

April 26, 2015

The last few months have been an amazing period in the American left's presidential politics. It is plain that a sizable portion of Democrats are not enthused with Hillary Clinton. But, they've let the Clintons suck the air out of any other campaign and now are trying to figure out how to extricate themselves. We began noting this with items by Maureen Dowd and Ron Fournier on [February 24th](#), [March 9th](#), [March 10th](#), [March 16th](#), And it continues today. We'll let [Ron Fournier](#), who has been in the anti-Clinton trenches for awhile, start us off. [Gennifer Flowers](#). [Cattle futures](#). [The White House travel office](#). [Rose Law Firm files](#). [The Lincoln Bedroom](#). [Monica Lewinsky](#). And now, the Clinton Foundation. What ties these stories together is the predictable, paint-by-numbers response from the Bill and Hillary Clinton political operation.

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What did donors expect from the Clintons? Did they receive favors in return? Why did the Clintons do business with countries that finance terrorism and suppress the rights of women? Did family and friends benefit from their ties to the foundation? And, in a broader sense, what do the operations of the foundation say about Hillary Clinton's management ability and ethical grounding? ...

The [NY Times report](#) about Bill Clinton's 2005 mission to Kazakhstan attracted a lot of media attention this week. The Clinton Group sure vacuumed up a lot of cash during that trip.

... At the heart of the tale are several men, leaders of the Canadian mining industry, who have been major donors to the charitable endeavors of former President [Bill Clinton](#) and his family. Members of that group built, financed and eventually sold off to the Russians a company that would become known as Uranium One.

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*be approved by a committee composed of representatives from a number of United States government agencies. Among the agencies that eventually signed off was the State Department, then headed by Mr. Clinton's wife, Hillary Rodham Clinton.*

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*And shortly after the Russians announced their intention to acquire a majority stake in Uranium One, Mr. Clinton received \$500,000 for a Moscow speech from a Russian investment bank with links to the Kremlin that was promoting Uranium One stock.*

*At the time, both Rosatom and the United States government made promises intended to ease concerns about ceding control of the company's assets to the Russians. Those promises have been repeatedly broken, records show.*

*The New York Times's examination of the Uranium One deal is based on dozens of interviews, as well as a review of public records and securities filings in Canada, Russia and the United States. Some of the connections between Uranium One and the Clinton Foundation were unearthed by Peter Schweizer, a former fellow at the right-leaning Hoover Institution and author of the forthcoming book "Clinton Cash." Mr. Schweizer provided a preview of material in the book to *The Times*, which scrutinized his information and built upon it with its own reporting. ...*

Then ABC News reported Bill Clinton's speaking fees more than doubled when his wife became SecState.

*After his wife became Secretary of State, former President Bill Clinton began to collect speaking fees that often doubled or tripled what he had been charging earlier in his post White House years, bringing in millions of dollars from groups that included several with interests pending before the State Department, an ABC News review of financial disclosure records shows.*

*Where he once had drawn \$150,000 for a typical address in the years following his presidency, Clinton saw a succession of staggering paydays for speeches in 2010 and 2011, including \$500,000 paid by a Russian investment bank and \$750,000 to address a telecom conference in China.*

*"It's unusual to see a former president's speaking fee go up over time," said Richard Painter, who served as chief ethics lawyer in the White House Counsel's office under President George W. Bush. "I must say I'm surprised that he raised his fees. There's no prohibition on his raising it. But it does create some appearance problems if he raises his fee after she becomes Secretary of State."*

*Public speaking became a natural and lucrative source of income for Clinton when he returned to private life in 2001. Records from disclosure forms filed by Hillary Clinton during her tenures in the U.S. Senate and then in the Obama Administration indicate he took in more than \$105 million in speech fees during that 14 year period. ...*

New York Magazine calls it Bill Clinton's disastrous post presidency.

*The qualities of an effective presidency do not seem to transfer onto a post-presidency. Jimmy Carter was an ineffective president who became an exemplary post-president. (That's a stretch. The guy can't shut up. - Pckrhd) Bill Clinton appears to be the reverse. All sorts of unproven worst-case-scenario questions float around the web of connections between Bill's private work, Hillary Clinton's public role as secretary of State, the Clintons' quasi-public charity, and Hillary's noncompliant email system. But the best-case scenario is bad enough: The Clintons have been disorganized and greedy.*

*The news today about the Clintons all fleshes out, in one way or another, their lack of interest in policing serious conflict-of-interest problems that arise in their overlapping roles:*

- *The New York Times has a report about the State Department's decision to approve the sale of Uranium mines to a Russian company that donated \$2.35 million to the Clinton Global Initiative, and that a Russian investment bank promoting the deal paid Bill \$500,000 for a speech in Moscow.*
- *The Washington Post reports that Bill Clinton has received \$26 million in speaking fees from entities that also donated to the Clinton Global Initiative.*
- *The Washington Examiner reports, "Twenty-two of the 37 corporations nominated for a prestigious State Department award — and six of the eight ultimate winners — while Hillary Clinton was Secretary of State were also donors to the Clinton family foundation."*
- *And Reuters reports, "Hillary Clinton's family's charities are refiling at least five annual tax returns after a Reuters review found errors in how they reported donations from governments, and said they may audit other Clinton Foundation returns in case of other errors."*

For our fifth leftist to denigrate the Clintons we have Chris Cillizza of the Washington Post posting on all the stories that have come out recently.

*... in terms of raising the "I don't know if I want to go through all of this again" sentiment among average people, this collection of stories is just terrible. It reminds them -- or, if it doesn't remind them yet, it will -- of all the things in the 1990s that they didn't like and certainly don't want to go through again. Obviously the top of the mind issue there is Monica Lewinsky but there's Whitewater, the travel office, the Buddhist monks -- and so and so forth.*

*"It's the Clinton way: raking in millions from foreign governments behind closed doors while making promises about transparency that they never intended to keep," said Carly Fiorina, one of the 20 (or so) people likely to run for president on the Republican side. "Have we had enough of a ruling political class that doles out favors to the wealthy and well connected few?"*

*Republicans would be wise to follow Fiorina's example as they strategize the best way to effectively attack Clinton in the campaign to come. While hitting her on her resume or readiness for the office is a loser with the American public, raising questions about her honesty is far more fertile soil.*

*Check out the new Quinnipiac University national poll. More than six in ten (62 percent) of voters said Clinton has "strong leadership qualities." In that same sample, however, less than four in ten (38 percent) said that Clinton was honest and trustworthy. A majority (54 percent) said she's not honest and trustworthy, including 61 percent of independents. ...*

We close with one of our friends, [John Podhoretz](#), who points out the problems the Clintons and Obama have left for their party.

