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A Collection of Interesting, Important, and Controversial Perspectives Largely Excluded from the American Mainstream Media

American Pravda: The Limits of Media Corruption • 25m

RON UNZ • MAY 22, 2023 • 3,300 WORDS • [LEAVE A COMMENT](#)



I published my original American Pravda article just over ten years ago, emphasizing that our reality was created by the media, which many of us eventually discovered was far from reliable.



Aside from the evidence of our own senses, almost everything we know about the past or the news of today comes from bits of ink on paper or colored pixels on a screen, and fortunately over the last decade or two the growth of the Internet has vastly widened the range of information available to us in that latter category. Even if the overwhelming majority of the unorthodox claims provided by such non-traditional web-based sources is incorrect, at least there now exists the possibility of extracting vital nuggets of truth from vast mountains of falsehood. Certainly the events of the past dozen years have forced me to completely recalibrate my own reality-detection apparatus.

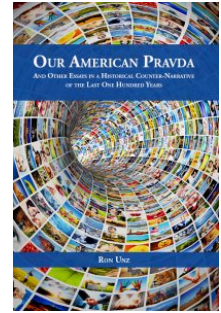
- [Our American Pravda](#)[1]

Ron Unz • ***The American Conservative*** • April 29, 2013 • 4,500 Words

Then five years ago this month I launched that series in earnest, eventually producing many dozens of articles[2] that have totaled a half million words.

Although I've tried to be extremely careful in all this historical and media analysis, the surprising conclusions I've reached on so many past events have sometimes raised doubts in

the back of my mind. Even if the evidence seems compelling and the sources quite credible, I wonder if it might really be possible for such explosive facts to be completely ignored by nearly all our media outlets. Surely the prospects of professional prizes would have tempted a few respectable journalists or academics into jumping on those same clues, setting off a cascade of their colleagues and resulting in a flood of media coverage. It seems inconceivable that almost everyone could be ignoring such important matters.



But every now and then another example appears that confirms the reality of such seemingly implausible media silence.

Consider the case of Jonathan Turley, a leading establishmentarian figure who holds the Shapiro Chair of Public Interest Law at George Washington University. As [his 5,000 word Wikipedia entry](#)[3] describes, he has spent decades as one of our most prolific and influential media commentators on legal matters, publishing numerous pieces in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* while being a regular guest on our broadcast networks. His long career has been entirely mainstream, and there is no sign he has ever explored any of the controversial topics that are the focus of my own research.

But just last week he published [an outraged column](#)[4] in *The Hill*—a very respectable DC outlet—expressing his amazement at the total unwillingness of our media to report the massive evidence of financial corruption engulfing the family of President Joe Biden. His stunned reaction was so forceful that his remarks are worth excerpting at considerable length:

This week, Rep. Byron Donalds (R-Fla.) tried to do the impossible. After he and his colleagues presented a labyrinth of LLC shell companies and accounts used to funnel as much as \$10 million to Biden family members, Donalds tried to induce the press to show some interest in the massive corruption scandal. “For those in the press, this easy pickings & Pulitzer-level stuff right here,” [he pleaded](#)[5].

The response was virtually immediate. Despite showing nine Biden family members allegedly receiving funds from corrupt figures in Romania, China and other countries, The New Republic quickly [ran a story](#)[6] headlined “Republicans Finally Admit They Have No Incriminating Evidence on Joe Biden.”

For many of us, it was otherworldly. A decade ago, when then-Vice President Joe Biden was denouncing corruption in Romania and Ukraine and promising action by the United States, massive payments were flowing to his son Hunter Biden and a variety of family members, including Biden grandchildren.

The brilliance of the Biden team was that it [invested the media in this scandal at the outset](#)[7] by burying the laptop story as “Russian disinformation” before the

election. That was, of course, false, but it took two years for most major media outlets to admit that the laptop was authentic.

But the media then ignored what was on that “authentic laptop.” Hundreds of emails detailed potentially criminal conduct and raw influence peddling in foreign countries.

When media outlets such as the New York Post confirmed the emails, the media then insisted that there was no corroboration of the influence peddling payments and no clear proof of criminal conduct. It entirely ignored the obvious corruption itself[8].

Now that the House has released[9] corroboration in actual money transfers linking many in the Biden family, the media is insisting that this is no scandal because there is no direct proof of payments to Joe Biden.

Putting aside that this is only the fourth month of an investigation, the media’s demand of a direct payment to President Biden is laughably absurd. The payments were going to his family, but he was the object of the influence peddling.

The House has shown millions of dollars going to at least nine Bidens[10] like dividends from a family business. As a long-time critic of influence peddling among both Republicans and Democrats, I have never seen the equal of the Bidens.

