



EXCLUSIVE: Illegal fundraiser for the Clintons made secret tape because he feared being ASSASSINATED over what he knew - and used it to reveal Democrats' bid to silence him

- **DailyMail.com has obtained a video in which convicted illegal Clinton fundraisers Johnny Chung gave secret testimony while in fear of his life**
- **The Chinese-American was convicted of funneling money to Bill Clinton's 1996 re-election bid in a breach of campaign finance law known as 'Chinagate'**
- **Now new book revealed how he spilled details of his activities in a video he made because he thought a squad of assassins would come after him**
- **He made the video with a friend after his FBI protection detail was suddenly removed - which Chung said on the tape shocked even his judge**
- **Chung feared meeting same fate as Ron Brown, Clinton commerce secretary, who died in plane crash, friend who made the tape reveals**
- **Video is revealed in new book about the Chinagate scandal**

By [Alana Goodman For Dailymail.com](#)

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A Chinese-American businessman at the center of a Clinton campaign finance scandal secretly filmed a tell-all video as an 'insurance policy' - because he feared being murdered.

In footage provided exclusively to DailyMail.com, Johnny Chung spills details on how he illegally funneled money from Chinese officials to Bill Clinton's 1996 re-election bid.

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The Daily Mail

The Chinese-American Clinton fundraiser recorded the 'elaborate videotaped testimony' while in hiding in 2000.

He smuggled it to trusted friends and family with instructions to release it to the media in the event of his untimely death because he believed he was at risk of being assassinated.

Chung is believed to still be alive and living in China.

The video was obtained by author and historian Doug Wead for his new book *Game of Thorns*, which traces Hillary Clinton's unsuccessful 2016 campaign and the Chinese government's long-running operation to buy political influence in Washington.



https://youtu.be/wso9_lw1LNY | [Raw *.mp4 video file](#)



Figure 1: Trusted: Johnny Chung's fundraising made him someone the Clinton were keen to be seen with - and to thanks. But when the businessman (left) got caught up in scandal, he feared for his life. Quite how close they were is shown in this picture - signed by Hillary Clinton



Taped: Johnny Chung recorded this testimony in a tape now obtained by DailyMail.com. He is believed to still be alive in China



Tentacles spread: The Chinagate scandal also saw Ng Lap Seng, a Macau billionaire tied to the Chinese government, accused of pouring \$1 million into Clinton's 1996 reelection bid.

Wead provided excerpts from the film to Dailymail.com. The man with whom Chung made the tape, Bob Abernethy, a friend from his church, said it was right that it was shown.

In the never-before-released footage, Chung described how he feared for his life after he publicly admitted to funneling money from Chinese officials to President Bill Clinton's 1996 reelection campaign.

He also claimed Democrats pressured him to stay silent about his dealings with the Clintons and said the FBI tried to enlist him in a sting against a top Chinese general at a Los Angeles airport.

The video comes amid renewed interest in foreign influence in Washington, as some members of President Donald Trump's team have been scrutinized for their associations with Russian officials.

The video grew out of a controversy in the mid-1990s when evidence surfaced that Chinese officials were pouring hundreds of thousands into then president Bill Clinton's reelection campaign through American straw donors.

Chung, one of the main players in the 'Chinagate' scandal, was accused of giving over \$300,000 to the Democratic National Committee on behalf of the head of China's military intelligence agency during Clinton's reelection bid.

Chung cooperated with the Department of Justice during the investigation, and was sentenced to five years of probation for campaign finance violations, bank fraud and tax evasion in 1998.

According to Wead's book *Game of Thorns*, Chung was persuaded to film the 'insurance' video by a former government official who visited him while he was in hiding and told him that his 'odds of survival actually increased by going public.'

Chung 'received a friendly visit from a retired government official, friendly with the FBI, who perhaps felt guilty about the treatment Chung had been given after agreeing to come forward and tell the truth,' reported Wead.

'And so, with assistance from the former government official, Johnny Chung produced an elaborate videotaped testimony that was secreted to friends and family to be forwarded to the media in the case of his death.'

Chung described on the tape how Democrats on the House Committee on Government Reform tried to dissuade him from testifying publicly before the committee by sending his attorney a letter telling him he could plead the Fifth Amendment.

Chung said his attorney thought the letter was 'ludicrous' and a veiled threat from Washington Democrats that they wanted Chung to stay quiet.

'My attorney is a fine and good attorney in the West Coast,' said Chung. 'Besides, every good American attorney, they know how to take the fifth...[the Democrats] sent a package to my attorney for one purpose.'

After Chung agreed to cooperate with prosecutors on the Chinagate investigation, he feared his knowledge of the Clinton campaign finance scandal and the Chinese influence operation could make him a target for assassination.



Testimony: Johnny Chung, who testified to the House Government Reform Committee, revealed how Democrats on the committee tried to dissuade him from testifying publicly by sending his attorney a letter telling him he could plead the Fifth Amendment

He said he feared his knowledge of the Clinton campaign finance scandal and the Chinese influence operation could make him a target for assassination.

