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PATRICK LAWRENCE:

Hunter Biden's Charge of Lying Under Oath

The June 5 criminal referrals are indication enough that the Oversight and Judiciary committees are far from done, spent, or at a dead end.



The U.S. Capitol dome at sunset. (Diane Krauthamer, Flickr, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

This is the fifth in Consortium News' series on the congressional investigation into President Joe Biden's allegedly corrupt involvement in the business affairs of his son Hunter. We publish these reports whenever new developments warrant them. Our earlier reports can be read here, here, here and here .

One reads regularly in the mainstream media, when events force them to report on the question, that the U.S. House Oversight Committee has hit a wall as it investigates Hunter

Biden's schemes to leverage his father's power and Joe Biden's potentially impeachable role in his son's unseemly doings.

The House hearings have stalled, or fizzled, or reached a dead end: This has been the standard theme in corporate media for months now.

"Wouldn't you know it," Michael Goodwin asked in *The New York Post* as far back as March, "CNN, *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, *Politico* and others on the left all reached exactly the same conclusion at the same time."

Let us put aside the notion that the above-named media are "left" and consider the implications of what Goodwin, a conservative columnist and relentless critic of the Biden regime, means to imply with this remark. There are three points to consider.

One, U.S. media's brazen rush to slam shut the door on the House proceedings puts their bias in favor of the president and his family well beyond dispute.

Two, liberal newspapers and broadcasters — repeatedly claiming that the House hearings have produced no proof or indication of wrongdoing on the president's part — can do so only by ignoring very substantial evidence of criminal and impeachable offenses.

Finally and not least, whatever the final outcome of the House proceedings, the nation's most powerful media have already sustained considerable self-inflicted damage by way of the negligence that is perfectly legible in their coverage of the investigations and its interim findings.

To be noted in this connection: More than two-thirds of Americans, according to a poll conducted earlier this year, think the House hearings should continue; half of these respondents — 34 percent of those surveyed — "think Joe Biden is guilty of corruption and should be impeached."

These figures cannot land as a surprise to anyone who has paid careful attention to the House hearings. Among much else, they have already produced substantive evidence establishing in considerable outline the operations of what is called, with justification, the Biden crime family:

— Payments of \$5 million each to Joe and Hunter Biden by Mykola Zlochevsky, the founding chairman of Burisma Holdings, the Ukrainian gas company. Zlochevsky sought (and enjoyed) Vice-President Biden's protection from Ukraine's chief prosecutor, who was investigating Burisma on charges on suspicion of extensive corruption.

— Gross payments to the Biden family, chiefly Hunter and Joe's brother James, of more than \$20 million during the years (2009–2017) when Joe was vice-president.

— A dense network of 20–odd shell companies the Biden family set up to disguise payments received from influence-peddling schemes Hunter conducted in Ukraine, Russia, China and elsewhere.

— The detailed testimony, so far not credibly refuted, of government investigators — from the F.B.I. and the IRS — providing granular evidence of the Biden family’s illegal financial operations.

— The covert, corrupt efforts of David Weiss, during his tenure as federal attorney for the Delaware District, to protect Hunter Biden from the above-noted investigators and, in addition, to negotiate a plea bargain on gun and tax charges that would immunize Hunter Biden from all subsequent criminal liabilities. This plea deal collapsed a year ago next month.

— Voluminous evidence of Joe Biden’s often intimate involvement in Hunter’s business dealings, many of these illicit, as lodged in the infamous laptop computer Hunter left at a repair shop in Wilmington, the contents of which were obtained by *The New York Post*.



Joe Biden, foreground, and son Hunter during inauguration of President Barack Obama, Jan. 20, 2009. (acaben, CC BY-SA 2.0, Wikimedia Commons)

— A check for \$240,000 James Biden wrote his brother shortly after he and Hunter consummated a transaction with a Chinese associate worth many times this figure. James Biden continues to contend that this was repayment of a loan from Joe Biden, but he and the Biden White House refuse to provide documentation substantiating the nature of the transaction.

