

The Spy Who Wasn't There...Much

Sun, 31 May 2015 17:00:00, newstips66, [category: brotopia, category: hired-assassins, post_tag: key-stories, category: worldnews]



- How are these people connected to the notorious Rakesh Saxena, In-Q-Tel and the New America Foundation?
- What is up with all these sneaky people with iffy back-grounds?
- Bizarre group of characters emerges.

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Meet Cody Shearer, the Strangest Character

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by Brendan Bordelon @brendanbordelon FOR THE NATIONAL REVIEW

And you thought Sidney Blumenthal was shady. Few people have heard of Cody Shearer, the unsanctioned diplomat, private eye, and Clinton flunky whose name surfaced in connection with the so-called intelligence reports Sidney Blumenthal was channeling to Hillary Clinton during her time at the State Department. But this shadowy fixture of the Clinton machine was everywhere in the 1990s — including war-torn Bosnia, where he became the subject of a State Department investigation after he represented himself as an agent of the U.S. government and took cash from a genocidal warlord. Now evidence suggests Shearer, working with his partner Blumenthal, was up to something similar during the 2011 revolution in Libya. And like in the 1990s, the Clintons were lurking on the margins. Much of the intelligence contained in memos fed to the Clinton State Department by Blumenthal was not just self-serving — it was provided by someone with a history of misleading foreign sources, misrepresenting himself as an agent of the U.S. government, and creating trouble for both himself and the United States abroad. Much of the intelligence contained in memos fed to the Clinton State Department by Blumenthal was not just self-serving — it was provided by someone with a history of misrepresenting himself as an agent of the U.S. government.

Though often described as a journalist, Shearer hasn't written much since the 1980s. His work, like that of his father, Lloyd Shearer, the former editor of Parade magazine, was often gossipy and reputation-ruining. A series of columns the younger Shearer wrote on the sexual proclivities of former Texas senator John Tower sank his nomination for defense secretary in 1989. RELATED: Did Sidney Blumenthal Violate Foreign-Lobbying Laws? Shearer's career took a strange turn when the Clintons entered the White House in 1992. His entrée into the first family's orbit was Strobe Talbott, Shearer's brother-in-law, who had been a friend of Bill Clinton since the president's days at Oxford. Talbott served as a deputy secretary in Bill Clinton's State Department; his brother-in-law took a different route, allegedly working with Clinton enforcer Terry Lenzner to investigate and, at times, intimidate women who accused Bill Clinton of sexual harassment. ADVERTISING But Shearer's political intrigues in the '90s extended beyond U.S. shores. In the middle of the decade, for reasons that remain unclear, he traveled to Europe to negotiate with associates of Radovan Karadzic, the Bosnian-Serb president known to have orchestrated the mass killings of Bosnian Muslims — including the Srebrenica genocide — during the brutal Yugoslav Wars. Representing himself as an agent of the State Department, Shearer told his Serbian contacts, which included members of Karadzic's family, that he could reduce the severity of impending war-crimes charges if Karadzic surrendered. He claimed he was in contact not only with his brother-in-law, but also with then-secretary of state Madeleine Albright and even with President Clinton himself.

RELATED: A Trip Down Memory Lane with the Clintons' Sleazeball Extraordinaire "He said, 'If you can show to my friends, meaning his brother-in-law and the president, that you can offer a serious line of negotiation, military action to capture Karadzic would not happen,'" the Serbian associate said, according to a 1999 Wall Street Journal article.

A subsequent State Department investigation found that the Serbs paid Shearer at least \$25,000 for his efforts, though the Serbs themselves claim he was paid much more. Although Shearer's negotiations on behalf of the U.S. government were unauthorized, the Wall Street Journal reported that Strobe Talbott knew of his brother-in-law's activities at least one year before the State Department did and asked him to stop. He only felt compelled to do so, according to the Journal, because Shearer was erroneously informing his Serbian contacts that the U.S. supported a plan to partition Bosnia, not because he was conducting shadow diplomacy with a genocidal warlord. RELATED: Do the Clintons Even Care about How Their Myriad Scandals Affect Their Public Image David Bossie, now the president of the conservative political-action committee Citizens United, first uncovered Shearer's role in the Bosnia negotiations as a GOP researcher on the House Oversight Committee in the 1990s. The State Department's inspector general opened an investigation into Shearer's actions in 1999, but it was never publicly released.

"It was just one of those things that fell by the wayside," says Bossie. "And then the Clintons leave office and it's all forgotten." Citizens United is now asking the State Department to release the investigation's results. Fast-forward 14 years and, in early 2011, as a State Department-sanctioned revolution against the Qaddafi regime in Libya was picking up steam, longtime Clinton consigliere Sidney Blumenthal was sending "confidential" intelligence memos to Hillary Clinton. He was touting leaders of the Libyan rebel movement with whom he had business dealings and pushing for the hire of private military contractors while working as an adviser to Osprey Global Solutions, a contracting company seeking to do business in Libya. More Hillary Clinton The Clintons' Favorite Way to Lie No Time for Hillary Scandals -- Because Every Reporter Everywhere Is Covering the Dennis Hastert Indictment Does the Media Hold Anyone to a Lower Ethical Standard than the Clintons? Shearer was aiding Blumenthal in these "intelligence-gathering" efforts. In one e-mail message from May 2001, first published by Gawker in March, Shearer appears to be serving as the liaison between Blumenthal and "Grange," the former Army general and CEO of Osprey, as they attempt to organize a small team of contractors to conduct an unspecified mission to the Libyan border from Tunisia.

He is also in frequent contact with "K," a Libyan named Khalifa al Sherif who seems to be feeding Shearer intelligence reports from inside the Libyan revolutionary council. It's not clear to what extent Clinton knew she was involving herself with Shearer — National Review was unable to contact Shearer, and the Clinton campaign did not reply to a request for comment. Bossie says the House Select Committee on Benghazi has been notified of Shearer's past indiscretions in Bosnia and believes that history will prove instructive as to what he was up to in Libya — and on whose behalf. —

Brendan Bordelon is a political reporter for National Review.

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