campaign.

The Clinton crowd is trying to woo Brock back into the fold because he’s good at getting money and knows how their enemies think. The Clintons appreciate the fact that Brock, like Morris, is a take-no-prisoners type with the ethical compass of a jackal. Baked in the tactics of the right, Brock will never believe that negative coverage results from legitimate shortcomings. Instead, it’s all personal, all false, and all a war.

This is a bad harbinger for those who had hoped that Hillary would “kill off the wild dogs,” as one Obama loyalist put it, and Bill would leave behind the sketchy hangers-on in the mold of Ron Burkle and Jeffrey Epstein.

Hillary’s inability to dispense with brass-knuckle, fanatical acolytes like Brock shows that she still has an insecure streak that requires Borgia-like blind loyalty, and can’t distinguish between the real vast right-wing conspiracy and the voices of legitimate concern.

Money-grubbing is always the ugly place with the Clintons, who have devoured \$2.1 billion in contributions since 1992 to their political campaigns, family foundation and philanthropies, according to The Old (Good) New Republic.

David Axelrod, the author of a new memoir, “Believer,” wrote that Hillary’s past gurus, Morris and Penn, were nonbelievers — mercenary, manipulative and avaricious. He told Politico’s Glenn Thrush that he would have advised Hillary not to cash in with her book and six-figure speeches.

Axelrod reiterated to me that Hillary’s designated campaign chairman, John Podesta, Bill Clinton’s last chief of staff who left his post as an Obama counselor on Friday, “has the strength and standing to enforce a kind of campaign discipline that hasn’t existed before.”

But, for now, what Republicans say about government is true of the Clintons: They really do believe that your money belongs to them.

Someday, they should give their tin cup to the Smithsonian. It's one of the wonders of the world.

WSJ

The Clinton Foundation Super PAC

It's past time to drop the fiction that the Clinton Foundation is a charity.

by Kimberley Strassel

Republican presidential aspirants are already launching political-action committees, gearing up for the expensive elections to come. They'll be hard-pressed to compete with the campaign vehicle [Hillary Clinton](#) has been erecting these past 14 years. You know, the Clinton Foundation.

With the news this week that Mrs. Clinton—the would-be occupant of the White House—is landing tens of millions from foreign governments for her shop, it's long past time to drop the fiction that the Clinton Foundation has ever been a charity. It's a political shop. Bill and Hillary have simply done with the foundation what they did with cattle futures and Whitewater and the Lincoln Bedroom and Johnny Chung—they've exploited the system.

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Oh sure, the foundation doles out grants for this and that cause. But they don't rank next to the annual Bill Clinton show—the Clinton Global Initiative event—to which he summons heads of state and basks for a media week as post-presidential statesman. This is an organization that in 2013 spent \$8.5 million in travel expenses alone, ferrying the Clintons to headliner events. Those keep Mrs. Clinton in the news, which helps when you want to be president.

It's a body that exists to keep the Clinton political team intact in between elections, working for the Clintons' political benefit. Only last week it came out that Dennis Cheng, who raised money for Mrs. Clinton's 2008 bid, and then transitioned to the Clinton Foundation's chief development officer, is now transitioning back to head up Mrs. Clinton's 2016 fundraising operation. Mr. Cheng has scored \$248 million for the foundation, and his Rolodex comes with him. The Washington Post reported this week that already half the major donors backing Ready for Hillary, a group supporting her 2016 bid, are also foundation givers.

How much of these employees' salaries, how much of Mrs. Clinton's travel, was funded by the Saudis? Or the United Arab Emirates, or Oman, or any of the other foreign nations that The Wall Street Journal Tuesday [reported](#) have given millions to the foundation this past year? How many voters has Mrs. Clinton wooed, how many potential donors has she primed, how many influential people has she recruited for her campaign via the Clinton Foundation?

The foundation claims none, but that's the other Clinton stroke of brilliance in using a charity as a campaign vehicle—we can't know. Poor [Jeb Bush](#) has to abide by all those pesky campaign-finance laws that require him to disclose exact donor names, and dates and amounts. And that also bar contributions from foreign entities.

Not a problem for Team Clinton. The foundation does divulge contributors—after a fashion—but doesn't give exact amounts or dates. Did Mrs. Clinton ever take any oddly timed actions as secretary of state? Who knows? Not the Federal Election Commission.

