

# What Are the Hearsay Leaks about “Russian Election Hacking” Attempting to Achieve?

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Region: [Russia and FSU](#), [USA](#)

Theme: [Intelligence](#), [Media Disinformation](#)

*Yesterday I noted below:*

*[T]he FBI also disagrees with at least parts of the alleged CIA conclusion ... That is important because the FBI, not the CIA, is responsible to investigate cyber related crimes within the U.S.*

The Washington Post, which yesterday claimed a united view of the relevant agencies with only “minor disagreements”, today caught up with Moon of Alabama. The headline:

[FBI and CIA give differing accounts to lawmakers on Russia’s motives in 2016 hacks](#)

The FBI official’s remarks to the lawmakers on the House Intelligence Committee were, in comparison, “fuzzy” and “ambiguous,” suggesting to those in the room that the bureau and the [Central Intelligence A]gency weren’t on the same page, the official said.

WaPo still asserts that it was a “Russian hack” from which the election relevant emails and other papers leaked. No evidence, none at all, has been presented to support that claim. Former UK Ambassador Craig Murray also strongly [disagrees](#) with the CIA claims:

As Julian Assange has made crystal clear, the leaks did not come from the Russians. As I have explained countless times, they are not hacks, they are insider leaks – there is a major difference between the two.

Murray claims to know the leaker, an insider person, and asks why the CIA and FBI, who claim to know the person related to Russia who leaked the papers, have then not arrested him or her.

End Update

The White House [ordered](#) on Friday a full review if and/or how Russia somehow intervened inappropriately in the U.S. election. It is unclear if and how much of such a review, to be produced by January 20, would be made public.

A few hours later senior members of Congress, aka “U.S. officials”, leaked [to the Washington Post](#) and [the New York Times](#) about the alleged content of a CIA assessment that, they claim, says that the Russian government through some third party hacked the Democratic National Committee and maybe also the Republican committee and officials and leaked

some of the hacked stuff to Wikileaks and others.

The real claims of the CIA assessment are not known. Neither is any evidence known on which an assessment is based on. All claims about the alleged CIA report WaPo and NYT report on are hearsay – unverified whisper by anonymous people. Some within the CIA seem to disagree with at least parts of the assessment. WaPo writes:

A senior U.S. official said there were minor disagreements among intelligence officials about the agency's assessment, in part because some questions remain unanswered.

According to someone talking to the NYT the FBI also disagrees with at least parts of the alleged CIA conclusion:

One senior government official, who had been briefed on an F.B.I. investigation into the matter, said that while there were attempts to penetrate the Republican committee's systems, they were not successful.

That is important because the FBI, not the CIA, is responsible to investigate cyber related crimes within the U.S. .

Glenn Greenwald and Mary Wheeler have written good pieces on these leaks from the CIA: [Anonymous Leaks to the WashPost About the CIA's Russia Beliefs Are No Substitute for Evidence](#) and [Unpacking the New CIA Leak: Don't Ignore the Aluminum Tube Footnote](#). I have little to add to their writing. They note that the CIA and its former and current leaders are known to be very much on the Clinton side while the FBI is more neutral if not even Trump orientated.

When the head of the Intelligence Community James Clapper made a statement about the alleged Russian hacks some took that as confirmation that such hacks had actually happened. But Clapper's statement used many weasel words and may have actually said the opposite (see his statement and my translation [at the end of this piece](#)). He explicitly [made no attribution](#) for any of the potential hacks.

It was the U.S. Department of Homeland Security that [tried to hack](#) the election systems of the state of Georgia. How do we know it was not them hacking and leaking the DNC papers?

One minor reason for the leaks now may be that "the Russians did it" exculpates Clinton from [being](#) a lousy candidate running a lousy campaign.

But one can think of three bigger reasons why these leaks about the CIA assessment are now happening:

1. To preempt the results of the official investigation Obama has now ordered. Any diversion of the official results from the alleged CIA assessment results will need extensive public explanation.
2. To swing the electoral college to vote for Clinton instead of Trump. This would be unprecedented and a coup contradicting the will of the voters. It would lead to political chaos and more. But many Clinton partisans [are pressing in that](#)

[direction](#) and such a dirty business would not be out of character for Hillary Clinton.

3. Even if neither 1 nor 2 can be achieved the propaganda effect of these leaks will be to dampen any movement of a Trump administration towards more friendly relations with Russia. Any such move by Trump will be responded with a chorus "but Russia hacked our election" even though there has been zero evidence or proof produced that such was indeed the case.

In response to the leaks Trump pointed out that the CIA lied about WMDs in Iraq. That is a decisive point. Indeed the CIA lied about lots of stuff over the years and one must assume that anything that is following a "the CIA says" introduction is a lie or at least an obfuscation.

The true danger, in my view, lies in possible reason 2 for the leaks. If enough delegates in the electoral college can somehow be bribed or otherwise convinced to flip towards electing Clinton we will see violent riots in the streets of many U.S. cities. What would follow thereafter is unpredictable.

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