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COMMENTARY | Center for American Security

NEXT STEPS FOR PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP'S EXECUTIVE ORDER, "HOLDING FORMER GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS ACCOUNTABLE FOR ELECTION INTERFERENCE AND IMPROPER DISCLOSURE OF SENSITIVE GOVERNMENTAL INFORMATION."

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As a former CIA analyst and staff member of the House Intelligence Committee, I strongly support President Trump's executive order to lift the security clearances of the 51 former intelligence officers who signed the fraudulent October 2020 letter asserting that a press story on a laptop owned by President Biden's son Hunter was Russian disinformation. I also strongly support President Trump's decision to lift any security clearances held by former National Security Adviser John Bolton due to his 2020 tell-all book.

The actions against these individuals were long overdue. However, more needs to be done.

The signers of the Hunter Biden laptop letter abused their intelligence credentials to influence the outcome of the 2020 election. They deceived the American people and discredited information derogatory to Joe Biden that could have resulted in his defeat. Intelligence professionals who abuse their professions to throw a presidential election are not entitled to hold lucrative post-employment security clearances.

John Bolton's 2020 book, *The Room Where It Happened: A White House Memoir*, published in June 2020, was a gross betrayal of his responsibilities as a senior presidential adviser because Bolton revealed his candid and confidential conversations with President Trump. His book also did not



comply with a mandatory pre-publication clearance procedure and reportedly included sensitive information. Given Bolton's violation of his obligation not to disclose confidential conversations with the president and to comply with pre-publication review rules, he is not entitled to hold a security clearance.

I also agree with the executive order's language directing the Director of National Intelligence (DNI) to submit a report to the president within 90 days that details any additional inappropriate activity that occurred within the Intelligence Community related to the Hunter Biden laptop letter; recommendations to prevent the Intelligence Community or anyone who works for or within it from inappropriately influencing domestic elections; and any disciplinary action, including the termination of security clearances, that should be taken against anyone who engaged in inappropriate conduct related to the letter signed by the 51 former intelligence officials.

Based on my experience working in the intelligence field, I recommend the following additional actions:

1. Withdrawal of security clearances from former Secretary of State Antony Blinken because he initiated the Hunter Biden laptop letter when he worked for the 2020 Biden campaign.
2. Suspension of employment and security clearances of any currently serving Intelligence Community officer involved in the pre-publication clearance of the Hunter Biden laptop letter.
3. All persons above be barred access to all U.S. government national security facilities, conferences, and events.
4. The DNI Director should direct companies that have hired any of the above persons as defense or intelligence contractors to terminate these contracts. If they refuse, the DNI will prepare a list of reprisals for the president, including ending all U.S. government contracts with these companies.