The foundation likes to note that it adopted self-imposed limits on foreign contributions during the period when Mrs. Clinton was at the State Department. Which is nice. Then again, that ban wasn't absolute, and it isn't clear it encompassed nonprofits funded by foreign governments, or covered wealthy foreigners, or foreign corporations. Nothing is clear. This is the Clintons. That's how they like it.

This is the baseline scandal of the Clinton Foundation—it's a political group that gets to operate outside the rules imposed on every other political player. Then comes the ethical morass. Republican National Committee spokesman Michael Short summed it up perfectly in a Wednesday WSJ [story](#): "When that 3 a.m. phone call comes, do voters really want to have a president on the line who took truckloads of cash from other countries?"

The nation's ethics guardians have gently declared the Clintons might clear this up with more disclosure, or by again limiting the foundation's acceptance of foreign money. What about the amounts already banked? The damage is done. If this were Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker, a likely GOP candidate, he'd be declared disqualified for office. The benefit of being a Clinton is that the nation expects this, and the bar for disqualification now sits in the exosphere.

Democrats might nonetheless consider how big a liability this is for their potential nominee. It's hard to label your GOP opponent anti-woman when the Clinton Foundation is funded by countries that bar women from voting and driving like Saudi Arabia. It's hard to call your GOP opponent a heartless capitalist—out of tune with middle-class anxieties—when you owe your foundation's soul to Canadian mining magnates and Ethiopian construction billionaires. And it's hard to claim you will fix a burning world when you owe foundation gratitude to countries holding the fossil-fuel blowtorches.

Mrs. Clinton won't let that stop her. So Democrats have to decide if they want to once again put their ethics in the blind Clinton trust.

Free Beacon

[The Bill, Hillary, Chelsea and His Royal Highness King Salman of Saudi Arabia Clinton Foundation](#)

It's not just that Hillary's corrupt. It's that she's also clueless.

by Matthew Continetti

The *Wall Street Journal* reported this past week that the [Bill, Hillary, and Chelsea Clinton Foundation](#) has quietly dropped its ban on foreign contributions and is accepting donations from the governments of "[the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Australia, Germany, and a Canadian government agency promoting the Keystone XL pipeline](#)." The *Journal's* conclusion: Since 2001 "the foundation has raised at least \$48 million from overseas governments."

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and the growing number of advisers, consultants, strategists, pollsters, groupies, [allies](#), and hangers-on whose livelihood depends on that family's political success. "These contributions," [the foundation said in a statement to the Journal](#), "are helping improve the lives of millions of people across the world, for which we are grateful."

What I love about this statement is its flip shamelessness, the way in which its airy sentimental public relations gobbledygook is both a denial of what is obviously a corrupt practice and an implicit endorsement of it. I do not doubt for a moment that the Clinton flack who led the email chain that came up with this blistering retort to the *Journal* is indeed "grateful" for every single one of the donations that foreign governments are making to his organization, because life in Manhattan and North Caldwell, New Jersey, is very expensive and these kids are not going to be paying for college on their own you know. If a little charity on the part of his excellency Sultan Qaboos of Oman can help pay for the lake house in Connecticut and the monthly installment on that brand new Tesla you've been eyeing through the window of the store on 25th Street, well, what's the harm? The programs you run—"transforming communities," "creating partnerships of purpose," devising other alliterative slogans—"improve the lives of millions of people across the world." OK, maybe not "millions of people," but certainly the lives of the oligarchs and monarchs and functionaries and foreign agents who sign checks to the Clintons and can count on reciprocity, not to mention the lives of one very special pair of grandparents, their beloved daughter, her husband ([especially when Goldman Sachs is footing the bill for losses at his hedge fund](#)), and beautiful Charlotte.

In its 14 years of existence the Clinton Foundation has raised a sum approaching \$2 billion. [A McClatchy analysis](#) found that 40 percent of contributions in the last decade have come from foreign sources. "It's a massive sum of money—though no one has done a story yet on how overseas programs they fund have worked," [Maggie Haberman of the New York Times noted on Twitter](#). Gee I wonder why. It's almost as though the political press is morally and intellectually disarmed whenever it hears words like "global dialogue" and "wellness" and "economic development" and "women and girls," as if the gritty, cynical, I've-seen-it-all correspondents for our major newspapers and networks turn to bubbling bittersweet goo as soon as some Clinton flack tells them, "[We are working with global partners to build an evidence-based case for the full participation of women and girls in the 21st century](#)," and their eyes fall on a picture of a cute, vibrant, and diverse group of young women surrounding the aging potentate and her daughter and former NBC News special correspondent. What it would take the *Post* or the *Times* to dispatch a reporter to Ishmaelia or wherever to examine, in skeptical detail, just where the Clinton money is going, to report on the precise state of the President Peter Mutharika Water Reclamation Plant and Convention Center, is beyond me. [Certainly the reports from Haiti are not encouraging](#). Even the *Journal* is not clear when the Clinton Foundation dropped its ban on foreign money, a mystery the Foundation itself does not seem to be in any hurry to solve.

