

In Trouble, Again

Mike Adamo
Senior Editor

The *New York Times* broke the story last week that Hillary Clinton conducted all of her State Department business through several private email accounts. Commentators from both left and right seized on the story, not just because everyone is eager for news on the Democrats' biggest presidential contender, but also because the controversy is classic Hillary.

There's no question that what Clinton was doing was ethically wrong and illegal. The State Department, like virtually all federal offices, mandates that officials preserve records of all government communications. A similar email brouhaha occurred in 2007 under the Bush administration, and "lost" emails were also at the center of the unresolved IRS controversy under the Obama administration.

Clinton has since announced that her colleagues at the State Department are reviewing the tens of thousands of emails for release. Because the private emails are insulated from the Freedom of Information Act, we have to trust that Clinton will not withhold any of her official communications. Given her record, it's unlikely.

There's hardly been a time since Clinton entered the public eye that she wasn't involved in one controversy or another. When Bill was in office the FBI investigated the Clintons in a scandal known as Whitewater, a decades-long series of suspicious dealings in real estate. The investigation led to their business partners being arrested and one committing suicide while the Clintons went unpunished. Investigators searched for years for subpoenaed documents related to a law firm at which Hillary worked with one of her Whitewater partners.



They found them in 1996, in the White House.

The 2012 Benghazi crisis when Clinton was Secretary of State revealed clearly her distaste for transparency. After Islamists attacked an American diplomatic facility in Libya, Clinton's State Department attempted to pin the blame on a video critical of Islam, which had supposedly triggered a violent protest. The subsequent investigation, in which Clinton was uncooperative, revealed that the attack was coordinated and no such protest existed. Her response: "What difference does it make?"

Just a week before the email story broke it was revealed that the Clinton Foundation received millions of dollars from foreign governments while Hillary was Secretary of State. The donations were a clear conflict of interest, and in at least one case they broke an ethics agreement that Hillary had with the Obama administration.

Democrats speculating about her possible 2016 campaign have worried about Clinton's wealth. She and her husband have made tens of millions of dollars over the course of their public life. Hillary has been making more millions in the past few years by speaking at colleges for upwards of \$200,000, a price that Hamilton

College was more than happy to pay in 2013.

Many Democrats do not want to rely on such a crooked person for the 2016 election, but they have few other choices. Joe Biden is a clown and Elizabeth Warren is too far to the left for most Americans. Few are willing to set themselves against the momentum of the "Ready for Hillary" meme, and others would rather be a "part of history" in electing the first woman president, regardless of how unfit for office she is.

Clinton and her supporters have had many opportunities to perfect the art of damage control. The familiar strategy is to ignore the problem for as long as possible and then declare it old news. But as Clinton faces greater scrutiny with the approaching election, it's going to become harder to ignore scandals like this. Her long history of misbehavior suggests that there are many more controversies waiting to come out.

Every successive scandal cements Clinton's reputation as greedy, power-hungry, and secretive. If she makes it to the White House we shouldn't expect anything other than more corruption.

GOP: Time to Get Real

Alex Klosner | *Staff Writer*

I can't help but roll my eyes and cringe when I hear some of the potential Republican candidates for the 2016 election. While Hillary Clinton (A.K.A. hrd22@clintonemail.com) continues to hold a firm grip over the Democratic donors, the Republican field is packed full

of potential candidates from former Florida Governor Jeb Bush to Texas Senator Ted Cruz. But several fringe candidates may soon launch campaigns, causing great harm to the Republican Party.

Sadly, former Alaska governor Sarah Palin has not yet ruled out a 2016 run for President. The inarticulate former vice-presidential nominee gave a speech at the Iowa Freedom Summit in January. The speech contained very

little substance and can be best described as a perplexing stream of consciousness. Palin presented some sagacious and intellectually insightful advice to the Republican leadership: “GOP leaders, by the way, y’know the man can only ride ya when your back is bent. So strengthen it! Then the man can’t ride ya, America won’t be taken for a ride.”

Palin’s choice to remain in politics reflects her narcissistic desire for celebrity status and complete disregard for Republicans’ interests. As Charles C. W. Cooke of National Review accurately put it, “Having been mercilessly and unjustly pilloried by the media throughout the 2008 campaign, Sarah Palin had a clear choice in its aftermath: she could sober up and prove the buggers wrong, or she could collapse into ignominious pasquinade. Sadly, she chose the latter. The rest of us should choose to move on.”

