



Emails: Hillary kept close ties to Clinton Foundation while at State

By SARAH WESTWOOD • 8/31/15 11:27 PM

Thousands of Hillary Clinton's private emails released by the State Department Monday evening illustrate the deep ties Clinton maintained to her family's foundation while serving as secretary of state.

Clinton seemingly kept close tabs on the Clinton Foundation's activities — a situation the Obama administration had hoped to avoid when bringing Clinton into the State Department in 2009.

Much of her involvement with the foundation focused on its work in Haiti after the 2010 earthquake there. The Clinton Foundation was heavily involved in projects across Haiti after the disaster, many of which have subsequently been criticized.

Clinton referred to the Clinton Foundation's cash flow as "unencumbered" in January 2010 when she suggested to Cheryl Mills, then her chief of staff, that they pitch the Clinton Foundation or the Red Cross on a series of project ideas.

Chelsea Clinton also kept her parents abreast of the foundation's activities in Haiti, informing them of what the family could do to improve conditions on the ground after traveling the country in 2010.

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Several other emails made reference to conversations Clinton and her

aides had at Clinton Global Initiative events, hinting at the important role the charity played in shaping Clinton's relationships.

For example, Hillary Clinton asked one of her aides, Kris Balderston, to encourage the government of Norway to pledge \$600,000 to a Clinton Global Initiative project in Sept. 2010.

Norway is a major donor to the Clinton Foundation.

Another email suggests Hillary Clinton planned to appear onstage at a Clinton Global Initiative event, and that her State Department staff were involved in arranging the appearance.

Sidney Blumenthal, the controversial aide to Hillary Clinton who was blocked from working at the State Department, peppered the secretary with memos and advice throughout 2009 and 2010, records show.

Hillary Clinton welcomed his counsel, telling Blumenthal at one point that Bill Clinton thought his memos were "brilliant."

Blumenthal constantly provided unvetted intelligence to Hillary Clinton in memos that were marked "confidential." In other emails, he provided Hillary Clinton with texts of his son Max's work. Max Blumenthal is a journalist who wrote for the Daily Beast. Some of the younger Blumenthal's writings about Israel have been controversial.

After falling short of a court-ordered benchmark at the end of July, releasing just 2,206 pages of emails, the State Department vowed to get back on track by publishing additional emails in August and September.

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State officials had promised to release at least 6,106 pages of emails at

the end of August, the largest batch of records to be posted online since the agency began putting out emails in May.

The agency blamed its inability to publish the required number of emails in July on the involvement of the intelligence community.

Intelligence experts began assisting the State Department in its review of the emails after two inspectors general asked the Justice Department to open an investigation into Hillary Clinton's private server.

The watchdogs for the State Department and the intelligence community cited hundreds of classified emails they believed the server contained as evidence of potential wrongdoing, though prominent Democrats have rushed to Hillary Clinton's defense.

The former secretary of state has dismissed allegations of misconduct by stressing the fact that none of the emails were marked classified at the time they were sent.

But intelligence experts have warned that officials are responsible for handling sensitive information properly, regardless of whether it is marked classified.

The National Security Agency, Defense Intelligence Agency, National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, Office of the Director of National Intelligence and the CIA have each claimed ownership of classified intelligence that has surfaced in the emails published before August.

Hillary Clinton has seen her commanding lead in New Hampshire evaporate amid the broadening FBI probe.

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Sen. Bernie Sanders has surged ahead in New Hampshire and crept

closer in Iowa as Hillary Clinton has struggled to explain the volume of classified emails, her relationship with Blumenthal and her involvement with the Clinton Foundation, among other questionable practices from her time at State.

Hillary Clinton's campaign has repeatedly attempted to shift focus onto the dispute between the State Department and the intelligence community over what should be classified.

State officials have resisted the intelligence community inspector general's findings. For example, the agency downplayed the watchdog's assertion that at least two emails in a small sample contained classified information when they were written.

Hillary Clinton has said none of the emails she sent or received were classified at the time they were written.

But an analysis of the records released in May, June and July of this year indicated many of the 63 emails that were classified before the August release contained sensitive information when created.

Clinton and her top aides discussed weaknesses in embassy security, private conversations with foreign diplomats and their take on relations between other countries — information that some consider inherently classified.

Critics have raised concerns about potential conflicts of interest involving Williams & Connolly, the law firm representing Clinton in her legal battles.

Katherine Duval, **SCROLL DOWN FOR NEXT STORY** the State Department attorney in charge of document production in the Clinton email case, worked for Williams & Connolly

before a stint at the Internal Revenue Service that put her at the center of another high-profile scandal.

Duval oversaw the tax agency's handling of records during an investigation into whether the IRS unfairly targeted conservative groups. She came under fire when thousands of emails and records belonging to Lois Lerner, former head of the agency's tax-exempt unit, disappeared as congressional investigators closed in.

The State Department has said it plans to publish 7,156 emails by the end of September.

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