*... Which brings up the Democratic party, its voters, and its overall health. The condition of the party is a complex one. At the presidential level, the results of the past five elections suggest Democrats go into 2016 with a mild structural advantage; it would seem that, all things being equal, they can depend on a nationwide floor around 48 percent, while the GOP floor is probably a point or a point and half below that. Brilliant get-out-the-vote innovations from 2008 and 2012 will doubtless be added to as we head into the coming year.*

*On the other hand, the national condition of the Democratic Party outside the presidential realm is terrible. Since 2009, Democrats are down 60 seats in the House and 14 seats in the Senate. Republicans held 22 governor's mansions in 2009; now they hold 31. Democrats have an astounding 910 fewer state legislators than they did when Barack Obama took office. The GOP has majorities in 67 of the 99 state legislative bodies in the United States, more than at any time since the 1920s.*

*So Democrats go into 2016 in good structural shape for a presidential bid but in horrendous overall shape as a political party when it comes to holding the levers of power everywhere else.*

*Hillary Clinton's ability so far to clear the field—with the exception of a former governor of Maryland who ended office wildly unpopular in his own state—is a mark of the party's sclerosis. Even when George H.W. Bush was running as Ronald Reagan's successor in 1987-88, there were six other serious contenders, five of them figures of note in the party: Senate GOP leader and one-time vice-presidential candidate Bob Dole, the wildly popular Rep. Jack Kemp, former secretary of state Alexander Haig, former Delaware Gov. Pete du Pont, and Pat Robertson. If Bush had stumbled badly, or if scandal had surrounded him, Dole in particular was right there to pick up the slack.*

*That was the mark of a party that had been strengthened rather than weakened by its years in the White House. ...*

The Cartoonists have fun today

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**National Journal**

**[The Questions Hillary Clinton Doesn't Want Answered About the Clinton Foundation](#)**

***I don't know what's in Peter Schweizer's book. But I know what the Clintons are capable of.***

by Ron Fournier

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The [Bill, Hillary & Chelsea Clinton Foundation](#) is both an [admirable](#) charity and a shadow political operation awash in conflicts of interest—a reflection of the power couple who founded it. Bill and Hillary Clinton, like history's most enduring characters, seem to stride through public life with an angel on one shoulder and a devil on the other.

The seedy side of the foundation is a legitimate campaign issue. While the Clintons deserve credit for making foundation donations largely transparent, other activities raise serious questions. They violated an ethics agreement with the Obama White House. Hillary Clinton deleted most emails she sent and received as secretary of State, including any concerning the foundation or its donors.

What did donors expect from the Clintons? Did they receive favors in return? Why did the Clintons do business with countries that finance terrorism and suppress the rights of women? Did [family and friends](#) benefit from their ties to the foundation? And, in a broader sense, what do the operations of the foundation say about Hillary Clinton's management ability and ethical grounding?

These questions are *reportedly* explored by conservative author Peter Schweizer in a soon-to-be-published book, [Clinton Cash: The Untold Story of How and Why Foreign Governments and Businesses Helped Make Bill and Hillary Rich](#). I say "reportedly" because I haven't read the book; I have no idea whether Schweizer reveals any wrongdoing or relevant information. Scheduled for publication May 5, its contents are unknown.

That hasn't stopped the Clintons from denying, deflecting, and demeaning.

"[I'll be] subjected to all kinds of distractions and attacks, and I'm ready for that," Hillary Clinton said when asked about the book while campaigning for the presidency in New Hampshire. "I know that comes, unfortunately, with the territory."

Clever how she casts herself as the victim of a book she hasn't read and of questions she has yet to answer. The Clinton campaign circulated a memo to its supporters Tuesday night with talking points on the book. According to [Politico](#):

In the memo, [Brian] Fallon links to a series of critical reports on Schweizer and the book, including one ThinkProgress post noting that one of Schweizer's sources is a TD Bank press release that was revealed to be fake in 2013. Fallon also details how Schweizer has spoken with Republicans—but apparently not Democrats—about the findings prior to the publication date.

The memo quotes a report by Media Matters For America, the liberal watchdog founded by Clinton ally David Brock, that says Schweizer's Government Accountability Institute has "close ties to a billionaire family funding Sen. Ted Cruz's presidential run. GAI has also received substantial support from groups backed by Charles and David Koch," the libertarian billionaire brothers.

Liberal groups like Media Matters and Correct The Record—a subsidiary of American Bridge, also founded by Brock—have served as a rapid response unit against the book, digging into the author's record and the book's alleged findings.

The issue isn't Hillary Clinton and her ethical shortcuts, Fallon intimates, it's Schweizer. The memo doesn't point to Clinton's detailed defense of the foundation's fundraising process, because she has never given one. It doesn't explain why it's proper for a sitting secretary of State and presidential hopeful to accept foreign donations, because she has never offered an explanation. It doesn't detail the profits secured by her brother and other intimates via the foundation, because Clinton has never owned up to them. It doesn't justify the huge personal and administration expenses charged to the charity, because Clinton has offered none.

Finally, the memo doesn't say whether Clinton's deleted emails involved favors for foundation donors, because—well, we may never know.

"The book relies on distortions of widely available data that the Clinton Foundation already makes public on its own," Fallon writes. "The author attempts to repackage and twist these previously known facts into absurd conspiracy theories."

Who is repackaging and twisting facts into absurd conspiracy theories? I can't say that about Schweitzer; I haven't read his book. But I do know what the Clintons are capable of.

## NY Times

### [Cash Flowed to Clinton Foundation as Russians Pressed for Control of Uranium Company](#)

by Jo Becker and Mike McIntire

The headline in Pravda trumpeted President Vladimir V. Putin's latest coup, its nationalistic fervor recalling an era when its precursor served as the official mouthpiece of the Kremlin: "Russian Nuclear Energy Conquers the World."

The article, in January 2013, detailed how the Russian atomic energy agency, Rosatom, had taken over a Canadian company with uranium-mining stakes stretching from Central Asia to the American West. The deal made Rosatom one of the world's largest uranium producers and brought Mr. Putin closer to his goal of controlling much of the global uranium supply chain.

But the untold story behind that story is one that involves not just the Russian president, but also a former American president and a woman who would like to be the next one.

At the heart of the tale are several men, leaders of the Canadian mining industry, who have been major donors to the charitable endeavors of former President [Bill Clinton](#) and his family. Members of that group built, financed and eventually sold off to the Russians a company that would become known as Uranium One.

Beyond mines in Kazakhstan that are among the most lucrative in the world, the sale gave the Russians control of one-fifth of all uranium production capacity in the United States. Since uranium is considered a strategic asset, with implications for national security, the deal had to be approved by a committee composed of representatives from a number of United States

government agencies. Among the agencies that eventually signed off was the State Department, then headed by Mr. Clinton's wife, [Hillary Rodham Clinton](#).

