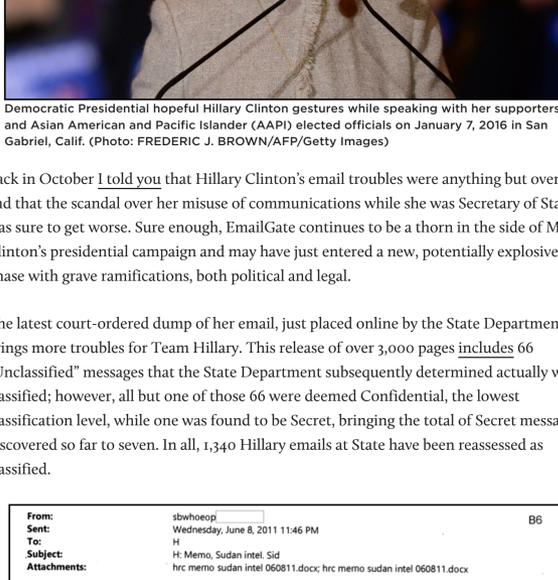




Hillary's EmailGate Goes Nuclear

Does the latest release of Hillary's State Department emails include highly classified U.S. intelligence?

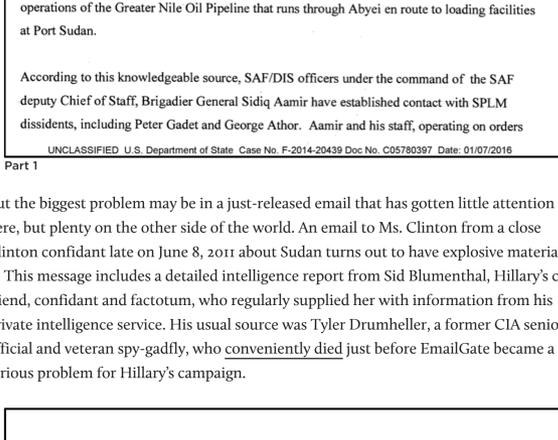
By [John R. Schindler](#) • 01/09/16 5:49pm



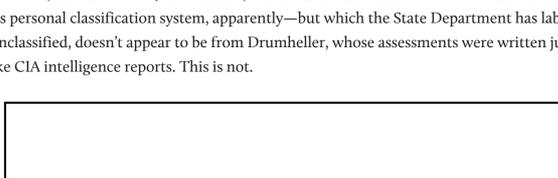
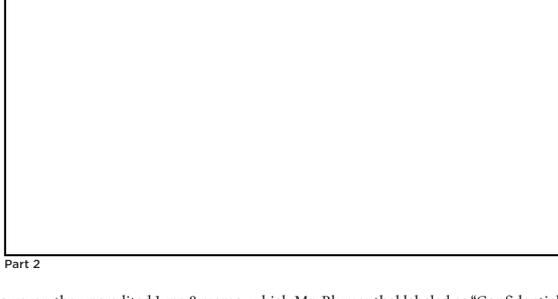
Democratic Presidential hopeful Hillary Clinton gestures while speaking with her supporters and Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAP) elected officials on January 7, 2016 in San Gabriel, Calif. (Photo: FREDERIC J. BROWN/AFP/Getty Images)

Back in October I [told you](#) that Hillary Clinton's email troubles were anything but over, and that the scandal over her misuse of communications while she was Secretary of State was sure to get worse. Sure enough, EmailGate continues to be a thorn in the side of Ms. Clinton's presidential campaign and may have just entered a new, potentially explosive phase with grave ramifications, both political and legal.

The latest court-ordered dump of her email, just placed online by the State Department, brings more troubles for Team Hillary. This release of over 3,000 pages includes 66 "Unclassified" messages that the State Department subsequently determined actually were classified; however, all but one of those 66 were deemed Confidential, the lowest classification level, while one was found to be Secret, bringing the total of Secret messages discovered so far to seven. In all, 1,340 Hillary emails at State have been reassessed as classified.