One can always count on the media's herd instinct, however, and in the hours since the initial *Journal* scoop and the Clintons' flagrant doubling-down on buckraking from overseas interests, a group of stories has appeared that suggests the Clintons have a big problem on their hands. A *Washington Post* analysis "[found substantial overlap between the Clinton political machinery and the foundation](#)," and noted that "nearly half of the major donors who are backing ready for Hillary, a group promoting her 2016 presidential bid, as well as nearly half of the bundlers from her 2008 campaign, have given at least \$10,000 to the foundation, either on their own or through foundations or companies they run." What do you think they want for all of that money? An Eid al-Fatr card?

McClatchy [draws our attention](#) to donors such as "Mohammed Al-Amoudi, a billionaire businessman who lives in Ethiopia and Saudi Arabia, retired German race car driver Michael

Schumacher, and Denis O'Brien, the Irish chairman of Digicel phone company," who "each donated between \$5 million to \$10 million." You know, regular folks; American-Gothic types; the sort of common people who so puzzle Clinton that she is [asking more than 200 policy wonks for advice](#) on how to talk to them.

How I would love to have been in the room with Bill Clinton and Doug Band and God-only-knows-who-else as the former president sweet-talked Herr Schumacher, telling him stories of his childhood and presidency and subsequent career, confiding his preferred cigar brands, mixing up funny vignettes with economic and political analysis, dropping hints at Hillary's political future and impending ascension to the status of Sun-Queen, dispensing tips on vegan dieting, interspersing his unending monologue with deadpan treacle like "it's for our children" and "we're all one big global village" and "you should see what they're doing for women's health in Rwanda," as the "retired German race car driver" kept his mouth contorted in a tight grin, ready to mention the quo for the quid, feeling like a big man for gaining proximity to the biggest big man of them all.

And to think that scenes like this have played out in conference rooms and private jets and luxury hotels around the world for over a decade, with promises exchanged and pledges made and deals negotiated and influence peddled, and no one really has the faintest idea of any of the details except members of Bill Clinton's innermost circle. What beguiles and amazes is the scope of the self-dealing, the effrontery of the horse-trading, the utterly earnest way in which the Clintons are able to transform hobnobbing with and skimming off the global elite into a parody of "philanthropy."

I also find it revealing, though, that the Clintons seemed to be caught off guard by the *Wall Street Journal's* reporting, that the insistence by Clinton Foundation spokesmen that there is no story here and that it is "a false choice" to suggest a conflict of interest when foreign billionaires hand money to the presidential frontrunner has assumed an increasingly desperate character. What the scrambling exposes is that this political organization is as aloof and tone-deaf as ever.

Clinton appears to have decided to remain secluded for as long as possible so that her approval numbers do not plunge, but I wonder whether this strategy is as sound as she seems to think it is. It's not as though her non-candidacy candidacy is really producing results. Her book was a flop, she stepped in it with the "dead broke" comments, continuing the paid speeches and chartered flights plays into the caricature of a tired comfortable rich politician, all of the infighting is being played out in the media, some liberals are wondering whether it really would be a good thing for her to become the first non-incumbent in memory to waltz into the nomination unopposed, and now she faces the prospect of two years of questions about transactions and commitments and actions by her husband and his cronies.

What the Clintons have done in the years after they left the White House will be an important part of the "narrative" of the 2016 campaign, of the tale Republicans market to the public of a venal and corrupt and bizarre family so bent on wealth and power that they are more interested in catering to rich foreigners than to the average American. I don't know if the public will buy it—no one knows—but I do know that Hillary Clinton as a candidate and as the chief executive of a massive political organization has shown herself to be seriously deficient in the methods and skills required for a successful presidential campaign. She lost before, she's flubbing now, and people are beginning to recognize that she can always lose again. It's not the sleaze so much as her clumsy pronounced absence of style, her hesitant maladroit uneasy responses to tough questions posed by serious critics. It won't be corruption alone that does Hillary in. It will be her cluelessness.

