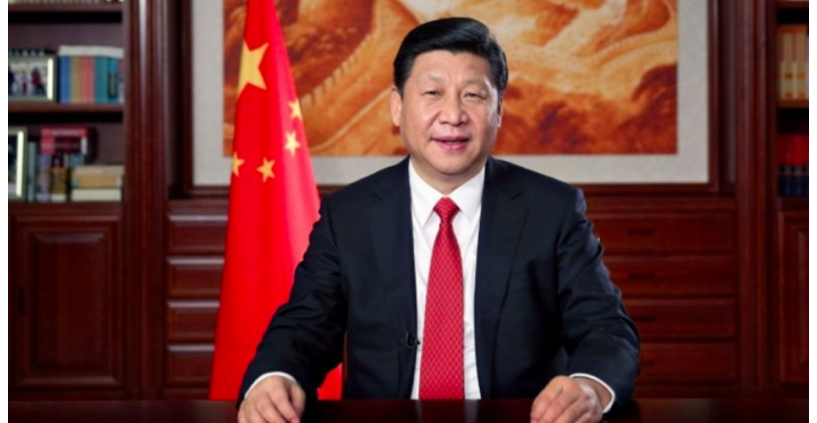




Written by [Alex Newman](#) on April 14, 2016

Panama Papers: Gov't Corruption Is the Scandal, not Privacy

While the media-manufactured “scandal” of “rich people” allegedly hiding money from politicians in offshore accounts [continues to be exposed as largely bogus](#), there have been some interesting revelations of alleged corruption among politicians and dictators to emerge from the so-called Panama Papers. The ruthless Communist Chinese dictatorship, which is censoring all news about the leak in domestic outlets, appears to be the regime with the most top-level officials implicated.



Hundreds of other tyrants, politicians, bureaucrats, judges, crony bankers, officials, and their family members have also been ensnared, according to news reports about the leaked documents. Despite the lack of media attention, even the Hillary Clinton campaign, via senior Democrat operatives John and Tony Podesta and the Kremlin bank their firm represents, has been indirectly caught up in the maelstrom.

The media, bloated governments, and the political class, unsurprisingly, are trying to whip the public into a frenzy over the non-issue of legal tax avoidance by the productive class — companies and individuals who do what they can to avoid surrendering more of their wealth to politicians than they are legally required to hand over. “A lot of it’s legal, but that’s exactly the problem,” fumed Obama, who apparently feels entitled to unspecified amounts of other people’s wealth beyond what the law requires, and never met a tax or regulation that he did not want to impose. In the real world, of course, not paying more in tax than required by law is great news for humanity. It means more money for productive investments, economic growth, and consumer spending. It also means less money for bloated governments and politicians to squander, steal, or worse, use to oppress the citizenry.

Just as *The New American* predicted last week, the Panama Papers are [already being exploited by the establishment and tax-hungry governments to push more globalism and statism](#) — [a global tax regime](#), a planetary jihad against financial privacy, and more. Top European officials and tax-funded shells for Big Government were even celebrating the leak of documents from Panamanian law firm Mossack Fonseca, imagining that it would help advance their cause. And the [United Nations did not disappoint](#). “The ‘Panama Papers’ underscore the need to make public disclosure of beneficial ownership information legally binding in all countries,” declared UN “human rights expert” Juan Pablo Bohoslavsky. “States must put an end to such harmful banking secrecy, for which there is no meaningful justification.” It was not immediately clear how shredding what remains of the human right to privacy would promote “human rights.”

But while the media and the establishment try to keep everyone focused on legal tax avoidance, the real scandals, if there are any, might be the sheer number of top politicians, United Nations figures, and bureaucrats exposed in potentially shady dealings in the leak. In all, less than 30 members of the



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Forbes billionaire list even popped up in the documents so far, and none appears to have been involved in violating any laws. On the other hand, some 150 or more politicians and senior officials have already been linked to the scandal. Among the most infamous so far was Prime Minister of Iceland Sigmundur Gunnlaugsson, who appears to have used a secret Panamanian entity to potentially skirt capital controls imposed on everyday Icelanders amid that nation's banking-sector meltdown. He was forced to "step aside" indefinitely by outraged protesters over a failure to disclose the facts. But he was only the tip of the iceberg.

First, China. No other government or dictatorship thus far has as many top level rulers and minions or their families involved in allegedly stealing money and hiding it abroad. According to news reports, at least eight senior Communist Party of China bigwigs or their family members have offshore corporations that were set up by Mossack Fonseca, one of many similar firms that establish legal entities for clients. There is reportedly no reasonable, lawful explanation for the sums involved. Among those implicated is the brother-in-law of brutal Chinese dictator and Communist Party boss Xi Jinping (shown above), who is currently engaged in an alleged "anti-corruption" campaign targeting certain officials for real and imagined corruption. All news of the leak is banned in China.

Beyond Beijing, numerous current and former UN officials were also ensnared in the scandal. The son of former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, for example, used a Panamanian shell company in 2003 to purchase a fancy apartment in London for himself. He had previously been accused and investigated for alleged corruption involving massive UN contracts awarded to his company while his father led the UN. A lawyer for Annan released a statement claiming the secret Panamanian shell companies and accounts were all created for "normal, legal purposes." But suspicions continue to swirl around the former UN chief and his family.