As the Russians gradually assumed control of Uranium One in three separate transactions from 2009 to 2013, Canadian records show, a flow of cash made its way to the Clinton Foundation. Uranium One's chairman used his family foundation to make four donations totaling \$2.35 million. Those contributions were not publicly disclosed by the Clintons, despite an agreement Mrs. Clinton had struck with the Obama White House to publicly identify all donors. Other people with ties to the company made donations as well.

And shortly after the Russians announced their intention to acquire a majority stake in Uranium One, Mr. Clinton received \$500,000 for a Moscow speech from a Russian investment bank with links to the Kremlin that was promoting Uranium One stock.

At the time, both Rosatom and the United States government made promises intended to ease concerns about ceding control of the company's assets to the Russians. Those promises have been repeatedly broken, records show.

The New York Times's examination of the Uranium One deal is based on dozens of interviews, as well as a review of public records and securities filings in Canada, [Russia](#) and the United States. Some of the connections between Uranium One and the Clinton Foundation were unearthed by Peter Schweizer, a former fellow at the right-leaning Hoover Institution and author of [the forthcoming book "Clinton Cash."](#) Mr. Schweizer provided a preview of material in the book to The Times, which scrutinized his information and built upon it with its own reporting.

Whether the donations played any role in the approval of the uranium deal is unknown. But the episode underscores the special ethical challenges presented by the Clinton Foundation, headed by a former president who relied heavily on foreign cash to accumulate \$250 million in assets even as his wife helped steer American foreign policy as secretary of state, presiding over decisions with the potential to benefit the foundation's donors.

In a statement, Brian Fallon, a spokesman for Mrs. Clinton's presidential campaign, said no one "has ever produced a shred of evidence supporting the theory that Hillary Clinton ever took action as secretary of state to support the interests of donors to the Clinton Foundation." He emphasized that multiple United States agencies, as well as the Canadian government, had signed off on the deal and that, in general, such matters were handled at a level below the secretary. "To suggest the State Department, under then-Secretary Clinton, exerted undue influence in the U.S. government's review of the sale of Uranium One is utterly baseless," he added.

American political campaigns are barred from accepting foreign donations. But foreigners may give to foundations in the United States. In the days since [Mrs. Clinton announced her candidacy](#) for president, the Clinton Foundation has announced changes meant to quell longstanding concerns about potential conflicts of interest in such donations; it has limited donations from foreign governments, with many, like Russia's, barred from giving to all but its health care initiatives. That policy stops short of Mrs. Clinton's agreement with the Obama administration, which prohibited all foreign government donations while she served as the nation's top diplomat.

Either way, the Uranium One deal highlights the limits of such prohibitions. The foundation will continue to accept contributions from foreign individuals and businesses whose interests, like

Uranium One's, may overlap with those of foreign governments, some of which may be at odds with the United States.

When the Uranium One deal was approved, the geopolitical backdrop was far different from today's. The Obama administration was seeking to "reset" strained relations with Russia. The deal was strategically important to Mr. Putin, who shortly after the Americans gave their blessing sat down for a staged interview with Rosatom's chief executive, Sergei Kiriyenko. "Few could have imagined in the past that we would own 20 percent of U.S. reserves," Mr. Kiriyenko told Mr. Putin.

Now, after Russia's annexation of Crimea and aggression in Ukraine, the Moscow-Washington relationship is devolving toward Cold War levels, a point several experts made in evaluating a deal so beneficial to Mr. Putin, a man known to use energy resources to project power around the world.

"Should we be concerned? Absolutely," said Michael McFaul, who served under Mrs. Clinton as the American ambassador to Russia but said he had been unaware of the Uranium One deal until asked about it. "Do we want Putin to have a monopoly on this? Of course we don't. We don't want to be dependent on Putin for anything in this climate."

## **A Seat at the Table**

The path to a Russian acquisition of American uranium deposits began in 2005 in Kazakhstan, where the Canadian mining financier Frank Giustra orchestrated his first big uranium deal, with Mr. Clinton at his side.

The two men had flown aboard Mr. Giustra's private jet to Almaty, Kazakhstan, where they dined with the authoritarian president, Nursultan A. Nazarbayev. Mr. Clinton handed the Kazakh president a propaganda coup when he expressed support for Mr. Nazarbayev's bid to head an international elections monitoring group, undercutting American foreign policy and criticism of Kazakhstan's poor human rights record by, among others, his wife, then a senator.

Within days of the visit, Mr. Giustra's fledgling company, UrAsia Energy Ltd., signed a preliminary deal giving it stakes in three uranium mines controlled by the state-run uranium agency Kazatomprom.

If the Kazakh deal was a major victory, UrAsia did not wait long before resuming the hunt. In 2007, it merged with Uranium One, a South African company with assets in Africa and Australia, in what was described as a \$3.5 billion transaction. The new company, which kept the Uranium One name, was controlled by UrAsia investors including Ian Telfer, a Canadian who became chairman. Through a spokeswoman, Mr. Giustra, whose personal stake in the deal was estimated at about \$45 million, said he sold his stake in 2007.

Soon, Uranium One began to snap up mining companies with assets in the United States. In April 2007, it announced the purchase of a uranium mill in Utah and more than 38,000 acres of uranium exploration properties in four Western states, followed quickly by the acquisition of the Energy Metals Corporation and its uranium holdings in Wyoming, Texas and Utah. That deal made clear that Uranium One was intent on becoming "a powerhouse in the United States uranium sector with the potential to become the domestic supplier of choice for U.S. utilities," the company declared.



Still, the company's story was hardly front-page news in the United States — until early 2008, in the midst of Mrs. Clinton's failed presidential campaign, when The Times published an article revealing the 2005 trip's link to Mr. Giustra's Kazakhstan mining deal. It also reported that several months later, Mr. Giustra had [donated \\$31.3 million](#) to Mr. Clinton's foundation.

Though the article quoted the former head of Kazatomprom, Moukhtar Dzhakishev, as saying that the deal required government approval and was discussed at a dinner with the president, Mr. Giustra insisted that it was a private transaction, with no need for Mr. Clinton's influence with Kazakh officials. He described his relationship with the former American president as motivated solely by a shared interest in philanthropy.

As if to underscore the point, five months later Mr. Giustra held a fund-raiser for the Clinton Giustra Sustainable Growth Initiative, a project aimed at fostering progressive environmental and labor practices in the natural resources industry, to which he had pledged \$100 million. The star-studded gala, at a conference center in Toronto, featured performances by Elton John and Shakira and celebrities like Tom Cruise, John Travolta and Robin Williams encouraging contributions from the many so-called F.O.F.s — Friends of Frank — in attendance, among them Mr. Telfer. In all, the evening generated \$16 million in pledges, according to an article in The Globe and Mail.