Right Turn

The Clintons' outrageous ethics

by Jennifer Rubin

Not content to cut their losses, Hillary and Bill Clinton are prolonging their foreign-money scandal by insisting that she gets to keep millions from foreign governments even after she runs for president. [The Wall Street Journal reports](#):

The Clinton Foundation said Thursday that if Hillary Clinton runs for president, it will consider whether to continue accepting contributions from foreign governments, a step that would be aimed at avoiding the appearance of conflicts of interest.

The statement didn't commit the foundation to rejecting donations from foreign governments in the future, as Republicans and some Democrats have urged amid concerns that those nations could use Mrs. Clinton's family philanthropy to try to gain favor with a leading presidential candidate.

And they sure don't say she will give the millions already received back. Something is terribly wrong with this picture. Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the rest paid good money for an "in" with a future president, and the foundation isn't about to lessen the appearance of dependency. They keep the money; the oil states keep their chits. This is how the Iranians negotiate: They keep what they have, they might not keep doing it, and you stop criticizing them.

The Post likewise reports:

A third of foundation donors who have given more than \$1 million are foreign governments or other entities based outside the United States, and foreign donors make up more than half of those who have given more than \$5 million.

The prevalence of financial institutions, both foreign and domestic, as major donors is likely to stir more unease in the Democratic Party's liberal base, which is pushing Hillary Clinton to adopt a more populist and less Wall Street-focused economic agenda. The role of interests located in countries such as Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Argentina may spur questions about the independence of a potential commander in chief who has solicited money from foreign donors with a stake in the actions of the U.S. government.

Republicans are taken aback by the ethical blindness afflicting Hillaryland. Maybe the money has been spent? Maybe Clinton is so addicted to the swirl of big-money donors she can't give up the hobnobbing. It is hard to fathom why any politician — even "we were broke" Hillary Clinton — could keep up the pretense that foreign governments can do through the back door (give via a foundation controlled by the Clinton family and run by their flunkies) what they could never do through the front door (give her campaign direct negotiations)?

It is also remarkable the amount of their time devoted to making money, raising money and making the people who give money feel so privileged to do so. The Post reports:

Since its creation in 2001, the Bill, Hillary and Chelsea Clinton Foundation has raised close to \$2 billion from a vast global network that includes corporate titans, political donors, foreign governments and other wealthy interests, according to a Washington Post review of public records and newly released contribution data.

The total, representing cash and pledges reported in tax filings, includes \$262 million that was raised in 2013 — the year Hillary Rodham Clinton stepped down as secretary of state and began to devote her energies to the foundation and to a likely second run for president.

The financial success of the foundation, which funds charitable work around the world, underscores the highly unusual nature of another Clinton candidacy.

“Unusual” is one way to put it. And although the mainstream media are [beginning](#) to [squawk](#), the pundits do not suggest that the money-grubbing reflects a fundamental character flaw so serious as to be disqualifying. In laughably reverential tones, the [New York Times editorial board](#) suggests: *If she wouldn't mind and not that there is anything wrong with it, she should stop taking such money. People are so critical of every little thing these days.* (“No critic has alleged a specific conflict of interest. The foundation, in fact, went beyond normal philanthropic bounds for transparency six years ago in instituting voluntary disclosure of donors within broad dollar ranges on its website. But this very information can feed criticism.”) Yes, we have seen no specific criticism (!?!), just indictments of the whole sorry spectacle. Nary a critical word is uttered about Hillary Clinton’s mindset or personal ethics, which are still above reproach if anyone asks. (“Restoring the restrictions on foreign donors would be a good way to make this point as Mrs. Clinton’s widely expected campaign moves forward.”) *Nothing more to see here. Shall we move on?* The thought bubble above her fan club at the Times would read: *“Puleez don’t make us defend this.”*

Surely the mainstream media would be calling for Jeb Bush’s head if he, say, took money for his education foundation from Hamas’s patrons in Qatar. (Bush spokeswoman Kristy Campbell declined to remark on Clinton’s behavior but did tell Right Turn, “As part of seriously exploring a potential run for president, Governor Bush stepped down as chairman of his education foundation.” She added, “His foundation does not accept contributions from foreign governments or foreign entities.”) But then, Clinton behaves as she does because the press enables her by playing down the significance of her ethical obtuseness. Why stop if she can get away with virtually anything? It’s not a double standard so much as no standards being applied to her. She is sui generis and therefore is not only coddled but also praised for philanthropy and ultimately endorsed as the great defender of the weak and poor. All ethical judgment is suspended by those who whip themselves into outrage over the most trivial offense by other pols. In some parallel universe, some liberal pundit would declare that years of ethical slumming and unbridled greed make Clinton unfit for high office. Period.