Dr. Ben Carson, another potential GOP candidate, gained substantial media attention after openly criticizing the Obama Administration and the Affordable Care Act in front of the President at the National Prayer Breakfast in 2013. Carson rose from poverty in inner-city Detroit to become the director of pediatric neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins Hospital by age 33.

Earlier this month, Carson officially launched a presidential exploratory committee allowing him to begin fundraising for a potential campaign. Although he possesses an impressive resume and a strong appeal to far-right conservatives, Carson’s entry into the race

would worsen internal friction in the GOP and alienate moderates due to a series of controversial remarks. Carson once asserted that “Obamacare is the worst thing that has happened in this nation since slavery.” In a recent interview with CNN, Carson stated that homosexuality is “absolutely” a choice because people “go into prison straight and when they come out, they’re gay.” Carson later apologized for his comments. The GOP cannot afford to support such candidates that lack political, military, and business experience and have a record of inaccurate, distasteful statements.

While Palin and Carson continue to inject political poison into the GOP, the real extravaganza begins if Donald Trump announces his candidacy. The real estate mogul announced last year that he’s “considering it very strongly.” Many believe Trump’s comments are insincere as he promoted the idea of running in the past and never followed through. Although I am a fan of *Celebrity Apprentice*, I believe Mr. Trump lacks the vital political experience necessary to be President of the United States and would transform the GOP primary into a reality TV show.

The Republican leadership must denounce the overt incompetence of these clowns and promote articulate, knowledgeable, and serious candidates in the primary in order to succeed in the upcoming election. I don’t doubt that the fringe candidates of the current conservative movement are causing older conservative intelligentsia like William F. Buckley, Jr. to turn in their graves.

ISIS and the Twitter War

Taylor Elicegui | *Staff Writer*

Twitter is now one of ISIS’s favorite recruiting tools and a new way to make threats against the West and non-Muslims, giving a new meaning to the term Twitter Wars. Hashtags like #WaronWhites and #AmessagefromISISToUS allow members of ISIS to directly contact individuals in the West without a middleman like traditional media organizations. But many have not been content to idly watch as ISIS fighters threaten their way of life. Individuals in Italy and Japan, in particular, have begun to mock ISIS fighters, illustrating the surprising importance of Twitter in this clash of cultures.

For a particular subset of ISIS members, mocking them via Twitter is an appropriate response. Thomas Friedman explains in an op-ed for the New York Times that three different factions make up ISIS’s ranks. “Some are hardened jihadists,” he writes, “but many are just losers, misfits, adventure seekers and young men who’ve never held power, a job or a girl’s hand and joined ISIS to get all three.”

In October ISIS posted an audio recording, threatening to invade Rome and fly their flag over the Vatican. ISIS members started tweeting threats, accompanied by

the hashtag #We_Are_Coming_O_Rome [*sic*]. Italians commandeered the hashtag, offering ISIS travel tips. The tweets ranged from “Be sure to fly Alitalia so you get the full experience” to “Don’t put cheese on seafood pasta, don’t wear socks with sandals, and pls leave a review on @TripAdvisor,” and “ISIS, Alitalia will not let you board the aircraft wearing last seasons combat fatigues.” The Italian government took the threats more seriously and is increasing homeland security.

Japan also took to mocking ISIS via Twitter. In October 2014, ISIS demanded \$200 million in exchange for two Japanese hostages. People responded a hashtag that roughly translates to “ISIS Photoshop Grand Prix.” The hashtag encouraged tweeters to upload photoshopped pictures of ISIS fighters participating in activities associated with the Western world.

An article from *Business Insider* quotes Peter Payne, the owner of an internet store selling Japanese goods, succinctly summarizing the attitude behind hashtag. “You can kill some of us,” he said, “but Japan is a peaceful and happy land with fast internet. So go to hell.”

The pictures ranged from ISIS executioners drinking beer to the executioners being transformed into Hello Kitty. Just like the Italians, many in Japan are refusing to empower

ISIS, and instead are appropriately responding by belittling and mocking the fighters.

In this new age of warfare involving social media, individuals outside of combat areas will play a much larger role. The strange world of Twitter allows for interactions that are entirely unprecedented. While we should not dismiss threats of violence and terrorism on social media, the United States should also learn a lesson from the Japanese and Italians, and refuse to empower members of ISIS. The motivations of ISIS members go beyond desiring power and respect, but refusing to give those is a necessary part of the response.

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