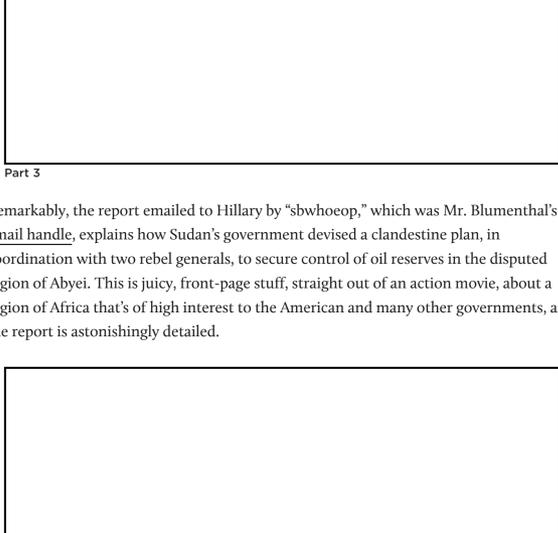


There are gems here. It's hard to miss the irony of Ms. Clinton [expressing surprise](#) about a State Department staffer using personal email for work, which the Secretary of State noted *in her own personal email*. More consequential was Ms Clinton ordering a [staffer](#) to send classified talking points for a coming meeting via a non-secure fax machine, stripped of their classification markings. This appears to be a clear violation of federal law and the sort of thing that is a career-ender, or worse, for normals. The chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee [termed](#) that July 2011 incident "disturbing," and so it is to anyone acquainted with U.S. Government laws and regulations regarding the handling of classified material.

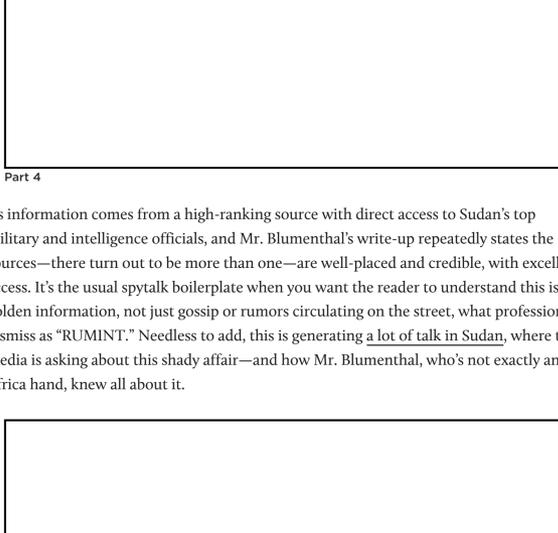


UNCLASSIFIED U.S. Department of State Case No. F-2014-20439 Doc No. C05780397 Date: 01/07/2016

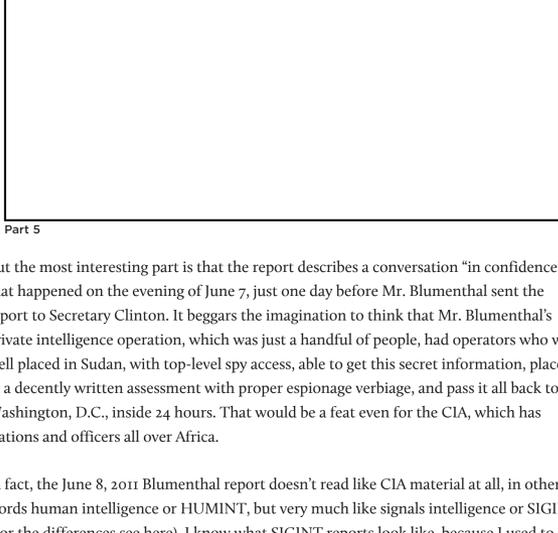
But the biggest problem may be in a just-released email that has gotten little attention here, but plenty on the other side of the world. An email to Ms. Clinton from a close Clinton confidant late on June 8, 2011 about Sudan turns out to have explosive material in it. This message includes a detailed intelligence report from Sid Blumenthal, Hillary's close friend, confidant and factotum, who regularly supplied her with information from his private intelligence service. His usual source was Tyler Drumheller, a former CIA senior official and veteran spy-gadfly, who [conveniently died](#) just before EmailGate became a serious problem for Hillary's campaign.