Consortium News reported on these and other matters earlier in this series. Now there is evidence that Hunter Biden compounded his legal liabilities when he testified at length and under oath to Congress on Feb. 28 — an appearance Biden refused until he was threatened with contempt of Congress.

The House Ways and Means Committee, which also has an investigative function in the Biden case, voted on May 22 to release 100 pages of new evidence showing that Hunter Biden lied three times during that testimony. The evidence of this was provided, once again, by Gary Shapley and Joseph Ziegler, the IRS investigators who had previously presented the Oversight Committee with evidence of the Biden family's corruption.

The Ways and Means Committee is chaired by Jason Smith, a Missouri Republican. Here is part of Smith's official statement as he released the new evidence:

"Hunter Biden has shown once again he believes there are two systems of justice in this country — one for his family, and one for everyone else. Not only did Hunter Biden refuse to comply with his initial subpoena until threatened with criminal contempt, but he then came before Congress and lied....

The documents released today are not part of a personal vendetta against Hunter Biden, but are meant to ensure the equal application of the law.

Lying during sworn testimony is a felony offense that the Department of Justice has prosecuted numerous individuals for in recent years.... Hunter Biden's lies under oath, and obstruction of a congressional investigation into his family's potential corruption, calls into question other pieces of his testimony.

The newly released evidence affirms, once again, the only witnesses who can be trusted to tell the truth in this investigation are the IRS whistleblowers."

Ways and Means presents the three instances when Shapley and Zeigler caught Biden lying in a succinct format, the rigorous tone of which suggests the committee's strong determination to hold the president's son to the letter of the law.

Each entry is headed, "Lie #1," #2, or #3, followed by a section headed "Hunter Biden's Sworn Testimony" and another called simply "The Truth."



Internal Revenue Service building in Washington, D.C. (Chris Phan, Flickr, CC BY 2.0)

In the first case, Biden is shown to have lied about who he was texting, in a now- famous incident, when he warned a Mr. Zhao that his father was with him as he demanded an immediate wire transfer of \$5 million.

Biden, hiding behind his drug and alcohol addictions, claimed in testimony, “I sent the text to the wrong Zhao.” The committee produced What’sApp telephone records showing there was only one “Zhao” in Hunter Biden’s universe, and it was Raymond Zhao, the chairman of CEFC, a Chinese energy company that, shortly after the exchange of texts, wired \$5 million to accounts Hunter Biden controlled.

In the second case, Biden claimed to have no beneficial association with or control of the bank accounts of Rosemont Seneca Bohai, a financial entity Biden operated with a business partner named Devon Archer.

The committee revealed evidence that Biden in fact used Rosemont Seneca to receive his monthly stipend from Burisma, where he sat on the board during his father’s vice-presidency, as well as funds from other foreign enterprises and people to whom he was selling influence.

Lie #3 concerned Biden’s intervention to secure a U.S. visa in behalf of Mykola Zlochevsky, the Burisma founder (who is misidentified in the Ways and Means statement as “Nicolay.”) Asked about this during his Feb. 28 testimony, Biden asserted, “I’d never pick up the phone and call anybody for a visa.” The committee produced email traffic demonstrating that Biden “was actively using his name and father’s influence to aid foreign nationals in obtaining visas from the U.S. government.”



Zlochevsky in 2010. (Svetlana Pashko, Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 4.0)

Scant Coverage

It is shocking — or perhaps not in view of the media’s record — to consider how little coverage these revelations received at the time. On June 5, Jason Smith, Jim Jordan, who chairs the House Judiciary Committee, and James Comer, who chairs Oversight, sent criminal referrals to U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland, recommending the Justice Department charge Biden, and James Biden as well, with making false statements under oath. David Weiss, who now serves as a special prosecutor, also received the three chairs’ letter. Neither Garland nor Weiss has so far responded publicly. It is difficult to see how either the DoJ, the White House, or the media can ignore, spin, or distort these charges — open-and-shut matters documented on paper and in digital records.

Tangentially related but closely so, after a trial of of seven days, June 4 to June 10, the jury on June 11 found Hunter Biden guilty on all three charges related to his purchase and possession of a gun in 2018, during a time he was drug addicted and lied about this condition on his application to purchase a .38 Colt revolver.



