

Hillary Clinton's Hypocrisy on Dissent

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Five years ago, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's personal adviser Sidney Blumenthal urged her to apologize to former Army officer (and ex-CIA analyst) Ray McGovern after he was roughly arrested when he stood silently with his back turned in protest against a Clinton speech, ironically condemning foreign leaders who show intolerance of dissent.

According to an internal email recently released from former [Secretary Clinton's private email server](#), Blumenthal cited "an unfortunate incident" that occurred at her speech at George Washington University in Washington on Feb. 15, 2011. Blumenthal wrote that "something bad happened" and urged Clinton to have someone reach out and apologize to McGovern.

Instead, Clinton, who has declared that "supporting veterans is a sacred responsibility," denied any responsibility for McGovern's brutal arrest, which left the 71-year-old who was wearing a "Veterans for Peace" T-shirt, bloodied and bruised. She also offered no explanation for why she failed to stop the police when the arrest was occurring right in front of her; instead she just continued on with her speech about the need for leaders to respect the rights of dissidents.

In the email, Clinton did tell Blumenthal, "I'll see what else can be done," but it's not clear what that may have been. Afterwards, McGovern became a government target because of what the State Department called his "political activism, primarily anti-war."

Though the criminal charges against McGovern were dropped, he was placed on the State Department's "Be On the Look-out" or BOLO alert list, instructing police to "USE CAUTION, stop" and question him and also contact the State Department's Diplomatic Security Command Center.

After learning of the BOLO alert, the Partnership for Civil Justice Fund (PCJF), which is representing McGovern in connection with the 2011 incident, interceded to have the warning lifted. But McGovern wondered if the warning played a role in 2014 when he was aggressively arrested by New York City police at the entrance to the 92nd Street Y where he had hoped to pose a question to a speaker there, one of Clinton's friendly colleagues, former CIA Director and retired General David Petraeus.

After that arrest on Oct. 30, 2014, McGovern [wrote](#),

"God only knows (and then only if God has the proper clearances) what other organs of state security had entered the 'derogatory' information about the danger of my 'political activism' into their data bases. Had my 'derog' been shared, perhaps, with the ever-proliferating number of 'fusion centers' that were so effective in sharing information to track and thwart the activists of

Occupy – including subversives like Quakers and Catholic Workers?”

Clinton’s Speech

On Feb. 15, 2011, McGovern attended Clinton GWU speech, deciding on the spur of the moment – after feeling revulsion at the “enthusiastic applause” that welcomed the Secretary of State –

“to dissociate myself from the obsequious adulation of a person responsible for so much death, suffering and destruction. ...

“The fulsome praise for Clinton from GW’s president and the loud, sustained applause also brought to mind a phrase that – as a former Soviet analyst at CIA – I often read in Pravda. When reprinting the text of speeches by high Soviet officials, the Communist Party newspaper would regularly insert, in italicized parentheses: ‘Burniye applaudimenti; vce stoyat’ — Stormy applause; all rise.

“With the others at Clinton’s talk, I stood. I even clapped politely. But as the applause dragged on, I began to feel like a real phony. So, when the others finally sat down, I remained standing silently, motionless, wearing my ‘Veterans for Peace’ T-shirt, with my eyes fixed narrowly on the rear of the auditorium and my back to the Secretary.

“I did not expect what followed: a violent assault in full view of Madam Secretary by what we Soviet analysts used to call the ‘organs of state security.’ The rest is history, as they say. A short account of the incident can be [found here](#).

“As the video of the event shows, Secretary Clinton did not miss a beat in her speech as she called for authoritarian governments to show respect for dissent and to refrain from violence. She spoke with what seemed to be an especially chilly sang froid, as she ignored my silent protest and the violent assault which took place right in front of her.

“The experience gave me personal confirmation of the impression that I reluctantly had drawn from watching her behavior and its consequences over the past decade. The incident was a kind of metaphor of the much worse violence that Secretary Clinton has coolly countenanced against others.

“Again and again, Hillary Clinton – both as a U.S. senator and as Secretary of State – has demonstrated a nonchalant readiness to unleash the vast destructiveness of American military power. The charitable explanation, I suppose, is that she knows nothing of war from direct personal experience.” [For more of McGovern’s account of his arrest, see Consortiumnews.com’s “[Standing Up to War and Hillary Clinton](#).”]



Image: Ray McGovern displaying the aftermath of his arrest during a speech by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on Feb. 15, 2011.

In a civil court filing, the PCJF lawyers described the scene:

“As Secretary Clinton was reading from her prepared remarks regarding Egypt’s dictatorship [and] saying, ‘Then the government pulled the plug,’ the then-71-year-old McGovern was forcibly and falsely arrested by GWU police officers, grabbed by the head, assaulted, and as Secretary Clinton continued undisturbed stating, ‘the government ... did not want the world to watch,’ Mr. McGovern was removed from public view with excessive and brutal force, taken to jail, and left bleeding with bruises and contusions.”

In a press release about Clinton’s emails on Thursday, McGovern’s attorneys said they had sought State Department emails related to McGovern’s arrest but had not received Clinton’s email exchange with Blumenthal. Those emails surfaced in connection with congressional inquiries about Clinton conducting State Department business using a private server outside U.S. government control.

Based on the new disclosures, it was clear Clinton knew a great deal about the incident from Blumenthal, including receiving photos of McGovern’s injuries.

Blumenthal suggested that Clinton “have someone apologize to Ray McGovern,” but referred to the incident and McGovern in condescending terms, noting that McGovern’s mistreatment has “become a minor cause célèbre on the Internet among lefties.” As for McGovern, Blumenthal said the former CIA analyst who was a presidential briefer to George H.W. Bush has “become a Christian antiwar leftist who goes around bearing witness. Whatever his views, he’s harmless.”

Clinton responded,

“I appreciate your sending thgis [sic] to me. Neither State nor my staff had anything to do w this. The man stood up just as I was starting and GW—which claims their quick actions were part of their standard operating procedures to remove anyone who stands up and starts speaking while an invited guest is talking—moved to remove him. GW claims he was not in any way injured.”

However, McGovern was not speaking, simply standing quietly until he was attacked by the police. As for Clinton, no apology was forthcoming, nor any further explanation of why she failed to stop police from roughing up a peaceful protester in her presence.

Investigative reporter Robert Parry broke many of the Iran-Contra stories for The Associated Press and Newsweek in the 1980s. You can buy his latest book, America's Stolen Narrative, either in [print here](#) or as an e-book (from [Amazon](#) and [barnesandnoble.com](#)).

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