"None of this would have been possible if Frank Giustra didn't have a remarkable combination of caring and modesty, of vision and energy and iron determination," Mr. Clinton told those gathered, adding: "I love this guy, and you should, too."

But what had been a string of successes was about to hit a speed bump.

## **Arrest and Progress**

By June 2009, a little over a year after the star-studded evening in Toronto, Uranium One's stock was in free-fall, down 40 percent. Mr. Dzhakishev, the head of Kazatomprom, had just been arrested on charges that he illegally sold uranium deposits to foreign companies, including at least some of those won by Mr. Giustra's UrAsia and now owned by Uranium One.

Publicly, the company tried to reassure shareholders. Its chief executive, Jean Nortier, issued a confident statement calling the situation a "complete misunderstanding." He also publicly contradicted Mr. Giustra's contention that the uranium mining deal had not required government blessing. "When you do a transaction in Kazakhstan, you need the government's approval," he said, adding that UrAsia had indeed received that approval.

But privately, Uranium One officials were worried they could lose their joint mining ventures. American diplomatic cables made public by WikiLeaks also reflect concerns that Mr. Dzhakishev's arrest was part of a Russian power play for control of Kazakh uranium assets.

At the time, Russia was already eyeing a stake in Uranium One, Rosatom company documents show. Rosatom officials say they were seeking to acquire mines around the world because Russia lacks sufficient domestic reserves to meet its own industry needs.

It was against this backdrop that the Vancouver-based Uranium One pressed the American Embassy in Kazakhstan, as well as Canadian diplomats, to take up its cause with Kazakh officials, according to the American cables.

“We want more than a statement to the press,” Paul Clarke, a Uranium One executive vice president, told the embassy’s energy officer on June 10, the officer reported in a cable. “That is simply chitchat.” What the company needed, Mr. Clarke said, was official written confirmation that the licenses were still valid.

The American Embassy ultimately reported to the secretary of state, Mrs. Clinton. Though the Clarke cable was copied to her, it was given wide circulation, and it is unclear if she would have read it; the Clinton campaign did not address questions about the cable.

What is clear is that the embassy acted, with the cables showing that the unnamed energy officer met with Kazakh officials to discuss the issue on June 10 and 11.

Three days later, a wholly owned subsidiary of Rosatom completed a deal for 17 percent of Uranium One. And within a year, the Russian government would substantially up the ante, with a generous offer to shareholders that would give it a 51 percent controlling stake. But first, Uranium One had to get the American government to sign off on the deal.

## **The Power to Say No**

When a company controlled by the Chinese government sought a 51 percent stake in a tiny Nevada gold mining operation in 2009, it set off a secretive review process in Washington, where officials raised concerns primarily about the mine’s proximity to a military installation, but also about the potential for minerals at the site, including uranium, to come under Chinese control. The officials killed the deal.

Such is the power of the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States. The committee comprises some of the most powerful members of the cabinet, including the attorney general, the secretaries of the Treasury, Defense, Homeland Security, Commerce and Energy, and the secretary of state. They are charged with reviewing any deal that could result in foreign control of an American business or asset deemed important to national security.

The national security issue at stake in the Uranium One deal was not primarily about [nuclear weapons](#) proliferation; the United States and Russia had for years cooperated on that front, with Russia sending enriched fuel from decommissioned warheads to be used in American nuclear power plants in return for raw uranium. Instead, it concerned American dependence on foreign uranium sources. While the United States gets one-fifth of its electrical power from nuclear plants, it produces only around 20 percent of the uranium it needs, and most plants have only 18 to 36 months of reserves, according to Marin Katusa, author of “The Colder War: How the Global Energy Trade Slipped From America’s Grasp.”

“The Russians are easily winning the uranium war, and nobody’s talking about it,” said Mr. Katusa, who explores the implications of the Uranium One deal in his book. “It’s not just a domestic issue but a foreign policy issue, too.”

When ARMZ, an arm of Rosatom, took its first 17 percent stake in Uranium One in 2009, the two parties signed an agreement, found in securities filings, to seek the foreign investment committee’s review. But it was the 2010 deal, giving the Russians a controlling 51 percent stake, that set off alarm bells. Four members of the House of Representatives signed a letter expressing concern. Two more began pushing legislation to kill the deal.

Senator John Barrasso, a Republican from Wyoming, where Uranium One's largest American operation was, wrote to President Obama, saying the deal "would give the Russian government control over a sizable portion of America's uranium production capacity."

"Equally alarming," Mr. Barrasso added, "this sale gives ARMZ a significant stake in uranium mines in Kazakhstan."

Uranium One's shareholders were also alarmed, and were "afraid of Rosatom as a Russian state giant," Sergei Novikov, a company spokesman, recalled in an interview. He said Rosatom's chief, Mr. Kiriyyenko, sought to reassure Uranium One investors, promising that Rosatom would not break up the company and would keep the same management, including Mr. Telfer, the chairman. Another Rosatom official said publicly that it did not intend to increase its investment beyond 51 percent, and that it envisioned keeping Uranium One a public company

American nuclear officials, too, seemed eager to assuage fears. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission wrote to Senator Barrasso assuring him that American uranium would be preserved for domestic use, regardless of who owned it.

"In order to export uranium from the United States, Uranium One Inc. or ARMZ would need to apply for and obtain a specific NRC license authorizing the export of uranium for use reactor fuel," the letter said.

Still, the ultimate authority to approve or reject the Russian acquisition rested with the cabinet officials on the foreign investment committee, including Mrs. Clinton — whose husband was collecting millions of dollars in donations from people associated with Uranium One.

## **Undisclosed Donations**

Before Mrs. Clinton could assume her post as secretary of state, the White House demanded that she sign a memorandum of understanding placing limits on her husband's foundation's activities. To avoid the perception of conflicts of interest, beyond the ban on foreign government donations, the foundation was required to publicly disclose all contributors.

To judge from those disclosures — which list the contributions in ranges rather than precise amounts — the only Uranium One official to give to the Clinton Foundation was Mr. Telfer, the chairman, and the amount was relatively small: no more than \$250,000, and that was in 2007, before talk of a Rosatom deal began percolating.

But a review of tax records in Canada, where Mr. Telfer has a family charity called the Fernwood Foundation, shows that he donated millions of dollars more, during and after the critical time when the foreign investment committee was reviewing his deal with the Russians. With the Russians offering a special dividend, shareholders like Mr. Telfer stood to profit.