Judge Maryellen Noreika. (U.S. District Court for Delaware, Eric Crossan, Wikimedia Commons, Public domain)

Biden now awaits sentencing by Maryellen Noreika, the district court judge in Delaware who rejected the objectionably lenient plea bargain to which Weiss agreed in July 2023.

Much has been made of the Biden family's displays of unity and compassion before and during Hunter Biden's trial. President Biden flew to Wilmington for a late-night visit with Hallie Biden a few days before the trial began.

Even *The New York Times* suggested this risked leaving the president open to charges of witness tampering, given Hallie Biden was scheduled to testify for the prosecution. Hallie Biden is the widow of Beau Biden, Joe's oldest son, and, during Hunter Biden's years as an addict was for a time after Beau's death Hunter's paramour.

During testimony, Hunter's chronic indulgences in cocaine and alcohol were almost ostentatiously played out for the jury and, it seemed, the public. The First Lady, Jill Biden, attended the trial daily but for the days she was at the Normandy beaches to join the president in marking the 80th anniversary of the D-Day landings.

The Biden clan was notably stoic when the verdict was announced. Evidently for the cameras, Hunter Biden took his wife, Melissa Cohen Biden, by the shoulders, leaned to kiss her, and audibly whispered with a faint smile, "Hey."

It is not possible to interpret these evidently rehearsed-for-the-public family displays with anything like certainty. But questions inevitably arise. They turn, almost inevitably on David Weiss' role as the prosecutor in the gun case.

Weiss is a highly problematic figure. As earlier noted, he was deeply compromised when, during federal investigations into Hunter Biden's tax records and the broader matter of his foreign business dealings, he, Weiss, acted covertly on numerous occasions to shield Hunter Biden from the lawful scrutiny of federal investigators.

Many were astonished — and many Republican political figures objected — when, the plea deal of July 2023 having collapsed, Attorney-General Garland promoted Weiss to the rank of special prosecutor.



Weiss in 2018. (Delaware U.S. Attorneys Office, Wikimedia Commons, Public domain)

This was ostensibly to give Weiss broader powers to direct investigations into the corruption allegations Hunter Biden faced — an array that threatened to lead to the White House door.

As many critics immediately charged, the Weiss appointment seemed intended not to extend his powers but to keep in place a federal attorney who had just demonstrated his willingness to protect the president's son — and by extension the president, let us not miss — as a matter of partisan loyalty.

Hunter Biden's trial on various charges related to his handling of his federal taxes is to begin on Sept. 5, two months to the day before the presidential elections.

Weiss will again be the prosecutor. This leaves us now with two questions.

One, were Hunter Biden's attorneys in the gun trial in essence shadow-boxing? Their defense strategies — it could not be proven Hunter was using when he purchased the gun, a guilty verdict would infringe on his Second Amendment rights — were flimsy and unpromising.

Was the guilty verdict, in other words, what is called in intelligence circles a limited hangout?

Has a decision been made at top levels of the Democratic- controlled federal judiciary to find Hunter Biden guilty on the lesser crime of illegal gun possession — on the argument he had to be convicted of something — so as to prepare a skeptical public for an innocent verdict in the much more consequential trial on charges of financial corruption — a trial that could directly threaten the Biden presidency?

Two, where are the House hearings likely to go from here, and what will be the next step? The June 5 criminal referrals are indication enough that the Oversight and Judiciary committees are far from done, spent, or at a dead end.

As previously noted in this series, it seems clear they have enough sound evidence to support a vote to impeach President Biden.

But it remains to be seen whether the House committees will have the political will to press the case they appear to have, just as the outcome in California, where Weiss will prosecute the tax and corruption cases, is for now not at all certain.

Patrick Lawrence, a correspondent abroad for many years, chiefly for *The International Herald Tribune*, is a columnist, essayist, lecturer and author, most recently of *Journalists and Their Shadows*, available from Clarity Press or via Amazon. Other books include *Time No Longer: Americans After the American Century*. His Twitter account, @thefloutist, has been permanently censored.

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By Patrick

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