The whole purpose of influence peddling is to use family members as shields for corrupt officials. Instead of making a direct payment to a politician, which could be seen as a bribe, you can give millions to his or her spouse or children.

Moreover, these emails include references to Joe Biden[11] getting a 10 percent cut of one Chinese deal. It also shows Biden associates warning not to use Joe Biden’s name but to employ code names like “the Big Guy.”[12] At the same time, the president and the first lady are referenced as benefiting from offices and receiving payments from Hunter.

Indeed, Hunter complains that his father is taking half of everything that he is raking in.

None of that matters. The New York Times ran a piece headlined[13], “House Republican Report Finds No Evidence of Wrongdoing by President Biden.” That is putting aside evidence against all the family members around Joe Biden. It also ignored that other evidence clearly shows Biden lied[14] about his family not receiving Chinese funds or that he never had any knowledge[15] of his son’s business dealings.

In discussing modern Russian propaganda, researchers at the Rand Corporation described it[16] as having “two distinctive features: high numbers of channels and messages and a shameless willingness to disseminate partial truths or outright fictions.”

Sound familiar?

Today we are seeing a much more dangerous phenomenon. The coverage this week has all the markings of a state media. The consistent spin. The almost universal lack of details. The absurd distinctions.

It is the blindside of our First Amendment, which addresses the classic use of state authority to coerce and control media. It does not address a circumstance in which most of the media will maintain an official line by consent rather than coercion.

The media simply fails to see the story. Of course, it can always look to the president for enlightenment. Just before his son received a massive transfer of money from one of the most corrupt figures in Romania, Biden explained to that country why corruption must remain everyone’s focus. “Corruption is a cancer, a cancer that eats away at a citizen’s faith in democracy,” he said[17]. “Corruption is just another form of tyranny.”

It is just a shame that no one wants to cover it.

- America’s state media: The blackout on Biden corruption is truly ‘Pulitzer-level stuff’[18]
Jonathan Turley • ***The Hill*** • May 13, 2023 • 1,000 Words

If our journalists are unwilling to report the most blatant evidence of corruption surrounding our President, is there any chance they would be willing to consider the far more controversial topics I have covered in my series? And prior to the existence of the Internet, how many individuals would have even become aware of these facts or Turley’s accusations?

His bitter complaints brought to mind one of my early American Pravda pieces[19], in which I’d described similar claims made by prominent journalist John T. Flynn in the 1940s. He had been outraged by the unwillingness of the media to report the enormous familial corruption surrounding President Franklin D. Roosevelt, involving sums vastly larger than those received by the Biden family.

Take the case of John T. Flynn[20], probably unknown today to all but one American in a hundred, if even that...

So imagine my surprise at discovering that throughout the 1930s he had been one of the single most influential *liberal* voices in American society, a writer on

economics and politics whose status may have roughly approximated that of Paul Krugman, though with a strong muck-raking tinge. His weekly column in *The New Republic* allowed him to serve as a lodestar for America's progressive elites, while his regular appearances in *Colliers*, an illustrated mass circulation weekly reaching many millions of Americans, provided him a platform comparable to that of a major television personality in the later heyday of network TV.

To some extent, Flynn's prominence may be objectively quantified. A few years ago, I happened to mention his name to a well-read and committed liberal born in the 1930s, and she unsurprisingly drew a complete blank, but wondered if he might have been a little like Walter Lippmann[21], the very famous columnist of that era. When I checked, I saw that across the hundreds of periodicals in my archiving system, there were just 23 articles by Lippmann from the 1930s but fully 489 by Flynn.

But Flynn's claims were extremely precise, detailed, and specific, including numerous names, dates, and references. Most surprisingly, he accused the Roosevelts of exhibiting an extraordinary degree of familial financial corruption[22], which he claimed may have been unprecedented in American history. Apparently, despite his wealthy and elite background FDR's eldest son Elliott never attended college and had essentially no professional qualifications in anything. But soon after FDR became president, he began soliciting large personal payments and "investments" from wealthy businessmen who needed favors from the massively growing federal government, and seemingly did so with FDR's full knowledge and approval. The situation sounded a little like Billy Carter's notorious activities during the late 1970s, but the money involved totaled as much as \$50 million in present-day dollars relative to the household income of that era. I had never heard a word about this.