His donations through the Fernwood Foundation included \$1 million reported in 2009, the year his company appealed to the American Embassy to help it keep its mines in Kazakhstan; \$250,000 in 2010, the year the Russians sought majority control; as well as \$600,000 in 2011; and \$500,000 in 2012. Mr. Telfer said that his donations had nothing to do with his business dealings, and that he had never discussed Uranium One with Mr. or Mrs. Clinton. He said he had given the money because he wanted to support Mr. Giustra's charitable endeavors with Mr. Clinton. "Frank and I have been friends and business partners for almost 20 years," he said.

The Clinton campaign left it to the foundation to reply to questions about the Fernwood donations; the foundation did not provide a response.

Mr. Telfer's undisclosed donations came in addition to between \$1.3 million and \$5.6 million in contributions, which were reported, from a constellation of people with ties to Uranium One or UrAsia, the company that originally acquired Uranium One's most valuable asset: the Kazakhstan mines. Without those assets, the Russians would have had no interest in the deal: "It wasn't the goal to buy the Wyoming mines. The goal was to acquire the Kazakh assets, which are very good," Mr. Novikov, the Rosatom spokesman, said in an interview.

Amid this influx of Uranium One-connected money, Mr. Clinton was invited to speak in Moscow in June 2010, the same month Rosatom struck its deal for a majority stake in Uranium One.

The \$500,000 fee — among Mr. Clinton's highest — was paid by Renaissance Capital, a Russian investment bank with ties to the Kremlin that has invited world leaders, including Tony Blair, the former British prime minister, to speak at its annual investor conference.

Renaissance Capital analysts talked up Uranium One's stock, assigning it a "buy" rating and saying in a July 2010 research report that it was "the best play" in the uranium markets. In addition, Renaissance Capital turned up that same year as a major donor, along with Mr. Telfer and Mr. Giustra, to a small medical charity in Colorado run by a friend of Mr. Giustra's. In a newsletter to supporters, the friend credited Mr. Giustra with helping get donations from "businesses around the world."

A Renaissance Capital representative would not comment on the genesis of Mr. Clinton's speech to an audience that included leading Russian officials, or on whether it was connected to the Rosatom deal. According to a Russian government news service, Mr. Putin personally thanked Mr. Clinton for speaking.

A person with knowledge of the Clinton Foundation's fund-raising operation, who requested anonymity to speak candidly about it, said that for many people, the hope is that money will in fact buy influence: "Why do you think they are doing it — because they love them?" But whether it actually does is another question. And in this case, there were broader geopolitical pressures that likely came into play as the United States considered whether to approve the Rosatom-Uranium One deal.

## **Diplomatic Considerations**

If doing business with Rosatom was good for those involved with the Uranium One deal, engaging with Russia was also a priority of the incoming Obama administration, which was hoping for a new era of cooperation as Mr. Putin relinquished the presidency — if only for a term — to Dmitri A. Medvedev.

"The assumption was we could engage Russia to further core U.S. national security interests," said Mr. McFaul, the former ambassador.

It started out well. The two countries made progress on nuclear proliferation issues, and expanded use of Russian territory to resupply American forces in Afghanistan. Keeping Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon was among the United States' top priorities, and in June 2010 Russia signed off on a United Nations resolution imposing tough new sanctions on that country.

Two months later, the deal giving ARMZ a controlling stake in Uranium One was submitted to the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States for review. Because of the secrecy surrounding the process, it is hard to know whether the participants weighed the desire to improve bilateral relations against the potential risks of allowing the Russian government control over the biggest uranium producer in the United States. The deal was ultimately approved in October, following what two people involved in securing the approval said had been a relatively smooth process.

Not all of the committee's decisions are personally debated by the agency heads themselves; in less controversial cases, deputy or assistant secretaries may sign off. But experts and former committee members say Russia's interest in Uranium One and its American uranium reserves seemed to warrant attention at the highest levels.

"This deal had generated press, it had captured the attention of Congress and it was strategically important," said Richard Russell, who served on the committee during the George W. Bush administration. "When I was there invariably any one of those conditions would cause this to get pushed way up the chain, and here you had all three."

And Mrs. Clinton brought a reputation for hawkishness to the process; as a senator, she was a vocal critic of the committee's approval of a deal that would have transferred the management of major American seaports to a company based in the United Arab Emirates, and as a presidential candidate she had advocated legislation to strengthen the process.

The Clinton campaign spokesman, Mr. Fallon, said that in general, these matters did not rise to the secretary's level. He would not comment on whether Mrs. Clinton had been briefed on the matter, but he gave The Times a statement from the former assistant secretary assigned to the foreign investment committee at the time, Jose Fernandez. While not addressing the specifics of the Uranium One deal, Mr. Fernandez said, "Mrs. Clinton never intervened with me on any C.F.I.U.S. matter."

Mr. Fallon also noted that if any agency had raised national security concerns about the Uranium One deal, it could have taken them directly to the president.

Anne-Marie Slaughter, the State Department's director of policy planning at the time, said she was unaware of the transaction — or the extent to which it made Russia a dominant uranium supplier. But speaking generally, she urged caution in evaluating its wisdom in hindsight.

"Russia was not a country we took lightly at the time or thought was cuddly," she said. "But it wasn't the adversary it is today."

That renewed adversarial relationship has raised concerns about European dependency on Russian energy resources, including nuclear fuel. The unease reaches beyond diplomatic circles. In Wyoming, where Uranium One equipment is scattered across his 35,000-acre ranch, John Christensen is frustrated that repeated changes in corporate ownership over the years led to French, South African, Canadian and, finally, Russian control over mining rights on his property.

"I hate to see a foreign government own mining rights here in the United States," he said. "I don't think that should happen."

Mr. Christensen, 65, noted that despite assurances by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission that uranium could not leave the country without Uranium One or ARMZ obtaining an export license

— which they do not have — yellowcake from his property was routinely packed into drums and trucked off to a processing plant in Canada.

Asked about that, the commission confirmed that Uranium One has, in fact, shipped yellowcake to Canada even though it does not have an export license. Instead, the transport company doing the shipping, RSB Logistic Services, has the license. A commission spokesman said that “to the best of our knowledge” most of the uranium sent to Canada for processing was returned for use in the United States. A Uranium One spokeswoman, Donna Wichers, said 25 percent had gone to Western Europe and Japan. At the moment, with the uranium market in a downturn, nothing is being shipped from the Wyoming mines.

The “no export” assurance given at the time of the Rosatom deal is not the only one that turned out to be less than it seemed. Despite pledges to the contrary, Uranium One was eventually delisted from the Toronto Stock Exchange and taken private. As of 2013, Rosatom’s subsidiary, ARMZ, owned 100 percent of the company.

