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OPINION | BUSINESS WORLD

# *Hunter and Joe Biden Need Trump*

The press won't keep lying about Hunter's laptop if Trump isn't on the ballot.



By

Holman W. Jenkins, Jr. [Follow](#)

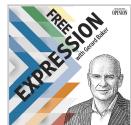
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President Joe Biden and his son, Hunter, watch fireworks from the Truman Balcony in Washington, July 4.

PHOTO: CHRIS KLEPONIS - POOL VIA CNP/ZUMA PRESS

When Democrats and the media are done trying to disqualify Donald Trump over Jan. 6, they'll have a similar job to do on Joe Biden. U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland has not one but two choices to make with import for 2024: whether to pursue Mr. Trump for Jan. 6 crimes and whether to keep averting his eyes from Hunter Biden and the evidence of Biden family corruption.

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In making his ill-considered call to the Ukrainian president that led to his first impeachment, President Trump, many forget, was riffing on Hunter Biden controversies spelled out in lengthy reporting by the New York Times, the New Yorker magazine, ABC News and other mainstream venues—pursuits that were promptly dropped and even actively suppressed once the elder Biden became the media’s champion to unseat Mr. Trump.

Adjust your picture of press corruption. It’s not so much the lies they tell as the truths they withhold. Let Mr. Biden threaten to become an albatross to progressive and Democratic hopes in 2024, and the Hunter story will un-disappear in a hurry. In fact, it’s already happening but in a way that will be half-hearted until the name Eric Schwerin starts appearing in mainstream accounts, the man whom the New York Post calls “a de facto financial planner for the wider Biden family.”

All the themes converge in a voicemail newly unearthed off Hunter’s laptop by the Daily Mail. On the evening of Dec. 12, 2018, Joe Biden is heard congratulating his son for surviving a New York Times story about his dealings with a disgraced Chinese mogul. The future president tells Hunter the story “was good. I think you’re clear”—a statement that would seem to torpedo many a repeated White House claim that the president never discussed business with Hunter.

From here on out, neurosis will be the mainstream press’s constant companion as it tries to live down its earlier suppression of the laptop story. In its own March reporting, the Washington Post opted for a display of fake rigor to suggest a reason for its delay in acknowledging the laptop’s existence, indicating even now it wouldn’t stoop to reporting emails seen only in preview mode, meaning the accompanying metadata wasn’t preserved.

This is a scrupulousness rarely seen in Post reporting, festooned as it usually is with blind quotes, anonymous sources and hearsay. It's also idiotic: If an email is important, it needs to be checked out whether or not it comes with metadata—metadata can be falsified too—by calling up sources, by examining other records, etc.

The fake rigor clearly serves to let the Post ignore one email in particular. Deep in a “how this story was reported” sidebar a diligent reader discovers that this is the notorious “big guy” email that seemed to indicate that Hunter tried to negotiate a secret stake in a Chinese deal for his father. By refusing to report this email, the Post zooms to Olympian heights of circumspection because there actually is a credible, on-the-record source in Hunter associate Tony Bobulinski willing to confirm the email’s gist.

Picture a group of reporters and editors sitting around and concocting the metadata dodge. Picture not one speaking up to say, “Shouldn’t we do the actual reporting and find out if the email is real?” The job of the press is to find out things, not to avert its eyes from possibilities damaging to its favorites.

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The Post’s neurotic rigmarole does underline just how long-tailed the laptop episode may be, in which the press defected from its fundamental mission by suppressing what it knew to be a true, newsworthy story.

Quickly surfacing with the laptop in October 2020, after all, were questions far more important than any having to do with Hunter Biden. If the laptop was a Russian ruse, as 51 former U.S. intelligence officials piped up to suggest, this was news. If the laptop was real, this was news. If dozens of former intelligence officials were lying to the public to influence an election, this was news.

The longest-tail consequence, though, may be found in recent words of Joe Biden. In a series of public statements, he said he wants Mr. Trump to run again. And why wouldn't he? Never mind that most Americans want neither man on the ballot. If faced with Mr. Trump's presumed greater corruption, wouldn't the press continue to ignore the overflowing Hunter Biden evidence? Wouldn't Democrats hold their noses and renominate Mr. Biden because he already beat Mr. Trump once?

Hunter and his dad *need* Mr. Trump to run. This, I submit, may be the only way the laptop revelations don't finally blow up and bring Mr. Biden's political life to an end. Even so, it's far from apparent that the rich and varied pathologies of his younger son won't explode anyway and drag Mr. Biden down and hand the election to Mr. Trump.

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