Numerous other African officials or family members were also named in the documents. They include Kenya's deputy chief justice, the son of Ghana's former president, the personal secretary of Morocco's King, Angola's oil minister, the sister of the president of the Democratic Republic of Congo, the head of Botswana's appeals court, the widow of former Guinean president Lansana Conte, and many, many more.

In Pakistan, at least three out of four children of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, a top recipient of U.S. tax dollars under "foreign aid" schemes, used shell companies to buy properties in London. In Azerbaijan, "President" Ilham Aliyev's wife and children are listed owners of offshore companies in the documents. And the Kremlin, of course, has been at the center of much of the reporting about the Panama Papers, with some news accounts claiming there is a \$2 billion trail leading back to Putin.

Also ensnared was Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko. According to leaked documents cited in press reports, the Ukrainian leader set up an offshore company in the British Virgin Islands as a "tax haven" using the services of the Mossack Fonseca law firm. Calls for his impeachment are growing louder, though prosecutors declined to press charges. Poroshenko himself denies wrongdoing, too, saying all of the activities were legitimate and legal. Critics, though, said he likely broke at least some laws by creating a company during his presidency and by not reporting it on his disclosure forms.

Numerous other current and former heads of state have also been named in the documents. And the full list of people named has not even been released yet. It is reportedly set to be released publicly in May. So far, only journalists with select establishment publications have been permitted to examine the documents.



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In the United States, some media reports are linking the Clinton and Obama camps to the scandal. Essentially, the Panama Papers revealed shady dealings by the Kremlin-controlled Russian banking giant Sberbanka. The U.S. lobbying firm for that company was founded by two top operatives and money men for Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama, John Podesta and his brother Tony. The state-owned firm, the largest in Russia, is essentially an arm of the Kremlin and its intelligence agencies. It is also very close to Vladimir Putin and his inner circle, according to reports.

Both Podesta brothers, meanwhile, are key Democrat insiders. John, founder of the Big Business-backed radical statist group Center for American Progress (CAP), occupied a top post in the Obama administration and [even worked on a United Nations plan to “dramatically alter” the way every person on the planet thinks](#) and behaves. He currently serves as campaign chief for Clinton. Tony works on the money side, serving as a “big-money” bundler gathering contributions from cronies to get Clinton elected and presumably secure favors in return.

The *Observer*, which [highlighted the revelations](#), and other critics, said the Podesta Group should have registered as agents of the Russian government under U.S. federal law. “They are lobbyists for Vladimir Putin’s personal bank of choice, an arm of his Kremlin and its intelligence services,” it said. “Since the brothers Podesta are presumably destined for very high-level White House jobs next January if the Democrats triumph in November at the polls, their relationship with Sberbank is something they — and Hillary Clinton — need to explain to the public.” So far the brothers’ lobbying outfit has declined to comment in response to requests from reporters.

Of course, much of the information that emerged during the leak, even on politicians, surrounds otherwise legal activities, as liberty-oriented voices in the debate have pointed out. “Yes, bad people also use legal and financial services. Sometimes they even do so to help them conduct their illicit activity. They also sometimes use airplanes to meet with co-conspirators, or cash to conduct black market sales,” [explained](#) Director of Policy and Communications Brian Garst with the Center for Freedom and Prosperity. “That’s not an argument for depriving law abiding citizens of the use of either of those. The fact that corrupt politicians made use of the legal services of Mossack Fonseca does not mean that something must be done about Mossack Fonseca and similar firms. It suggests, if anything, that something must be done about political corruption.”

Another analyst explained that it was only logical to expect that politicians would be implicated to a great extent. “News like this should definitely offend us, but it shouldn’t surprise us. Politicians get into politics and dictators lust for power so that they can get rich,” [explained](#) economic author and commentator John Tamny at RealClearMarkets, calling for people to celebrate tax havens for keeping more wealth out of the hands of the political class. “The truly productive create actual wealth in the private sector, while the politics and power-minded attain wealth by getting into politics whereby they fleece the true wealth creators of their production.”

Suspicious raised about lack of Western globalists and insiders exposed in the leak have abounded so far. And Rothschild efforts to attract overseas money to its own offshore-accounts operations based out of Nevada have also been highlighted by cynics and skeptics of the establishment narrative. Some analysts have also noted that Rothschild protege and radical globalist George Soros was financing the left-wing “journalism” groups behind the leaks. Bradley Birkenfeld, the infamous American who worked at a Swiss bank and told the IRS about U.S. taxpayers evading taxes, even [told CNBC that the Panama Papers was likely a CIA operation](#), with the handful of Western figures such as U.K. Prime Minister David Cameron caught up in it merely “collateral damage.”



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Either way, the phony “scandal” does not smell right and has not from the beginning, when [globalists and socialists foaming at the mouth to kill privacy and impose a global tax regime were celebrating](#). But no matter how much it may irritate humanity that crooked politicians steal money and stash it overseas, that is not a reason for the rest of us to surrender the individual right to privacy — plus, crooked politicians will just find another way to steal anyway. Americans, in particular, should demand *more* financial privacy and freedom, rather than being duped into joining the tax-funded shills hoping to shred both.

Photo of Xi Jinping: AP Images

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