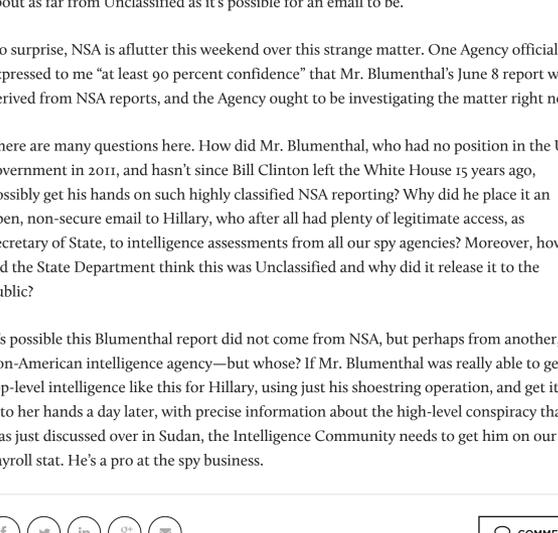
However, the uncredited June 8 memo, which Mr. Blumenthal labeled as "Confidential"—his personal classification system, apparently—but which the State Department has labeled Unclassified, doesn't appear to be from Drumheller, whose assessments were written just like CIA intelligence reports. This is not.



Remarkably, the report emailed to Hillary by "sbwhoopj," which was Mr. Blumenthal's email handle, explains how Sudan's government devised a clandestine plan, in coordination with two rebel generals, to secure control of oil reserves in the disputed region of Abyei. This is juicy, front-page stuff, straight out of an action movie, about a region of Africa that's of high interest to the American and many other governments, and the report is astonishingly detailed.



Its information comes from a high-ranking source with direct access to Sudan's top military and intelligence officials, and Mr. Blumenthal's write-up repeatedly states the access—it's there turn out to be more than one—are well-placed and credible, with excellent sources. It's the usual spytalk boilerplate when you want the reader to understand this is golden information, not just gossip or rumors circulating on the street, what professionals dismiss as "RUMINT." Needless to add, this is generating a [lot of talk in Sudan](#), where the media is asking about this shady affair—and how Mr. Blumenthal, who's not exactly an old Africa hand, knew all about it.



But the most interesting part is that the report describes a conversation "in confidence" that happened on the evening of June 7, just one day before Mr. Blumenthal sent the report to Secretary Clinton. It begs the imagination to think that Mr. Blumenthal's private intelligence operation, which was just a handful of people, had operators who were well placed in Sudan, with top-level spy access, able to get this secret information, place it in a decently written assessment with proper espionage verbiage, and pass it all back to Washington, D.C., inside 24 hours. That would be a feat even for the CIA, which has stations and officers all over Africa.

In fact, the June 8, 2011 Blumenthal report doesn't read like CIA material at all, in other words for the human intelligence or HUMINT, but very much like signals intelligence or SIGINT. (For the differences see [here](#).) I know what Tyler reports look like, because I used to write them for the National Security Agency, [America's biggest source of intelligence](#). SIGINT reports, which I've read thousands of, have a very distinct style and flavor to them and Blumenthal's write-up matches it, right down to the "Source Comments," which smack very much of NSA reporting and its "house rules."

But is this an NSA assessment? If so, it would have to be classified at least Secret/Sensitive [Compartmented Information](#), a handling caveat that applies to most SIGINT, and quite possibly Top Secret/SCI, the highest normal classification we have. In that case, it was about as far from Unclassified as it's possible for an email to be.

No surprise, NSA is aflutter this weekend over this strange matter. One Agency official expressed to me "at least 90 percent confidence" that Mr. Blumenthal's June 8 report was derived from NSA reports, and the Agency ought to be investigating the matter right now.

There are many questions here. How did Mr. Blumenthal, who had no position in the U.S. government in 2011, and hasn't since Bill Clinton left the White House 15 years ago, possibly get his hands on such highly classified NSA reporting? Why did he place it an open, non-secure email to Hillary, who after all had plenty of legitimate access, as Secretary of State, to intelligence assessments from all our spy agencies? Moreover, how did the State Department think this was Unclassified and why did it release it to the public?

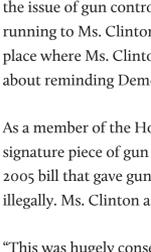
It's possible this Blumenthal report—did not come from NSA, but perhaps from another, non-American intelligence agency—but whose? If Mr. Blumenthal was really able to get top-level intelligence like this for Hillary, using just his shoestring operation, and get it into her hands a day later, with precise information about the high-level conspiracy that was just discussed over in Sudan, the Intelligence Community needs to get him on our payroll stat. He's a pro at the spy business.



