

## Public Statement on the Hunter Biden Emails

October 19, 2020

We are all individuals who devoted significant portions of our lives to national security. Some of us served in senior positions in policy departments and agencies, and some of us served in senior positions in the Intelligence Community. Some of us were political appointees, and some were career officials. Many of us worked for presidents of both political parties.

We are all also individuals who see Russia as one of our nation's primary adversaries. All of us have an understanding of the wide range of Russian overt and covert activities that undermine US national security, with some of us knowing Russian behavior intimately, as we worked to defend our nation against it for a career. A few of us worked against Russian information operations in the United States in the last several years.

*Perhaps most important, each of us believes deeply that American citizens should determine the outcome of elections, not foreign governments. All of us agree with the founding fathers' concern about the damage that foreign interference in our politics can do to our democracy.*

It is for all these reasons that we write to say that the arrival on the US political scene of emails purportedly belonging to Vice President Biden's son Hunter, much of it related to his time serving on the Board of the Ukrainian gas company Burisma, has all the classic earmarks of a Russian information operation.

We want to emphasize that we do not know if the emails, provided to the New York Post by President Trump's personal attorney Rudy Giuliani, are genuine or not and that we do not have evidence of Russian involvement -- just that our experience makes us deeply suspicious that the Russian government played a significant role in this case.

*If we are right, this is Russia trying to influence how Americans vote in this election, and we believe strongly that Americans need to be aware of this.*

There are a number of factors that make us suspicious of Russian involvement.

Such an operation would be consistent with Russian objectives, as outlined publicly and recently by the Intelligence Community, to create political chaos in the United States and to deepen political divisions here but also to undermine the candidacy of former Vice President Biden and thereby help the candidacy of President Trump. For the Russians at this point, with Trump down in the polls, there is incentive for Moscow to pull out the stops to do anything possible to help Trump win and/or to weaken Biden should he win. A "laptop op" fits the bill, as the publication of the emails are clearly designed to discredit Biden.

Such an operation would be consistent with some of the key methods Russia has used in its now multi-year operation to interfere in our democracy – the hacking (via cyber operations) and the dumping of accurate information or the distribution of inaccurate or misinformation. Russia did both of these during the 2016 presidential election – judgments shared by the US Intelligence Community, the investigation into Russian activities by Special Counsel Robert Mueller, and the entirety (all Republicans and Democrats) on the current Senate Intelligence Committee.

Such an operation is also consistent with several data points. The Russians, according to media reports and cybersecurity experts, targeted Burisma late last year for cyber collection and gained access to its emails. And Ukrainian politician and businessman Adriy Derkach, identified and sanctioned by the US Treasury Department for being a 10-year Russian agent interfering in the 2020 election, passed purported materials on Burisma and Hunter Biden to Giuliani.

Our view that the Russians are involved in the Hunter Biden email issue is consistent with two other significant data points as well. According to the Washington Post, citing four sources, “U.S. intelligence agencies warned the White House last year that Giuliani was the target of an influence operation by Russian intelligence.”

In addition, media reports say that the FBI has now opened an investigation into Russian involvement in this case. According to USA Today, “...federal authorities are investigating whether the material supplied to the New York Post by Rudy Giuliani...is part of a smoke bomb of disinformation pushed by Russia.”

*We do not know whether these press reports are accurate, but they do suggest concern within Executive Branch departments and agencies that mirrors ours. It is high time that Russia stops interfering in our democracy.*

Signed by,

Jim Clapper  
Former Director of National Intelligence  
Former Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence  
Former Director of the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency  
Former Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency

Mike Hayden  
Former Director, Central Intelligence Agency  
Former Director, National Security Agency  
Former Principal Deputy Director of National Intelligence

Leon Panetta

Former Director, Central Intelligence Agency  
Former Secretary of Defense

John Brennan  
Former Director, Central Intelligence Agency  
Former White House Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Advisor  
Former Director, Terrorism Threat Integration Center  
Former Analyst and Operations Officer, Central Intelligence Agency

Thomas Finger  
Former Deputy Director of National Intelligence for Analysis  
Former Assistant Secretary for Intelligence and Research, Department of State  
Former Chair, National Intelligence Council

Rick Ledgett  
Former Deputy Director, National Security Agency

John McLaughlin  
Former Acting Director, Central Intelligence Agency  
Former Deputy Director, Central Intelligence Agency  
Former Director of Analysis, Central Intelligence Agency  
Former Director, Slavic and Eurasian Analysis, Central Intelligence Agency

Michael Morell  
Former Acting Director, Central Intelligence Agency  
Former Deputy Director, Central Intelligence Agency  
Former Director of Analysis, Central Intelligence Agency

Mike Vickers  
Former Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence  
Former Operations Officer, Central Intelligence Agency