This is a test of sorts for the Democratic Party: *Is it so afraid of the Clintons and so lacking in any reasonable alternative to Hillary Clinton’s candidacy that it and all potential rivals will remain mum about this?* Oh, let’s not kid ourselves. The people who raised a stink about [Mitt Romney’s blind trust that had Cayman Islands mutual funds](#) will continue to treat her as political royalty.

Right Turn

Hillary Clinton should be disqualified, not Scott Walker

by Jennifer Rubin

The mainstream media are ready to write off Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker as a coward and unfit for the presidency because he wouldn’t denounce [Rudy Giuliani’s comments](#) questioning the president’s love for America. One can think it was ill advised (as a number of GOP contenders,

including Sens. Marco Rubio of Florida and Lindsey Graham of South Carolina as well as Indiana Gov. Mike Pence, have said), but it is a strange standard to apply (Denounce an ex-official's rants, or get out!). *Who else has not commented on others' remarks?*

I have not heard Hillary Clinton denounce the leaks from the administration badmouthing the prime minister of Israel. She has not criticized the president for misleading Americans that they could keep their health-care insurance and their doctors. She did not decry the president's assertion that gunning down Jews in a kosher market in France was "random." She never condemned the remarks of former Middle East negotiator Martin Indyk blaming Israel for the breakdown in peace talks or of her successor in suggesting that America couldn't protect Israel or stave off boycotts of Israel if it didn't make peace with the Palestinians. And let's not get started on all the idiotic utterances Vice President Joe Biden has made. While President George W. Bush was in office, Clinton never denounced a host of comments questioning his motives, honesty, etc. Frankly, she has not been asked about such things because, well, why would she have to answer for everyone in her party who ever said something off-putting? If they can drag her into an interview, the media should ask her all these questions and more. If she refuses to answer, out of the race, they must declare! Yeah. Right.

Forget comments about others' comments. Clinton won't tell us — for she is in perpetual hiding — what *she* thinks about the compelling issues of the day. She can't give her opinion on the Keystone XL pipeline. Anyone ask her if she thinks we are winning the war against the Islamic State, if we have improved our standing with Arab allies, if we have violated our promise to Ukraine to provide security in exchange for having given up its nukes, if Iran can be allowed to just "unplug" its centrifuges as the U.S. negotiators are apparently suggesting, or her opinion on any of hundreds of other knotty foreign or domestic issues? Isn't it pure cowardice for her to remain silent about an imminent deal that would leave Iran with thousands of centrifuges? Really, now is the time for candor and leadership. Knowing how untenable a nuclear-armed Iran would be, her silence is irresponsible. I wonder why the media aren't pestering her for her position and decrying her silence as disqualifying for the job as commander in chief.

If one had to identify the single candidate in either party who most consistently refuses to take firm, public stances or criticize the candidate's own party (including its president), you would be hard pressed to come up with a worse offender than Clinton. She wrote a book devoid of substance, but rather than declare her too timid to be president, the media yawned and said the book was pretty dull. And since her [book tour disaster](#), she has been unwilling to present herself to the media for serious questioning.

And, of course, not a soul in the mainstream media suggests that a woman who takes millions from corporate titans who would have demands on her administration or who uses millions from foreign governments to fund her foundation (that, in turn, funds her luxury travel and employs a coterie of loyalists) has *disqualified* herself from high office. Brian Williams cannot stay on the air for telling stories of courage under fire, but Clinton's gunfire-on-the-tarmac tale is long forgotten.

When they demand that Clinton get out of the race for not criticizing Democrats or even disclosing her views, then the mainstream media's criticism of Walker might be taken more seriously. Until then, maybe, to borrow the president's phrase, they should get off their high horse before running out to banish an up-and-coming Republican candidate whose youth, blue-collar persona and political courage contrast so favorably with Clinton's age, clueless 1 percent status and political cowardice.

