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# David Olliver

Political news, Tech news and much more

## **Trump Rage: Mass Hysteria, Russophobia, and a Craven Media-How to Create a Modern Witch Hunt**

David Olliver · Friday, April 7th, 2017

### **Mass Hysteria, Russophobia, and the Rage Against Trump: Toward Understanding a Modern Witch Hunt**

Mass hysteria is something that is difficult for modern science to explain.

We have some pretty stark and terrifying examples of hysteria gripping groups of people: the Salem witch trials and the McCarthy hearings to name two of the more prominent ones. But we are hard-pressed to really identify what is happening to people when they come to believe something preposterous en masse and begin behaving like a panicked herd of animals.

But even if we can't fully explain mass hysteria, it seems fair to say that we can propose a third, very American, very modern example of the phenomenon, one that is currently unfolding in the Land of the Free even as we speak: the constant, unending drumbeat that is our national anti-Russia freakout.

And at the center of this maelstrom of malediction is a stark hatred of the newly elected president and his Administration.

There are of course pat explanations that opponents of the Administration on both the left and right are happy to provide, but it might behoove us to take a moment to move beyond the knee-jerk revulsion many people seem to have toward the man himself and dig a little deeper.

### **The Russians Are Coming...?**

It's quite amazing, really, when you stop to consider the way the "Russia hacked the election" narrative and the anti-Trump hatred at its heart is playing out. For one thing, there is still no solid proof of these allegations to this day, some five months following the election. Nothing has been presented by any intelligence agency, nor by any member of either the House or Senate intelligence committees, nor by any reporter, nor by anyone else that in any way comes close to establishing the veracity of such a claim.

Yet witness the pundits, politicians, talk show hosts, actors, musicians, authors, athletes—you name it, every type of person who has a forum with which to reach mass numbers of people—all screeching about Russian hacking and thus the illegitimacy of the Trump presidency.

The only such “proof” that has thus far been presented, upon which all of the purveyors of this hysteria have hung their hats, was a flimsy summary of speculations and accusations, lacking in any kind of solid backing or even logic, that was presented by the Director of National Intelligence James Clapper in early January.

The [document](#) that [known liar](#) Clapper presented with such solemnity and pomp was [mocked relentlessly](#) by people who actually work in cyber-security as the vague fig leaf it was.

But that’s just one example of how this entire narrative is wrong, or at least built on the flimsiest of sand castles of so-called evidence. The truth is that for this particular hysterical mode of thought to have so completely taken over the national conversation is frankly stunning.

It is no accident. It has to come from somewhere.

### **Cui Bono?**

So who benefits from all of this anti-Trump hysteria?

To begin to dig into this aspect of the story we have to go back and look at not only how the election played out, but how virtually everyone thought it was destined to play out.

On the Democrat side, the Clinton camp is widely acknowledged to be the “establishment” wing of the party. They represent the group with the closest ties to the institutional history of Dems, including the obvious Bill Clinton White House connections, the Wall Street connections, the military connections through the numerous Hillary-guided overseas misadventures during her tenure as Secretary of State, the international connections via the multi-billion dollar Clinton Foundation and Bill and Hillary’s long-standing ties to Saudi oil money, connections to the establishment in Europe, and the dozens of other tentacles they have slithering through the domestic and international moneyed community.

They are liberal in name only, and fully neoliberal in reality, meaning they are part and parcel of the current corporatist tide sweeping over the world, erasing national borders, laying waste to individual freedoms, scooping up all the money for those at the top and forcing the masses to pay for their theft through austerity programs.

So when Hillary announced her bid to become the next president of the United States, the establishment Dems, bloated with decades of power and fat with Wall Street cash, saw it as a home run. She is a woman—at minimum a factor for 51 percent of the electorate—she has the backing of the bankers, the military, the oil companies, Big Pharma, and the hard-right Israeli lobby. Plus, she has the political acumen to change her tone (if not her policies) on lefty causes like the minimum wage, police state

overreach, banking reform, racial issues, LGBTQ issues, marijuana reform, and whatever else they wanted to hear.

## How could she possibly lose?

Well, for one thing, Bernie Sanders happened. The schism became starkly apparent between the neoliberal Clinton/Pelosi/Wasserman-Schultz/Podesta faction of the Democratic Party and the actual left: the ragged edges of labor, the anti-war faction, marijuana reformers, anti-fracking, anti-GMO and anti-Big Pharma activists, the Occupy movement and people who think maybe criminals on Wall Street should be punished, rather than permitted to run both major U.S. parties from behind the scenes.

The Clintonites, despite their closet overflowing with skeletons of scandal—Benghazi, John Podesta’s shady dealings, Hillary’s endless hit parade of buffoonery as Secretary of State, Bill’s string of sexual assaults—despite all this, with their \$1.6 billion campaign war chest, they thought could get those annoying plebes on board once they had cleared the boards of Senator Sanders and his divisive talk of corrupt party potentates rigging the game for the very rich.

As former Texas Governor and current Energy Secretary Rick Perry might say:

“Oops.”

And let’s not forget either that those emails that were allegedly hacked—actual emails that actually said what Dem officials thought and said to each other—showed that the Clintonites were salivating at the thought of running against a candidate Trump. They thought it was a shoo-in.

So think of it this way: you are a high-up Democratic party official and you have just had your ass handed to you by an opponent you WANTED to face because you thought he’d be easy to defeat, you’ve pissed away a billion dollars, your party is in shreds, scandals loom and you have no power to bury them: who do you blame?