## ABC News

### [Bill Clinton Cashed In When Hillary Became Secretary of State](#)

by Matthey Mosk and Brian Ross

After his wife became Secretary of State, former President [Bill Clinton](#) began to collect speaking fees that often doubled or tripled what he had been charging earlier in his post White House years, bringing in millions of dollars from groups that included several with interests pending before the [State Department](#), an ABC News review of financial disclosure records shows.

Where he once had drawn \$150,000 for a typical address in the years following his presidency, Clinton saw a succession of staggering paydays for speeches in 2010 and 2011, including \$500,000 paid by a Russian investment bank and \$750,000 to address a telecom conference in [China](#).

"It's unusual to see a former president's speaking fee go up over time," said Richard Painter, who served as chief ethics lawyer in the White House Counsel's office under President George W. Bush. "I must say I'm surprised that he raised his fees. There's no prohibition on his raising it. But it does create some appearance problems if he raises his fee after she becomes Secretary of State."

Public speaking became a natural and lucrative source of income for Clinton when he returned to private life in 2001. Records from disclosure forms filed by [Hillary Clinton](#) during her tenures in the U.S. Senate and then in the Obama Administration indicate he took in more than \$105 million in speech fees during that 14 year period. That steady flow of income has come under scrutiny in recent days, as it formed an element of a book by author and conservative think tank fellow Peter Schweizer called "Clinton Cash," due for release in coming days. ABC News received an advanced copy of the book, which highlights instances where domestic and foreign companies with pending interests before the State Department made large donations to the Clinton's charitable enterprises or, in some cases, helped underwrite the former president's speeches. The book offers no proof that Hillary Clinton took any direct action to benefit the groups and interests that were paying her husband. An independent review of source material by ABC News uncovered errors in the book, including an instance where paid and unpaid

speaking appearances were conflated. Schweizer said the errors would be corrected. But those same records supported the premise that former [President Clinton](#) accepted speaking fees from numerous companies and individuals with interests pending before the State Department. A spokesman for Hillary Clinton's campaign did not respond Wednesday to requests for comment from ABC News, but the campaign's leadership has been very aggressive in attacking the premise and content of the book. [John Podesta](#), the campaign chairman, told PBS, "He's cherry-picked information that's been disclosed and woven a bunch of conspiracy theories about it."

During her first visit to New Hampshire as a [presidential candidate](#) Monday, Hillary Clinton brushed off other finance-related allegations referenced in "Clinton Cash" about the [Clinton Foundation](#)'s acceptance of donations from foreign governments, dismissing them as being a "distraction" from the issues of her campaign.

"Well, we're back into the political season and therefore we will be subjected to all kinds of distractions and attacks and I'm ready for that. I know that that comes unfortunately with the territory," Clinton told reporters.

When Hillary Clinton took over as Secretary of State, Bill Clinton's attorney, David E. Kendall, drafted guidelines intended to help him avoid conflicts as he continued to accept payment for speeches. "I am writing to describe the voluntary steps, above and beyond the requirements of law and ethics regulations, that President Clinton intends to take to assist Senator Clinton to avoid even the appearance of a conflict of interest with her duties as Secretary of State," Kendall wrote. The rules required the State Department's ethics officials to review and approve speaking requests. In practice, there were few if any instances where ethics officials inside the State Department asked the former president to refuse to accept payment for a speech. Hundreds of pages of emails, first obtained through a Freedom of Information request by the right-leaning group Judicial Watch, show that requests from Clinton's personal office to the State Department for approval of speaking engagements were almost always granted.

In October 2010, for instance, Clinton accepted \$225,000 to give a speech in [Jamaica](#) sponsored in part by the [Irish](#) telecom firm Digicel. Just weeks earlier, Digicel had submitted an application to USAID, an agency overseen by the State Department, for millions of dollars in grant money to fund a mobile-phone money transfer service in Haiti. Two months after the speech, Digicel received the first installment of grant money. The company's chairman, Irish billionaire Denis O'Brien, was also a major contributor to the Clintons' charitable enterprises. He has not responded to questions sent to him through a Digicel spokesperson. The former president collected large payments from companies with global interests such as Canada's TD Bank, which had an interest in the Keystone Pipeline, a subject of intense lobbying in Washington. In just one week in March of 2011, Clinton collected \$1.3 million giving speeches in Nigeria, Brazil and Grand Cayman. One instance where the State Department did raise questions about a speech recipient came in 2012, when President Clinton requested to speak at an aviation conference sponsored in part by an organization called the Shanghai Airport Authority. The audience was billed as "6,000 business leaders, government officials, and high net worth individuals." The State Department ethics officer, Kathryn Youel Page, flagged the request in an email back to the former president's office indicating the sponsor had ties to the People's Republic of China (PRC) government. "I don't believe we've previously cleared acceptance of fees from PRC-linked entities, but could consider this variation," she wrote.

Clinton did not accept the fee.

## New York Magazine

### The Disastrous Clinton Post-Presidency

by Jonathan Chait

The qualities of an effective presidency do not seem to transfer onto a post-presidency. Jimmy Carter was an ineffective president who became an exemplary post-president. Bill Clinton appears to be the reverse. All sorts of unproven worst-case-scenario questions float around the web of connections between Bill's private work, Hillary Clinton's public role as secretary of State, the Clintons' quasi-public charity, and Hillary's noncompliant email system. But the best-case scenario is bad enough: The Clintons have been disorganized and greedy.

The news today about the Clintons all fleshes out, in one way or another, their lack of interest in policing serious conflict-of-interest problems that arise in their overlapping roles:

- The [New York Times](#) has a report about the State Department's decision to approve the sale of Uranium mines to a Russian company that donated \$2.35 million to the Clinton Global Initiative, and that a Russian investment bank promoting the deal paid Bill \$500,000 for a speech in Moscow.
- The [Washington Post](#) reports that Bill Clinton has received \$26 million in speaking fees from entities that also donated to the Clinton Global Initiative.
- The [Washington Examiner](#) reports, "[Twenty-two of the 37](#) corporations nominated for a prestigious State Department award — and six of the eight ultimate winners — while Hillary Clinton was Secretary of State were also donors to the Clinton family foundation."
- And [Reuters](#) reports, "Hillary Clinton's family's charities are refiling at least five annual tax returns after a Reuters review found errors in how they reported donations from governments, and said they may audit other Clinton Foundation returns in case of other errors."

The Clinton campaign is [batting down](#) the darkest and most conspiratorial interpretation of these stories, and where this all leads remains to be seen. But the most positive interpretation is not exactly good.