One can be critical of Walker ducking an easy question about the president's patriotism and even more so for his refusal to acknowledge that the president is a Christian. (I would agree with my

colleague Michael Gerson, who observed on [“Meet the Press”](#): “Well, I think Republicans have a specific problem, the dangerous feedback loop between partisan media and populist candidates. And feud is the worst discourse. And all of a sudden, talk radio is the voice inside your head. And you can’t address the country that way. It’s too inward looking.”) Walker cannot win simply by appealing to the anti-MSM base of the GOP, but must also assure donors and moderate voters he is ready for prime time. But trying to run Walker out of town on a rail is both a gross overreaction and evidence of the deeply embedded double standard in the mainstream media. Voters, not the media, ultimately will assess Walker’s fitness for office. In the meantime, the media would be advised to start demanding candor from Clinton and then judge her by the same standard they apply to Walker.

The Corner

[Hillary 2016, Meet Hillary 2008](#)

by Eliana Johnson

There isn’t even a Hillary Clinton presidential campaign yet, and already the sort of vicious infighting that brought down her 2008 campaign is underway. It sprang to the surface on Monday when David Brock, the founder of the liberal group Media Matters as well as the pro-Clinton PAC American Bridge angrily [resigned his board membership](#) at another pro-Clinton super PAC, Priorities USA Action. Like the political-action committees that have been established in recent months by the potential Republican candidates, from Jeb Bush to Chris Christie to Scott Walker, a trio of pro-Clinton groups, Media Matters, American Bridge, and Priorities USA, are together serving as a nascent campaign apparatus, doing fundraising and opposition research and hiring in top Democratic staffers.

As for Brock, he [has been called](#) “the face of the pre-2016” Clinton campaign and its “de facto spokesman,” and he will likely serve as a top adviser on the seemingly inevitable Clinton campaign. But he resigned from his leadership position at Priorities USA over what he called an “orchestrated political hit job” against American Bridge and Media Matters by . . . Clinton allies at Priorities USA. The so-called hit job was a [front-page New York Times piece](#) by Nicholas Confessore about Brock’s longtime fundraiser, Mary Pat Bonner, that detailed her lucrative work on behalf of a trio of pro-Clinton groups — American Bridge, Priorities USA, and Ready for Hillary — that for the past year have been working in concert. The report noted that the groups pay Bonner on commission, a controversial practice among fundraisers and the entities that employ them, PACs and political campaigns alike.

Brock, according to a [lengthy account](#) in *BuzzFeed*, alleges that the piece was the product of dirt being dished by former Obama campaign manager and current Priorities USA co-chair Jim Messina. Brock has since said he will consider rejoining the board. What will happen to all of the bad blood is a different question entirely.

This is the sort of thing those in the Clinton camp said wouldn’t happen again. The clashes of the big egos and the millionaire crybabies, their petty disputes spilling into public view. The events that elicited headlines like [“The Front-runner’s Fall”](#) (*The Atlantic*) and [“Hillaryland at War”](#) (*Vanity Fair*) — clashes between big-name advisers like Mark Penn, Harold Ickes, Patti Solis Dolye, and Howard Wolfson — were supposed to have been resolved. Now we have David Brock and Jim Messina.

What we don't have is an Obama campaign with a tight-knit and loyal crew determined to bring Clinton down this time around. So even if history repeats itself, the outcome may be different. At least in the Democratic primary.

National Journal

A Stupid and Sleazy Clinton Decision

If Hillary Clinton wants to be president, the Clinton Foundation should stop accepting money from foreign countries.

by Ron Fournier

This is sleazy and stupid. Just as Hillary Clinton is getting ready to run for president again, her family's charitable foundation secretly lifted a ban on accepting money from foreign governments.

The Wall Street Journal [discovered](#) the ethical breach during a search of donations of more than \$50,000 posted on the foundation's online database. "Recent donors include the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Australia, Germany, and a Canadian government agency promoting the Keystone XL Pipeline," reported James V. Grimaldi and Rebecca Ballhaus.

This is sleazy because of the clear conflicts of interest. What do these foreign countries expect in exchange for their donations? What pressure would Clinton face as president to return financial favors?

Even if you give her the benefit of the doubt (having covered the Clinton since the 1980s, I'm still willing to do that), you can't deny that this flip-flop creates a perception of foreign favoritism in a political system that most Americans already think is corrupted by money.

The Clinton Foundation stopped raising money from foreign governments in 2009 at the urging of the Obama administration. To their credit, the Obama team was worried about the perception of the secretary of State's husband, Bill Clinton, raising money while she represented U.S. interests overseas. After leaving the State Department, she officially joined the foundation, which changed its name to the [Bill, Hillary & Chelsea Clinton Foundation](#).