Doug Wise  
Former Deputy Director, Defense Intelligence Agency  
Former Senior CIA Operations Officer

Nick Rasmussen  
Former Director, National Counterterrorism Center

Russ Travers  
Former Acting Director, National Counterterrorism Center  
Former Deputy Director, National Counterterrorism Center  
Former Analyst of the Soviet Union and Russia, Defense Intelligence Agency

Andy Liepman

Former Deputy Director, National Counterterrorism Center  
Former Senior Intelligence Officer, Central Intelligence Agency

John Moseman

Former Chief of Staff, Central Intelligence Agency  
Former Director of Congressional Affairs, Central Intelligence Agency  
Former Minority Staff Director, Senate Select Committee on Intelligence

Larry Pfeiffer

Former Chief of Staff, Central Intelligence Agency  
Former Director, White House Situation Room

Jeremy Bash

Former Chief of Staff, Central Intelligence Agency  
Former Chief of Staff, Department of Defense  
Former Chief Counsel, House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence

Rodney Snyder

Former Chief of Staff, Central Intelligence Agency  
Former Director of Intelligence Programs, National Security Council  
Chief of Station, Central Intelligence Agency

Glenn Gerstell

Former General Counsel, National Security Agency

David B. Buckley

Former Inspector General, Central Intelligence Agency  
Former Democratic Staff Director, House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence  
Former Counterespionage Case Officer, United States Air Force

Nada Bakos

Former Analyst and Targeting Officer, Central Intelligence Agency

Patty Brandmaier

Former Senior Intelligence Officer, Central Intelligence Agency  
Former Deputy Associate Director for Military Affairs, Central Intelligence Agency  
Former Deputy Director of Congressional Affairs, Central Intelligence Agency

James B. Bruce

Former Senior Intelligence Officer, Central Intelligence Agency  
Former Senior Intelligence Officer, National Intelligence Council

Considerable work related to Russia

David Cariens

Former Intelligence Analyst, Central Intelligence Agency  
50+ Years Working in the Intelligence Community

Janice Cariens

Former Operational Support Officer, Central Intelligence Agency

Paul Kolbe

Former Senior Operations Officer, Central Intelligence Agency  
Former Chief, Central Eurasia Division, Central Intelligence Agency

Peter Corsell

Former Analyst, Central Intelligence Agency

Brett Davis

Former Senior Intelligence Officer, Central Intelligence Agency  
Former Deputy Director of the Special Activities Center for Expeditionary Operations, CIA

Roger Zane George

Former National Intelligence Officer

Steven L. Hall

Former Senior Intelligence Officer, Central Intelligence Agency  
Former Chief of Russian Operations, Central Intelligence Agency

Kent Harrington

Former National Intelligence Officer for East Asia, Central Intelligence Agency  
Former Director of Public Affairs, Central Intelligence Agency  
Former Chief of Station, Central Intelligence Agency  
Former Analyst, Central Intelligence Agency

Don Hepburn

Former Senior National Security Executive

Timothy D. Kilbourn

Former Dean, Sherman Kent School of Intelligence Analysis, Central Intelligence Agency  
Former PDB Briefer to President George W. Bush, Central Intelligence Agency

Ron Marks

Former Officer, Central Intelligence Agency  
Twice former staff of the Republican Majority Leader

Jonna Hiestand Mendez  
Technical Operations Officer, Central Intelligence Agency

Emile Nakhleh  
Former Director of the Political Islam Strategic Analysis Program, Central Intelligence Agency  
Former Senior Intelligence Analyst, Central Intelligence Agency

Gerald A. O'Shea  
Senior Operations Officer, Central Intelligence Agency  
Served four tours as Chief of Station, Central Intelligence Agency

David Priess  
Former Analyst and Manager, Central Intelligence Agency  
Former PDB Briefer, Central Intelligence Agency

Pam Purcilly  
Former Deputy Director of Analysis, Central Intelligence Agency  
Former Director of the Office of Russian and European Analysis, Central Intelligence Agency  
Former PDB Briefer to President George W. Bush, Central Intelligence Agency

Marc Polymeropoulos  
Former Senior Operations Officer, Central Intelligence Agency  
Former Acting Chief of Operations for Europe and Eurasia, Central Intelligence Agency

Chris Savos  
Former Senior Intelligence Officer, Central Intelligence Officer

Nick Shapiro  
Former Deputy Chief of Staff and Senior Advisor to the Director, Central Intelligence Agency

John Sipher  
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Former Deputy Chief of Russian Operations, Central Intelligence Agency

Stephen Slick  
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Cynthia Strand  
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Kristin Wood

Former Senior Intelligence Officer, Central Intelligence Agency

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In addition, nine additional former IC officers who cannot be named publicly also support the arguments in this letter.