When you are a power couple consisting of a former president and a current secretary of State and likely presidential candidate, you have the ability to raise a lot of money for charitable purposes that can do a lot of good. But some of the potential sources of donations will be looking to get something in return for their money other than moral satisfaction or the chance to hobnob with celebrities. Some of them want preferential treatment from the State Department, and others want access to a potential future Clinton administration. To run a private operation where Bill Clinton will deliver a speech for a (huge) fee and a charity that raises money from some of the same clients is a difficult situation to navigate. To overlay that fraught situation onto Hillary's ongoing and likely future government service makes it all much harder.

And yet the Clintons paid little to no attention to this problem. [Nicholas Confessore](#) described their operation as "a sprawling concern, supervised by a rotating board of old Clinton hands, vulnerable to distraction and threatened by conflicts of interest. It ran multimillion-dollar deficits for several years, despite vast amounts of money flowing in." Indeed, as [Ryan Lizza](#) reported in 2012, Bill Clinton seemed to see the nexus between his role and his wife's as a positive rather than a negative:



Regardless of Bill Clinton's personal feelings about Obama, it didn't take him long to see the advantages of an Obama Presidency. More than anyone, he pushed Hillary to take the job of Secretary of State. "President Clinton was a big supporter of the idea," an intimate of the Clintons told me. "He advocated very strongly for it and arguably was the tie-breaking reason she took the job." For one thing, having his spouse in that position didn't hurt his work at the Clinton Global Initiative. He invites foreign leaders to the initiative's annual meeting, and her prominence in the Administration can be an asset in attracting foreign donors. "Bill Clinton's been able to continue to be the Bill Clinton we know, in large part because of his relationship with the White House and because his wife is the Secretary of State," the Clinton associate continued. "It worked out very well for him. That may be a very cynical way to look at it, but that's a fact. A lot of the stuff he's doing internationally is aided by his level of access."

The Obama administration [wanted](#) Hillary Clinton to use official government email. She didn't. The Obama administration also [demanded](#) that the Clinton Foundation disclose all its donors while she served as Secretary of State. It didn't comply with that request, either.

The Clintons' charitable initiatives were a kind of quasi-government run by themselves, which was staffed by their own loyalists and made up the rules as it went along. Their experience running the actual government, with its formal accountability and disclosure, went reasonably well. Their experience running their own privatized mini-state has been a fiasco.

## **Washington Post - The Fix** **[Hillary Clinton has a baggage problem](#)**

by Chris Cillizza

Resize TextThe single biggest threat to Hillary Clinton's chances of being elected president next November -- more so than any one running against her in the Democratic primary or even her future Republican general election opponent -- is a sense among the electorate that the bad of putting another Clinton in office outweighs the good.

What Clinton cannot have -- if she wants to win -- is lots of voters saying some variant of this: "I like her and I think she'd probably be a good president. But, I just don't want to go through all of that stuff again." Which is why today is a not-at-all-good day for Clinton's presidential hopes.

There's this from the New York Times: "[Cash Flowed to Clinton Foundation as Russians Pressed for Control of Uranium Company.](#)"

This from the Post: "[For Clintons, speech income shows how their wealth is intertwined with charity.](#)"

And this from Politico: "[Hillary Clinton struggles to contain media barrage on foreign cash.](#)"

None of these stories are disastrous for Clinton's campaign. Of the three, the Times piece is the most problematic because it draws direct connections between State Department recommendations regarding Russia and donations from aligned business interests to the Clinton Foundation. This paragraph, in particular, is a tough one for Clinton:

As the Russians gradually assumed control of Uranium One in three separate transactions from 2009 to 2013, Canadian records show, a flow of cash made its way to the Clinton Foundation. Uranium One's chairman used his family foundation to make four donations totaling \$2.35 million. Those contributions were not publicly disclosed by the Clintons, despite an agreement Mrs. Clinton had struck with the Obama White House to publicly identify all donors. Other people with ties to the company made donations as well.

The Post story -- by the terrific [Roz Helderman](#) -- provides a much more detailed breakdown of the family's finances than has previously appeared elsewhere -- including the fact that Bill Clinton was paid \$26 million in speech fees "by companies and organizations that are also major donors to the foundation he created after leaving the White House."

Again, not great for the Clintons but also no silver bullet contained therein that would derail her campaign.

But, in terms of raising the "I don't know if I want to go through all of this again" sentiment among average people, this collection of stories is just terrible. It reminds them -- or, if it doesn't remind them yet, it will -- of all the things in the 1990s that they didn't like and certainly don't want to go through again. Obviously the top of the mind issue there is Monica Lewinsky but there's [Whitewater](#), the [travel office](#), the [Buddhist monks](#) -- and so and so forth.

"It's the Clinton way: raking in millions from foreign governments behind closed doors while making promises about transparency that they never intended to keep," said Carly Fiorina, one of the 20 (or so) people likely to run for president on the Republican side. "Have we had enough of a ruling political class that doles out favors to the wealthy and well connected few?"

Republicans would be wise to follow Fiorina's example as they strategize the best way to effectively attack Clinton in the campaign to come. While hitting her on her resume or readiness for the office is a loser with the American public, raising questions about her honesty is far more fertile soil.

Check out the [new Quinnipiac University national poll](#). More than six in ten (62 percent) of voters said Clinton has "strong leadership qualities." In that same sample, however, less than four in ten (38 percent) said that Clinton was honest and trustworthy. A majority (54 percent) said she's not honest and trustworthy, including 61 percent of independents.

That's a remarkable set of findings -- and speaks to the divided mind the public has about the Clintons broadly and Hillary Clinton specifically. There's a widespread belief in her capability to do the job she is running for. There's also widespread distrust in her personally. People admire her but don't know if she's honest.

And *that* is the central problem for Clinton with this series of stories today. It affirms for people that there is always some piece -- or pieces -- of baggage that come with electing the Clintons to anything. It's part of the deal. You don't get one without the other.

Make no mistake: Forcing people to decide whether Clinton's readiness for the job outweighs the fact that it's always something with these people is not the choice the Clinton team wants on the ballot in November 2016.

## Contentions

### [The 'Clinton Cash' Allegations Are a Test of the Democratic Party's Health](#)

by John Podhoretz

The [blockbuster New York Times story](#) detailing the enrichment of Bill Clinton and the Clinton Foundation at the hands of Canadians, Ukrainians, and Russians with specific business before Hillary Clinton's State Department is a political wake-up call for Democrats—but not the one you might think.

The issue isn't how they will respond to this one story, which may or may not have legs, or the next batch of stories due to emerge from Peter Schweizer's soon-to-be-released *Clinton Cash*. The issue is whether they are going to accede, as a party, to Mrs. Clinton walking into the nomination not only because there is an ethical cloud hovering over her from today's stories and the destruction of her private email server but because they really can have no idea what is going to come out about her between now and November 2016. This is why a coronation process is bad news for any party—not only because candidates want to be president but because parties as a whole need to be able to change things up when things go wrong.