This is stupid because it undermines the narrative of her unofficial campaign—one of the world's most famous women challenging the "glass ceiling" of U.S. politics. Some of these donor countries have no respect for women. Saudi Arabia has such a poor record that Clinton herself praised the ["brave"](#) Saudi women who defied their nation's ban on female drivers.

This is sleazy because her foundation takes money from countries that fund terrorism. A Wikileaks cable [quoted](#) then-Secretary of State Clinton saying, "Donors in Saudi Arabia constitute the most significant source of funding to Sunni terrorist groups worldwide." The United Arab Emirates also was implicated in the memo.

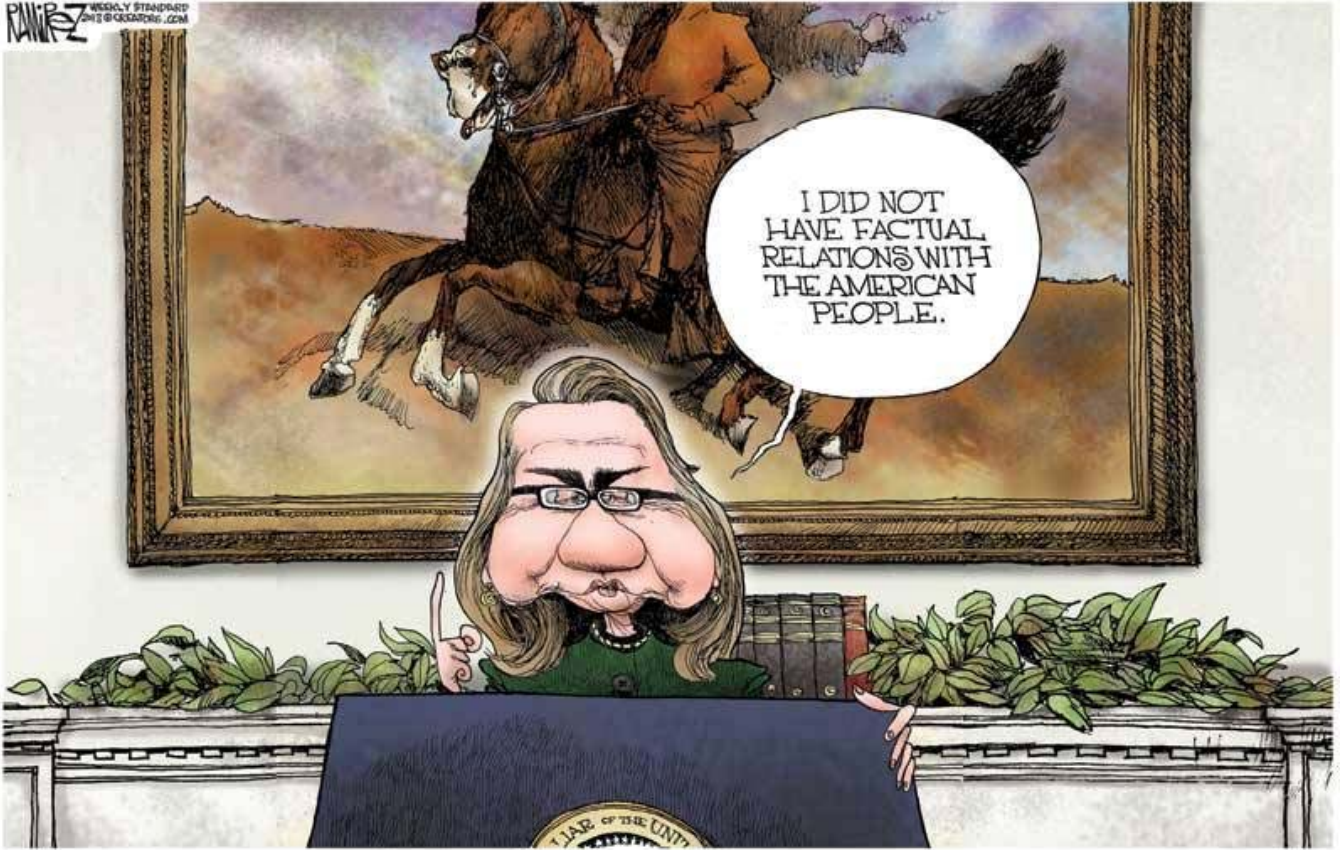
This is stupid because it plays into a decades-old knock on the Clintons: They'll cut any corner for campaign cash. In the 1990s, Bill Clinton and his top aides [used](#) the White House as a tool to court and reward big donors. It was the second-biggest scandal of his presidency.