The FBI in Los Angeles began providing around-the-clock protection for him. But just a few days before Chung was scheduled to testify before a grand jury, the FBI headquarters in Washington called off the protection detail and told Chung he would have to make the trip alone.

In the secret videotaped statement, Chung claimed the Department of Justice dismissed his safety concerns – with one U.S. attorney telling him to 'call 911' if he felt threatened.

'I called the FBI office and offered to [speak with] the US assistant attorney again on the phone,' said Chung.

'And he said 'Mr. Chung your case is over. As a normal American citizen what do you do if you feel your life is in danger? You just call 911.'

The businessman ended up testifying, telling the House committee that he believed the Clintons 'used me as much as I used them.'

During the mid-1990s, Chung met regularly in Washington with key Clinton officials and other Democrats – but none seemed suspicious about how the relatively unknown small-time businessman was able to cut them such large donation checks.

In total he visited the White House 57 times in a two-year span – eight of these meetings were 'off the books.'

Most of the meetings were with Hillary Clinton or her staff. During one of these trips, Chung personally handed a \$50,000 check to Hillary Clinton's chief of staff Maggie Williams.

Chung even helped arrange for Bill Clinton to meet with the source of the money – a top Chinese military official – at a Los Angeles fundraiser.

After Chung's activities caught the attention of federal authorities, Democrats quickly distanced themselves from the onetime fundraiser.

During Chung's case, DNC officials claimed he misled them and urged the judge to give him a harsh sentence. But the judge declined, and even noted in the sentencing statement that it was 'strange' nobody from the DNC was prosecuted for accepting the illegal funds.

'It's very strange that the giver pleads guilty and the givee gets off free,' said U.S. District Judge Manuel L. Real.

Judge Real also said the leaders of the DNC were 'two of the dumbest politicians I've ever seen' if they were not aware of the campaign funding scheme.

He blasted U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno for failing to appoint a special prosecutor to investigate Democratic involvement in the scandal.

In the videotaped declaration, Chung said the DNC 'portrayed themselves as the victims, victimized by Johnny Chung.'

Chung claimed that the FBI also wanted to enlist him in a plot to arrest Chinese General Ji Shengde at the Los Angeles airport.

"Mr Chung your case is over. As a normal American citizen what do you do if you feel your life is in danger? You just call 911."

U.S. Attorney's office's to Johnny Chung - making him fear for his life

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Trusted: Ng Lap Seng was photographed meeting then president Bill Clinton in Georgetown, in 1995. He avoided prosecution over claims he gave illegal campaign donations



Awaiting trial: Ng Lap Seng was arrested in 2015 with a suitcase of cash as he entered the United States and is now under house arrest pending a trial for attempting to bring a United Nations official

'At one point the FBI called me up and the Department of Justice people, they said General Ji had come to visit the United States, he visits once a year, and also he has a son in the United States,' said Chung. 'They were thinking of taking me to the...airport in Los Angeles and...the only thing I need to do is point the finger at General Ji.'

Chung lived in California after his probation ended, but has since returned to China. Wead said he was unable to reach him for the book.

Chung was interviewed in the video by his friend Bob Abernethy, a California software executive. The two became friends while attending the same church.

Abernethy told Dailymail.com that Chung recorded the film as a form of 'life insurance' before he testified to congress.

'The reason Johnny asked me to do this interview with him was to make the information publicly available [in case of his death] and also as a type of 'life insurance' since he was very concerned about his safety,' said Abernethy.

'His concern about his safety was understandable, given that there had been three attempts on his life which required FBI protection... and given his knowledge of what happened to people such as Ron Brown, who as Secretary of Commerce, was deeply involved in arranging – and selling seats on - Clinton administration trade missions to China,' added Abernethy.



Justified: Bob Abernethy (right), the church friend who helped Chung make the tape, said the death of Clinton's commerce secretary, Ron Brown (left), was among the factors which had made him fear for his life

Brown, the point person for Clinton's trade policy with China, was killed in a plane crash in Croatia in 1996. Some speculated that he was preparing to go public with information on the illegal Chinese campaign contributions shortly before his death.

Chung is one of several Chinese-Americans who were ensnared in the Clinton-era scandal that came to be known as 'Chinagate,' which involved the Chinese government illegally passing large sums of money to the Democratic National Committee.

Ng Lap Seng, a Macau billionaire tied to the Chinese government, was accused of pouring \$1 million into Clinton's 1996 reelection bid.

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Ng was accused of laundering the campaign donations through long-time Clinton associate Charlie Trie, who pleaded guilty to campaign finance violations in 1999.

Although Ng avoided prosecution at the time, he reappeared at a New York airport carrying a suitcase of cash in 2015, and was arrested for allegedly bribing a United Nations official. He is currently under house arrest at his \$3 million Manhattan apartment awaiting trial.

The UN official who allegedly accepted the bribes, John Ashe, 61, was unexpectedly killed by a barbell while lifting weights last summer.

In his book, Wead reports that the New York FBI office wanted to investigate Ng's connections to the Clintons last year, but the case was shut down by the Obama administration's Department of Justice.

Game of Thorns: The Inside Story of Hillary Clinton's Failed Campaign and Donald Trump's Winning Strategy is available for pre-order on Amazon.

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