One thing about these stories is that they demonstrate the mainstream media have spent the Obama years resolutely not doing their jobs—which means that Hillary Clinton has not actually been vetted the way, say, every major Republican in the race has been. (Marco Rubio and Jeb Bush have been the subject of intense scrutiny from Florida media, Scott Walker from Wisconsin media, Chris Christie from New York-area media, Rick Perry and Ted Cruz from Texas media, Bobby Jindal by Louisiana media, and so on.) This story—the story of the Clinton Foundation overall— has been hiding in plain sight from 2010 onward. Thus, Democratic voters who like her and believe she is the best person for them are operating on the basis of incomplete information owing to a systematic lack of scrutiny by a media largely unwilling (consciously and unconsciously) to do the deep digging into Obama administration troubles—especially during the first term, when such digging might have served the interests of Republicans in 2012.

But here we are. These stories and more are unavoidable now, and the classic Clinton dodges (which I detail today in a [New York Post column](#)) aren't going to work very well in response to them.

Which brings up the Democratic party, its voters, and its overall health. The condition of the party is a complex one. At the presidential level, the results of the past five elections suggest Democrats go into 2016 with a mild structural advantage; it would seem that, all things being equal, they can depend on a nationwide floor around 48 percent, while the GOP floor is probably a point or a point and half below that. Brilliant get-out-the-vote innovations from 2008 and 2012 will doubtless be added to as we head into the coming year.

On the other hand, the national condition of the Democratic Party outside the presidential realm is terrible. Since 2009, Democrats are down 60 seats in the House and 14 seats in the Senate. Republicans held 22 governor's mansions in 2009; now they hold 31. Democrats have an astounding 910 fewer state legislators than they did when Barack Obama took office. The GOP has majorities in 67 of the 99 state legislative bodies in the United States, more than at any time since the 1920s.

So Democrats go into 2016 in good structural shape for a presidential bid but in horrendous overall shape as a political party when it comes to holding the levers of power everywhere else.

Hillary Clinton's ability so far to clear the field—with the exception of a former governor of Maryland who ended office wildly unpopular in his own state—is a mark of the party's sclerosis. Even when George H.W. Bush was running as Ronald Reagan's successor in 1987-88, there were six other serious contenders, five of them figures of note in the party: Senate GOP leader and one-time vice-presidential candidate Bob Dole, the wildly popular Rep. Jack Kemp, former secretary of state Alexander Haig, former Delaware Gov. Pete du Pont, and Pat Robertson. If Bush had stumbled badly, or if scandal had surrounded him, Dole in particular was right there to pick up the slack.

That was the mark of a party that had been strengthened rather than weakened by its years in the White House.

The biggest polling news today—from a [Quinnipiac survey completed before the blockbuster story](#)—indicates that 61 percent of self-described independents find Hillary Clinton “untrustworthy.” That is a dangerous number for her and her party. If everything that has happened and is happening and will probably continue to happen to Hillary Clinton does not surface a challenger or two more threatening to her than Martin O'Malley, the party she will lead in 2016 will be more the wounded animal than the national force.



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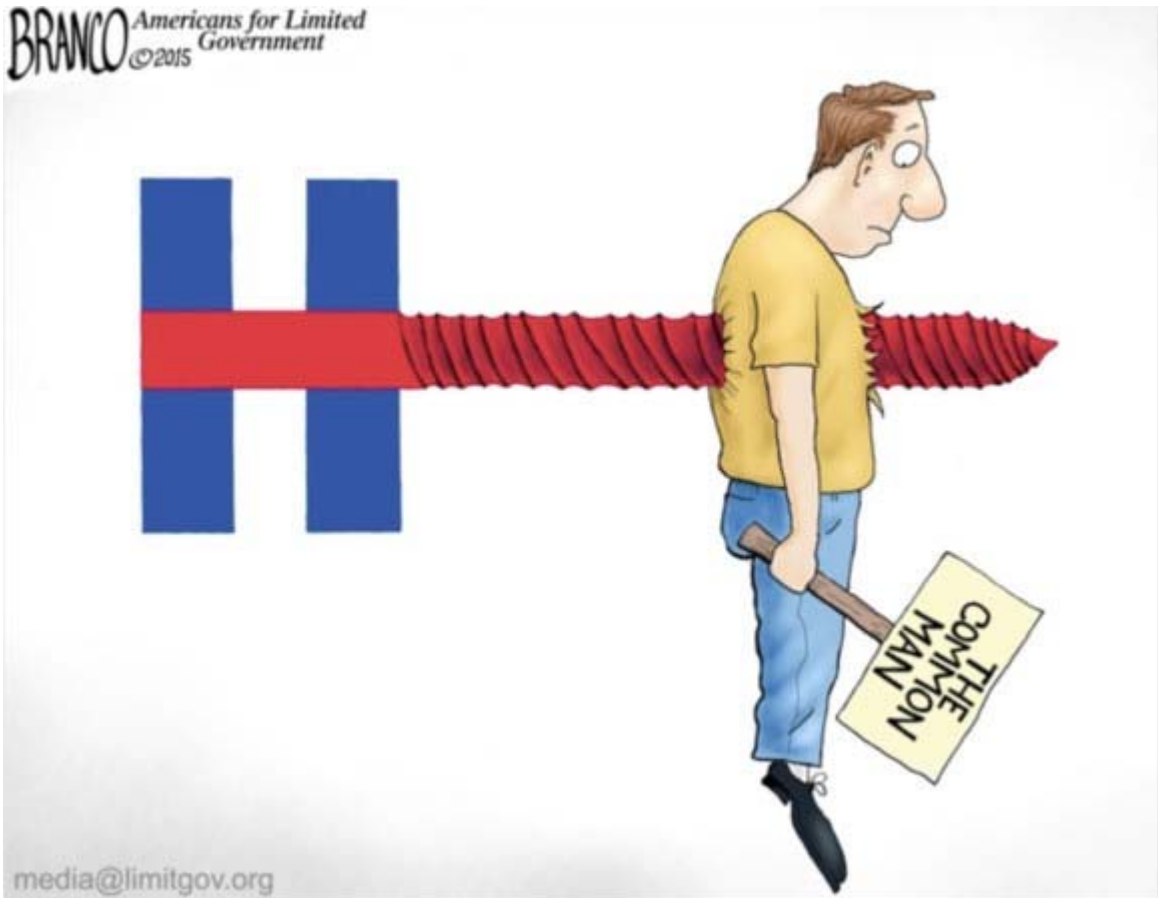


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