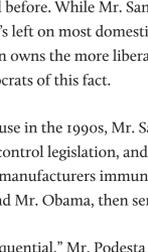
COMMENT

FILED UNDER: 2016 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION, CLASSIFIED, CLINTON, COMMUNICATIONS, EMAIL, EMAILGATE, EMAILS, HILLARY CLINTON, NSA, POLITICS, SECRETARY OF STATE, TEAM HILLARY, THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

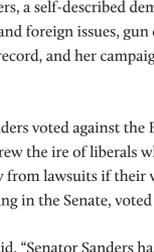
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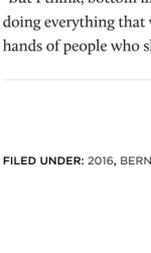
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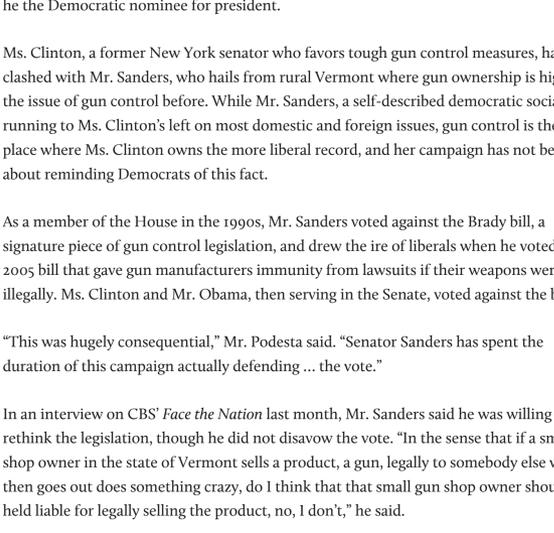
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Bet You Didn't Know This About Sarah Palin

Hillary Clinton Camp Rips Into Bernie Sanders' Weaker Gun Control Record

By [Ross Barkan](#) • 01/08/16 4:03pm



Hillary Clinton and Sen. Bernie Sanders. (Photo: Andrew Burton for Getty Images)

After the campaign manager for [Sen. Bernie Sanders](#) said earlier today that there was "no daylight" between the senator's record on gun control and President Barack Obama's, top aides to [Hillary Clinton](#) struck back in full force, accusing Mr. Sanders of misrepresenting his voting history.

"When Senator Sanders' campaign attempts to say there's no daylight between his record and that of the president's, his record and Hillary Clinton's, that's just not true," said John Podesta, Ms. Clinton's campaign chair, in a conference call with reporters.

In a *New York Times* op-ed today, President Barack Obama wrote that he would "not campaign for, vote for or support any candidate, even in my own party, who does not support common-sense gun reform." This led to speculation that Mr. Obama, a Democrat, would not support Mr. Sanders, an independent who caucuses with the Democrats, were he the Democratic nominee for president.

Ms. Clinton, a former New York senator who favors tough gun control measures, has clashed with Mr. Sanders, who hails from rural Vermont where gun ownership is high, on the issue of gun control before. While Mr. Sanders, a self-described democratic socialist, is running to Ms. Clinton's left on most domestic and foreign issues, gun control is the rare place where Ms. Clinton owns the more liberal record, and her campaign has not been shy about reminding Democrats of this fact.

As a member of the House in the 1990s, Mr. Sanders voted against the Brady bill, a signature piece of gun control legislation, and drew the ire of liberals when he voted for a 2005 bill that gave gun manufacturers immunity from lawsuits if their weapons were used illegally. Ms. Clinton and Mr. Obama, then serving in the Senate, voted against the bill.

"This was hugely consequential," Mr. Podesta said. "Senator Sanders has spent the duration of this campaign actually defending ... the vote."

In an interview on CBS' *Face the Nation* last month, Mr. Sanders said he was willing to rethink the legislation, though he did not disavow the vote. "In the sense that if a small gun shop owner in the state of Vermont sells a product, a gun, legally to somebody else who then goes out does something crazy, do I think that that small gun shop owner should be held liable for legally selling the product, no, I don't," he said.

"But I think, bottom line is, that we should be rethinking that legislation and we should be doing everything that we can as a country to make sure that weapons do not get into the hands of people who should not have them," he added.

COMMENT

FILED UNDER: 2016, BERNIE SANDERS, HILLARY CLINTON