The Wall Street Journal exposed this legal but unethical shift on the same day a new poll [suggested](#) that 50 percent of Americans believe Hillary Clinton represents the future. No other potential candidate ranked higher on the past-versus-future test.

But nothing screams "the past" louder than a Clinton fundraising flap. If Hillary Clinton wants to be a credible candidate for the future, the Clinton Foundation needs to knock it off.

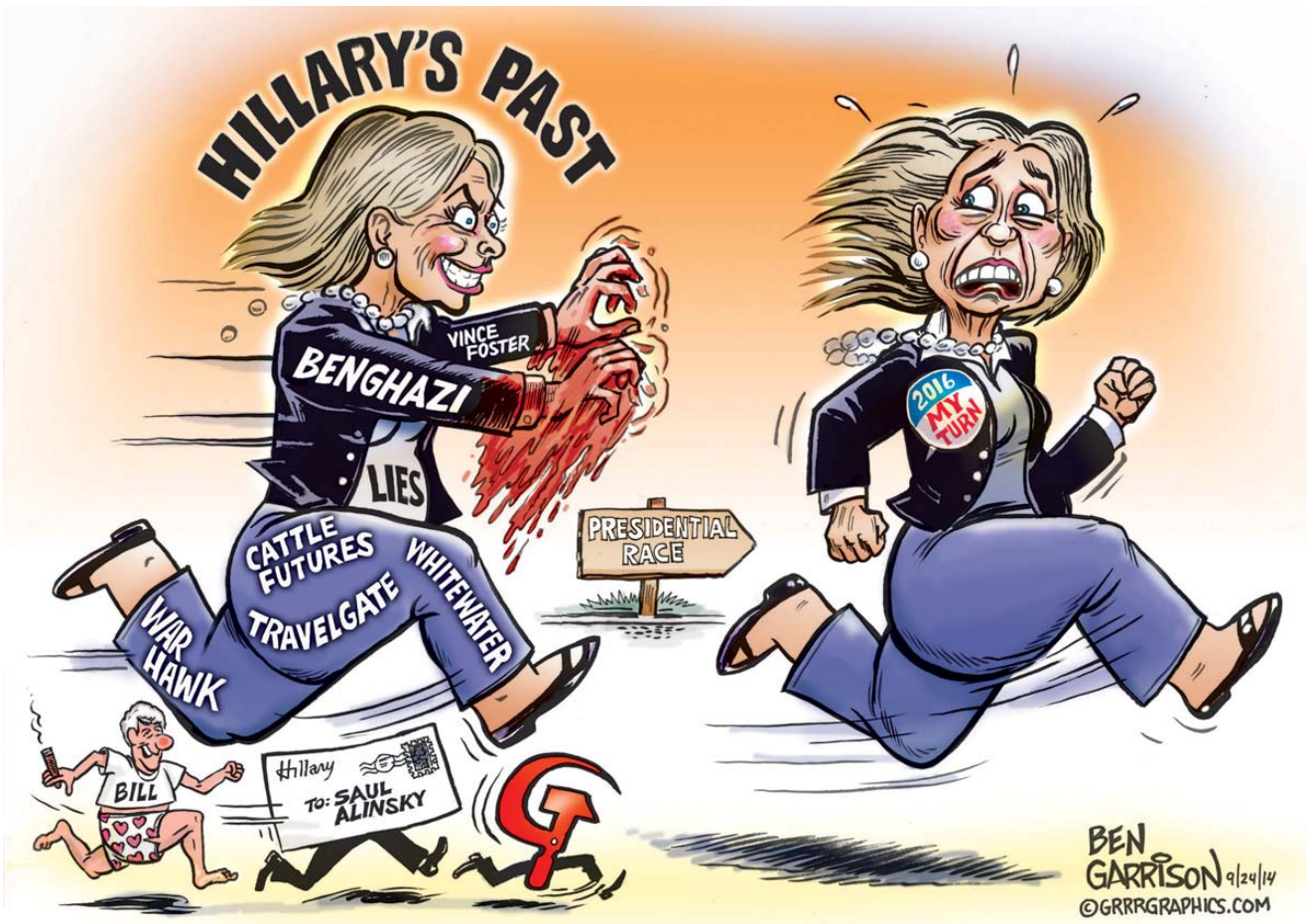
Q: Is your family truly well off?





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Hillary Clinton
2016