Even more shocking was the case of First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, who also had never attended college and apparently had little formal education of any sort. Soon after FDR was inaugurated, she began a major round of very well-paid personal advertising for corporate consumer products such as soap and took all sorts of other large payments over the next few years from various businesses, especially those crucially dependent upon government regulatory decisions. Imagine if recent First Ladies such as Michelle Obama or Laura Bush were constantly seen in TV ads hawking cars and diapers and fast food. The payments Eleanor personally received over the course of the FDR's dozen years in office allegedly came to an astonishing \$150 million, again relative to current family incomes. This, too, was something that I had never suspected. And all this was occurring during the very depths of the Great Depression, when a huge fraction of the country was desperately poor. Perhaps Juan and Eva Peron just didn't hire the right PR people or simply aimed too low.

Obviously, the unprecedented growth in the spending and regulatory power of the federal government during the New Deal years increased opportunities for this sort of personal graft by an enormous amount. But Flynn notes how odd the situation seemed since FDR's inherited fortune meant that he had already come into office as one of the wealthiest presidents of modern times. And as far as I've heard, his successor Harry S. Truman left the White House about as poor as he had entered it.

- [American Pravda: Our Great Purge of the 1940s\[23\]](#)
Ron Unz • ***The Unz Review*** • June 11, 2018 • 5,500 Words

According to Flynn, FDR's political victories were partly enabled by the total unwillingness of the partisan media of the day to report the facts of his personal corruption, and Prof. Turley says the same regarding Biden's 2000 victory over Donald Trump.

Days after the January 6th storming of the Capitol by outraged Trumpists, [I had made a similar point\[24\]](#), arguing that Trump's partisans had severely undercut their own case by focusing upon very dubious claims of Dominion voting machine fraud instead of the much more important factors of massive media bias and censorship.

I haven't investigated the matter, but there does seem to be considerable circumstantial evidence of widespread ballot fraud by Democratic Party forces, hardly surprising given the apocalyptic manner in which so many of their leaders had characterized the threat of a Trump reelection. After all, if they sincerely believed that a Trump victory would be catastrophic for America why would they not use every possible means, fair and foul alike, to save our country from that dire fate?

In particular, several of the major swing-states contain large cities—Detroit, Milwaukee, Philadelphia, and Atlanta—that are both totally controlled by the Democratic Party and also notoriously corrupt, and various eye-witnesses have suggested that the huge anti-Trump margins they provided may have been heavily “padded” to ensure the candidate's defeat.

Even leaving aside some of these plausible claims, the case for a stolen election seems almost airtight. I don't know or care anything about Dominion voting machines, whether they are controlled by Venezuelan Marxists, Chinese Communists, or Martians. But the most blatant election-theft was accomplished in absolutely plain sight.

Not long before the election, the hard drive of an abandoned laptop owned by Joe Biden's son Hunter revealed a gigantic international corruption scheme, quite possibility involving the candidate himself. But the facts of this enormous political

scandal were entirely ignored and boycotted by virtually every mainstream media outlet. And once the story was finally published in the pages of the *New York Post*, America's oldest newspaper, all links to the *Post* article and its website were suddenly banned by Twitter, Facebook, and other social media outlets to ensure that the voters remained ignorant until after they had cast their ballots.

Renowned international journalist Glenn Greenwald was hardly a Trump partisan, but he became outraged that the editors of the *Intercept*, the \$100 million publication he himself had co-founded, refused to allow him to cover that massive media scandal, and he angrily resigned in protest.^[25] In effect, America's media and tech giants formed a united front to steal the election and somehow drag the crippled Biden/Harris ticket across the finish line.

Furthermore, as former longtime CIA Analyst Ray McGovern noted it has now come out that current Secretary of State Antony Blinken then a top Biden aide had helped orchestrate the public declaration by 51 former Intelligence officers that the contents of the Hunter Biden laptop should be disregarded as likely Russian disinformation.

I had also pointed out that Trump's incompetent advocates had failed to emphasize the exceptionally close nature of the 2020 vote, which helped explain why his outraged supporters were driven to public protests:

Although hardly suggested by our mainstream media, the officially-reported results demonstrated that our 2020 presidential election was extraordinarily close.

All the regular pre-election polls had shown the Democratic candidate with a comfortable lead, but just as had been the case four years earlier, the actual votes tabulated revealed an entirely contrary outcome. According to the official vote-count, the Biden/Harris ticket ended up millions of votes ahead, having racked up huge leads in overwhelmingly Democratic states such as my own California, and also won by a very comfortable 306 to 232 margin in Electoral Votes. But control of the White House depends upon the state-by-state tallies, and these told a very different story.