Do you go home with your tail between your legs and admit that maybe neoliberalism isn’t working for 99 percent of the people, that clearly millions in your own party disagree with the stances you and your anointed candidate hold, and face down an honest assessment, rework your basic platform and approach and pledge to listen to your caucus in the future rather than fighting behind the scenes to silence and subdue them?

Hell no! Blame the Russians! And thus delegitimize **Trump**, the winner of the election.

But how to go about it...

## Our Precious Bodily Fluids Are at Risk

There is a great character named General Ripper in Stanley Kubrick’s classic anti-nuclear war satire “Dr. Strangelove, or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb.” He’s a classic gung-ho military man, a hard-bitten, cigar-chomping, crew-cut

type—the perfect wartime general.

The only problem is that he's completely insane. He is convinced that the Russians are not only the ideological and military enemy, but that they are attempting to steal "our precious bodily fluids," and he will not be swayed from his belief.

This is the tone that the mass media have been taking lately when it comes to the anti-Trump hatred that winds through the "Russians hacked the election" story like a poison vine. They have tone that betrays a steely-eyed, thousand-yard stare into a distant sun—a sun that may or may not actually be there—and a refusal to be shaken regardless of any amount of evidence or lack thereof:

"This is simply what happened, ipso facto, end of story, la la la I can't hear you, no you're the one who's stupid."

But why would the media put itself in this position? After all, the entire story is based on CIA intelligence—since when does the media believe the CIA? Why has this particular story been bitten on hook, line and sinker by 99 percent of mainstream media outlets while virtually everything else the CIA has said since...well, since forever has at least been questioned if not outright rejected?

Recall just the recent example of the Snowden revelations from a few short years ago—remember how the media simply bought DNI James Clapper's explanations without questioning them?

Yeah, [neither](#) do I.

So why this time? Why suddenly believe the same people who gave us the non-existent WMDs in Iraq, the debacle in Libya, the Syrian chemical weapons tale (and now another one dusted off for re-use) as well as the Gulf of Tonkin and countless other shady global dealings?

Consider for a moment who it was that told us all how Hillary was a guaranteed victor in any head-to-head matchup with Donald Trump. Consider the relentless, mocking coverage of Trump as candidate from Day One. Consider how we were constantly told he had no real shot.

The **mainstream media** has just as much credibility to lose as the establishment wing of the Democratic Party on the heels of a Trump victory. Everything they have told us to believe about how politics works, about how polls work, about how the various constituencies vote—and the media's own supposed expertise in all this—has been thrown into question. In order to cover their nakedness, the media needs a patsy just as badly as the Dems do.

It couldn't possibly be that, corrupted and debased by corporate money as they were for so many years they failed utterly to read the lay of the land and see what was right in front of them.

No. It had to be the Russians. It just had to be.

Fear is always at the heart of rage. And this desperation to reclaim their dubious credibility is clearly visible in the ferocity with which they have latched onto the anti-Trump, anti-Russia mania. And it is quite frankly startling, even so.

Consider some recent headlines: “Was Russia Election Hack an Act of War?” (USA Today); “Russian Hackers Said to Seek Hush Money From Liberal Groups” (Bloomberg); “How Much Did Russian Hacking Affect Congressional Races?” (Salon) I particularly like this one: not “DID hacking affect congressional races,” but “how much.” It’s a foregone conclusion that it did.

So we are left in the curious position in which a typically left-leaning press, typically skeptical of government positions is now wholly and completely on board with the CIA’s favored narrative, with nary a question about it.

Why would that be?

## Follow the Money

Well, you don’t get to the point where six companies own 90 percent of the media outlets in the nation without a whole lot of money, sunshine. And where there is money to buy up trillions of dollars worth of media outlets, there is money for a whole lot of other endeavors too.

But let’s consider for a second a much smaller amount, a piddling \$600 million.

That’s a lot to you and me, but to Jeff Bezos, owner of Amazon.com and the Washington Post, that’s an amount you might find in the couch cushions. Nonetheless, that seems to be how much he sold out the tattered remains of the credibility of the Washington Post for.

Turns out Bezos’ company is building a super-secret intranet network for the exclusive use of the CIA-price tag: \$600 million. Keep in mind too, that is twice what Bezos paid for the Post.

The pro-CIA narrative slant of the Post is unmistakable and it stinks to high heaven. But they are just the most blatant example of this kind of cronyism. The companies that own the rest of the media also have a stake in Wall Street, Big Oil, Big Pharma, military spending—everything the neoliberal money machine wants in order to continue its rapacious conquering of everyone and everything on the planet as it builds a new world order in which nation-states will go the way of the dodo, and international agreements will become corporate agreements administered by unelected lawyers, not statesmen.

Incidentally, you and I will have no say in any of these matters.

It would never do for these titans to have one of their puppet parties nor their pet media outlets to be exposed as shills for the billionaires. In order to keep their consolidation of power rolling along, they have to keep up the charade that we are still living in a democracy.

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And for that they need the appearance of political parties who are rivals, and they need the media to massage the message to the masses.

So there you have it, your anti-Trump, anti-Russia hysteria primer. There is obviously a whole lot more undergirding this story that there isn't enough space to go into here.

But let's just take a moment to think next time we are faced with the latest dubious news release on how horrible Trump is and how he is a puppet of the nefarious Russians.

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