

Broadening the Russia Investigations: A Baker's Dozen of Reasons Why the Probes Must Have a Bipartisan Focus

Ample evidence exists of illicit and/or damaging Russian efforts involving the Kremlin's interference in American governmental operations, domestic politics, the U.S. economy and often to the detriment of America's national security.

Whatever activities Vladimir Putin's regime undertook in this regard with respect to the 2016 elections pale by comparison with – *and can only be properly understood in the context of* – this larger pattern *involving both Republicans and Democrats*. Consequently, if Congress is to perform the required due diligence and oversight with respect to the Kremlin's subversive activities in this country, ***the focus of the present investigations – and perhaps others – must be made truly bipartisan.***

Here are 13 examples of topics that should be addressed in such a properly expanded focus:

1. **Russian interference in the 2012 Election.** On March 26, 2012, President Obama privately asked then-Russian President Dmitri Medvedev to relay to Vladimir Putin that he would have “more flexibility” after the election “on all these issues but particularly missile defense” if Putin would just “give me space” in the meantime.
2. **Russian penetration of New York Democratic Party machine.** In June 2010, the FBI rolled up an 11-person Russian deep-cover agent network. Two of its members had penetrated the New York Democratic Party machine of Hillary Clinton and Chuck Schumer. When the FBI arrested 10 of the spies, then-Secretary of State Clinton whisked them back to Russia in a hastily arranged spy swap, even though FBI investigators wanted to interrogate them further.
3. **Thomas Pickering and Russian and Iranian interests.** Between 2009 and 2012, Hillary Clinton's senior foreign policy advisor, Thomas Pickering, was paid some \$500,000 as a board member of the Russian pipeline firm TMK. During this period, as Pickering advised Clinton on Iran policy and promoted a nuclear deal with Tehran, TMK was selling oil and gas pipelines to Iran. Pickering also was a senior executive with Boeing, which benefited from the Iran deal.
4. **John Podesta and \$35 million from a Russian industrial espionage firm.** While advising Hillary Clinton in 2011, John Podesta joined the board of a small energy company in Massachusetts that, two months later, received \$35 million from Rusnano, a Russian investment firm. Putin created Rusnano by decree for the purpose of committing industrial espionage. Rusnano CEO Anatoly Chubais, was a major figure in the creation of the Russian gangster-state in 1990s and was close to the Bill Clinton administration, whose White House Chief of Staff was John Podesta. Podesta subsequently joined the Obama White House as senior counselor in 2014, but did not declare his Rusnano business connection. That same year, the FBI issued an “extraordinary warning” about Rusnano. Podesta went on to become Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign manager.

5. **Tony Podesta lobbied for criminal Russian bank.** John's brother, lobbyist Tony Podesta, John's, took \$170,000 over six months in payments from a sanctioned Russian bank, Sberbank (and offshore subsidiaries). The money was for lobbying the U.S. to lift sanctions on Sberbank in 2016, while John Podesta ran Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign.
6. **Podesta Group lobbied for same pro-Kremlin Ukrainians as Manafort.** The Podesta Group, founded by John and Tony and headed by Tony, took \$900,000 in payments from what *Politico* calls "pro-Russian Ukrainian politicians who also employed former Donald Trump campaign chairman Paul Manafort." The purpose was to conduct influence operations against Congress and federal agencies on behalf of the pro-Putin figures. The Trump campaign's liaison to the RNC in 2016, Rick Gates, connected the Podesta Group with the European Centre for a Modern Ukraine, a non-profit whose board originally contained Ukrainian members of parliament from the pro-Russian party." The lobbying ended in 2014 when Ukraine's pro-Putin president, Viktor Yanukovich, fled to Moscow.
7. **Uranium One: Sale of 20% of US Uranium Production to Russia.** Uranium One was owned by Frank Giustra, a close friend and business partner of former President Bill Clinton. Then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton approved the company's sale to the Russian nuclear agency, Rosatom, giving Putin's nuclear weapons monopoly ownership of 20% of US annual uranium production. Sberbank, which hired lobbyist Tony Podesta, was the lead financial institution involved in the transaction. Tony Podesta's firm also represented Uranium One before the State Department in 2012 and 2015. Giustra and others tied to the sale donated \$145 million to the Clinton Foundation.
8. **David and Simon Reuben.** Two British billionaires who made a fortune with Russian gangster-oligarchs during the latter's so-called "Aluminum Wars," the Reubens have long been tied to organized crime figures. They formed a joint venture with gangster-tycoon Oleg Deripaska (with whom they later had a falling out) and Lev and Mikhail Chernoi, who are linked to the Russian Mafia. The Reubens raised money for the Clinton Foundation.
9. **Viktor Pinchuk** is a pro-Kremlin Ukrainian oligarch with a decade-long relationship with the Clintons. He gave to both the Clinton and Trump campaigns. He has long sought to be accepted as a broker between the U.S. and Putin. His company, Interpipe, provides gas and oil pipelines to Iran. He is reported to be the largest funder of the Clinton Foundation.
10. **Hunter Biden and the pro-Kremlin Ukrainian oligarch.** In 2014, former Vice President Biden's son, Hunter, joined the board of Burisma, a Ukrainian gas company. Burisma is headed by a former minister of ousted Kremlin loyalist Viktor Yanukovich and is under British investigation for international money laundering.
11. **Hillary Clinton 'Reset' Partner Medvedev, now a focal point of Russian corruption.** As secretary of state, Hillary Clinton bet heavily on Putin surrogate Dmitry Medvedev. Last month, Medvedev's exposure as one of the most corrupt of Putin's inner circle triggered the massive anti-corruption protests across Russia.
12. **Skolkovo industrial espionage and missile development.** Prompted by Clinton Foundation staff and authorized by Hillary Clinton, the State Department in May 2010 facilitated the visit of 28 US high-tech CEOs and venture capitalists (17 of whom were Clinton Foundation donors) to Skolkovo, dubbed "Russia's Silicon Valley." The U.S. Army calls Skolkovo "an overt alternative to clandestine industrial espionage." Skolkovo enabled the transfer of militarily relevant American technologies, including hypersonic engines. The U.S. Air Force

reported last fall that the United States is currently behind Russia and China in developing “high speed maneuvering weapons,” and that Russia’s hypersonic weapons now threaten the continental U.S.

13. **CrowdStrike: Source of the narrative on Russian hacking for Trump.** CrowdStrike is the IT firm owned by a Russian expatriate, Dmitry Alperovich, that first announced that the Russian government “probably” hacked its client, the Democratic National Committee. *Esquire* reported that Alperovich was “surprised” that the DNC wanted to reveal that Russia was the suspected perpetrator. The FBI subsequently made its statement about Russia being the hacking source *based on CrowdStrike’s say-so*, since it was denied access of its own to the compromised DNC servers. Recently CrowdStrike modified and retracted its statements on Russia hacking, but the narrative was already firmly in play.