Incumbent Donald Trump lost Arizona, Georgia, and Wisconsin by such extremely narrow margins that a swing of less than 22,000 votes in those crucial states would have gotten him reelected. With a record 158 million votes cast, this amounted to a victory margin of around 0.01%. So if just one American voter in 7,000 had changed his mind, Trump might have received another four years in office. ***One American voter in 7,000.***

Such an exceptionally narrow victory is extremely unusual in modern American history. For decades, the very tight Kennedy-Nixon race of 1960 had been a byword

for close results, but Biden's margin of victory was much smaller. More recently, George W. Bush won a narrow reelection over Sen. John F. Kerry in 2004, but Kerry would have required a voter swing nearly five times greater than Trump's in order to claim victory. Indeed, with the sole exception of the notorious "dangling chads" Florida decision of the 2000 Bush-Gore election, no American presidential candidate in over 100 years had lost by so narrow a voter margin as Donald J. Trump.

If our incompetent or dishonest media had correctly reported these simple facts, perhaps Democratic partisans would have been somewhat more understanding of the outrage expressed by so many of their Republican counterparts, who believed they had been cheated of their election victory. Admittedly, Trump backers seem equally unaware of the historically slender margin of their candidate's defeat.

The Hunter Biden corruption scandal seemed about as serious as any in modern presidential election history and Biden's official victory margin was just 0.01%. So if the American voters had been allowed to learn the truth, Trump almost certainly would have won the election, quite possibly in an Electoral College landslide. Given these facts, anyone who continues to deny that the election was stolen from Trump is simply being ridiculous.

- [American Pravda: Our Disputed Election](#)[26]

Ron Unz • ***The Unz Review*** • January 14, 2021 • 2,000 Words

The total protection extended to Biden and his family despite the overwhelming evidence of criminality is matched by the huge efforts to railroad Trump on very doubtful grounds.

Columnist Kevin Barrett is a Muslim convert friendly towards Iran and he has long detested Trump, whom he considers an "odious" figure. Yet the totally unhinged campaign of vilification against the former President by our entire political and media establishment had led him to consider supporting Trump in the 2024 election:

Jimmy Dore makes a good case that Trump's civil trial for sexual assault and defamation was "[A Pure Democratic Hit Job](#).[27]" Dore points out that New York's bizarre one-year repeal of the statute of limitations was specifically designed to grease the skids for Carroll-v-Trump. Since when did governments start temporarily repealing statutes of limitations so they can go after political figures they don't like? The move seems especially egregious because it involved an almost three-decade-old case in which the alleged victim can't even remember which *year*

the alleged assault happened, and has no evidence whatsoever other than her word against his. If you're going to do something as extreme as suspending the statute of limitations so you can prosecute a specific case, shouldn't you at least have some evidence?

- [Why I'm ALMOST Ready to Vote for Trump](#)[28]

Even if he runs from Death Row

Kevin Barrett • ***The Unz Review*** • May 14, 2023 • 800 Words

Progressive journalists such as Max Blumenthal and Aaron Mate have similarly ridiculed Trump's concurrent indictment on hush-money charges by an NYC prosecutor.

Thoughtful individuals naturally extrapolate from matters that they fully understand to those less familiar to them. If Prof. Turley and other respectable figures have now concluded that our mainstream media is far less reliable than they had ever believed possible, perhaps they should consider that this may have also been true in the past, including on important matters that they had never previously investigated.

- [The American Pravda Series](#)[29]

Ron Unz • ***The Unz Review*** • 500,000 Words

Related Reading:

- [American Pravda: Our Disputed Election](#)[26]
- [American Pravda: Our Great Purge of the 1940s](#)[23]
- [Our American Pravda](#)[1]
- [The American Pravda Series](#)[29]
- [John McCain: When "Tokyo Rose" Ran for President](#)[30]
- [American Pravda: John McCain, Jeffrey Epstein, and Pizzagate](#)[31]

Source References

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[2] many dozens of articles => <https://www.unz.com/page/american-pravda-series/>

[3] his 5,000 word Wikipedia entry => https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jonathan_Turley

[4] an outraged column => <https://thehill.com/opinion/white-house/4003066-america-state-media-the-blackout-on-biden-corruption-is-truly-pulitzer-level-stuff/>

[5] he pleaded => <https://twitter.com/GOPoversight/status/1656409400817352706>

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[7] invested the media in this scandal at the outset =>
<https://jonathanturley.org/2021/10/19/joe-biden-and-the-disappearing-elephant-how-to-make-a-full-sized-scandal-vanish-in-front-of-an-audience-of-millions/>

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[18] America’s state media: The blackout on Biden corruption is truly ‘Pulitzer-level stuff’ =>
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[28] Why I'm ALMOST Ready to Vote for Trump => <https://www.unz.com/kbarrett/why-im-almost-ready-to-vote-for-trump/>

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