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Hillary's Excellent Clinton Foundation Reporting Adventure

During her confirmation hearings before becoming Secretary of State, Mrs. Clinton [repeatedly promised](#) disclosure and transparency. Maybe she tried, but well, mistakes were made. Passive voice, by someone. After all, she was pretty busy. She even tried to streamline her life by using a single wireless device for email. What, she had four? Mistakes were made.

The acting CEO of the Clinton Foundation [posted a statement](#) acknowledging that the Foundation failed to separate government grants from donations. Oops, we're amending our tax returns, no harm done, the Foundation suggests. It is clear that the Foundation does good works. The 'no harm done' is somewhat less clear, and it isn't just the tax returns.



Mrs. Clinton has done little to address the potentially disastrous fallout she could face if Americans, her own party and even the President, asked about it. For one, extensive donations or grants to her Foundation were made by foreign governments while Mrs. Clinton was Secretary of State. To most in government, the issue would be catastrophic. After all, tens of millions of dollars in foreign government payments [weren't reported](#) in tax filings for five years.

Depending on how one defines 'is' in the context of what 'is' a government donation, there was confusion. The parsing of 'is' worked for President Clinton. Perhaps it can for Mrs. Clinton too. If not, well, it might have violated Mrs. Clinton's promise before she signed on as Secretary of State from her home email server. Mr. Obama may not be mad, but perhaps he should be, since it appears that Mrs. Clinton violated his rules too.

The opaque Clinton Foundation tax returns make it worse, looking as if someone—presumably not Mrs. Clinton—wanted to keep the embarrassing and conflict-triggering gifts quiet. Perhaps there are official emails? Oh, even those are actually not official now. The run-by-someone-else Foundation has also come under scrutiny for failing to clear all foreign government donations through an agreed-upon State Department vetting process. [Another oops.](#)

The Foundation initially claimed that it was barred by Canadian law from revealing the names of donors. Some now call that a [bogus](#) excuse. And more mistakes keep coming out. The Foundation donations from the China Overseas Real Estate Development and the U.S.-Islamic World Conference? Actually, those were payments for services, er rather honoraria paid for Mr. Clinton's speeches.

It isn't just bloggers complaining. [Bloomberg](#), the [New York Times](#) and the [Boston Globe](#) have queried this mess. How much of Clinton Foundation donations go to overhead is a [worry](#) too. Mrs. Clinton resigned from the Foundation's board after she officially announced her Presidential run. Upon becoming Secretary of State, Mrs. Clinton promised that the Foundation would stop accepting donations from foreign governments. There were exceptions, and the Foundation's IRS filings were less than transparent.

Starting in 2010, the Foundation reported on its IRS tax return for three consecutive years that it received no donations from foreign government sources. It wasn't as if they didn't know how to report them. In prior years, the Foundation reported tens of millions of dollars in such donations. The Foundation is now worrying over the accuracy of the IRS returns from 2010, 2011 and 2012. Most taxpayers can't amend that far back, generally being limited to the last three years.

Yet the Foundation says it will "re-file when the review is completed." Refiling does sound responsible, but does it fix everything? It is clear that the Foundation did accept millions in donations from foreign governments in those years, which overlapped with the time Mrs. Clinton served as Secretary of State. In fact, a whopping [181 donors lobbied the State Department](#) while Mrs. Clinton was there.

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