

In the Interest of Transparency, New America Releases Email Correspondence with Barry Lynn

Aug. 30, 2017

In order to provide greater clarity and context to the issues raised in the *New York Times* article dated Wednesday, August 30th, New America is releasing in its entirety email correspondence from its President and CEO Anne-Marie Slaughter to the former director of Open Markets, Mr. Barry Lynn.

The first email quoted in the *New York Times* is from June 2016, a full year ago. Subsequently, we continued to support the work of Open Markets while asking Barry to abide by institutional norms of transparency and collegiality.

The next two emails, one of which was also quoted by the *New York Times* today, are from this summer. They again focus on Barry's obligations to his fellow program directors and to the institution as a whole. We would not have released them as a matter of employee confidentiality, but as they were partially released by the *New York Times*, we are providing them in the interest of full context and transparency.

On Thu, Jun 23, 2016 at 8:22 AM, Anne-Marie Slaughter wrote:

Barry -- I have to say I am with Meredith on this. We worked so hard with you to get you 11th Hour funding; just THINK about how you are imperilling funding for others. I need talking points now -- I am talking to her in less than an hour. We are in the process of trying to expand our relationship with Google on some absolutely key points. I also need the current write-up of the event right away. Right now.
Thanks.

On Fri, Jun 30, 2017 at 7:08 PM, Anne-Marie Slaughter wrote:

Dear Barry,
I just want to set out my understanding of where we are based on our conversation yesterday, so we have no misunderstanding going forward. As I told you, the time has come for Open Markets and New America to part ways, based on your repeated violations of our institutional norms and values concerning notice and cooperation when things that one program does affects other programs. I and other members of the leadership team regard your actions on Tuesday, June 26, as a breach of faith, imperiling the institution as a whole in a way that could have been avoided. Let me emphasize again that this decision is in no way based on the content of your work; you have made your views on platform monopolies clear in many ways over recent years and we have featured those views the way we feature the views of any other programs.
I am not going to change my mind on this. I have consulted repeatedly with other members of the leadership team and have myself reached the conclusion that we have given you enough chances to change your ways, without sufficient result. That said, I also recognize your long history with and contributions to New America and would very much prefer a cooperative spinning out where you find another home for Open Markets and its funding than firing you as Program Director. You and I agreed that this would be the best course; however, I made clear that if this process becomes adversarial in any way that generates negative publicity for New America from anyone associated with Open Markets, then the cooperative option will be foreclosed.
On timing, we discussed 1-2 months. You asked if I could give you more time; I said I would consult. I have consulted, and I'm afraid the answer is no. Open Markets must find a new home or spin out on its own by September 1. I will be back in the office on July 11 and will ask Isabel to find us a time to meet, with Tyra as well. Please bring a detailed plan of action to that meeting regarding your discussions with alternative homes for the program and planned communications with employees, funders, and the public. We can work through that together to make sure we have covered all possible contingencies.
We will also agree on a common narrative on why this is happening that involves no disparagement by us of you or by you of us. We will work closely with you to communicate to funders and to transfer your funding to another 501(c)(3) the extent that funders agree. We have done this with other programs in the past. The other issue we discussed relates to your current hiring. You should not bring anyone on as an employee between now and September 1. You can create a consulting contract or a fellowship agreement, to the extent your funders agree.
I am truly sorry it has come to this. But I very much hope that you can find a new home in a way that does not rupture your long relationship with New America.
Best,
Anne-Marie

From: Anne-Marie Slaughter
Sent: Friday, July 07, 2017 5:43 PM
To: 'Barry Lynn'
Cc: Tyra Mariani
Subject: RE: Following up on our conversation

Dear Barry,

I look forward to our meeting on Wednesday; I have asked Tyra to join us. I am disappointed in your response below, as I made clear repeatedly that I am absolutely not deciding that we must part ways based on any response from Google; I have not had any contact with anyone at Google since my conversation with Susan Molinari right after you and I talked on June 26 and you agreed that I would have a chance to see your press statement before it went up. As you know, I have written about platform monopolies myself, in a book that Eric Schmidt endorsed, and I fully respect and appreciate the work that you do every day. As I explained in our conversation and repeat here, your telling me one thing and doing another was just the last instance of a pattern of behavior that has been troubling to myself and your colleagues for over a year. I understand that you do not want to hurt New America, but you simply do not behave with the necessary degree of collegueship that sets all of us up to be successful in our various viewpoints and work. Indeed, your mischaracterization of our conversation below is a prime example of what I am talking about.

Still, I do want us to part ways as amicably as possible. I do have to insist on the timeline I laid out and think what I articulated is reasonable and fair, unless you would prefer for me to take unilateral action, which would have the effect of leaving your program at New America but not you. As further evidence that the issue at hand is not your views but your behavior, we would be willing to do that, but it would be a far worse outcome for you. Thus I hope we can agree on the timeline I propose, and suggest that you start talking to other possible hosts as quickly as possible, and hopefully you have already.

Tyra and I will see you Wednesday; I apologize for not getting the meeting scheduled sooner – I thought I had asked Isabel for it but we had a miscommunication.

Best,
Anne-Marie

The original post can be found here:

<https://www.newamerica.org/new-america/press-releases/interest-transparency-new-america-releases-email-correspondence-barry-lynn/>