

Reuters and BBC Caught Taking Money for Propaganda Campaign

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✓ Fact Checked

STORY AT-A-GLANCE

- › Leaked documents reveal Reuters and BBC News have been involved in a covert program by the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office to weaken Russia's influence through a multipronged propaganda campaign
- › Operation Mockingbird was a clandestine CIA media infiltration campaign launched in 1948 under the Office of Special Projects. The CIA spent about one-third of its budget on bribes to hundreds of journalists who published fake stories at the CIA's request
- › However, infiltration and manipulation of the media have been a routine occurrence since 1915, when J.P. Morgan interests, including the steel and shipbuilding industries, purchased editorial control of 25 of the most influential newspapers, thereby allowing them to control news about military preparedness, financial policies and other news that were crucial to their private and corporate interests
- › Operation Mockingbird was the CIA's effort to consolidate and expand this secret hold over the media some three decades later
- › While the propaganda messages change with the times, the basic modus operandi remains the same to this day. If anything, the system has only gotten more efficient and effective, as the number of major media outlets have shrunk and a vast majority of journalists simply parrot what's reported by the three global news agencies

This article was previously published March 10, 2021, and has been updated with new information.

Operation Mockingbird,^{1,2} publicly revealed during a 1975 Congressional hearing, was a clandestine CIA media infiltration campaign launched in 1948 under the Office of Special Projects.³

The CIA reportedly spent \$1 billion a year (about one-third of its entire budget⁴) on under-the-table bribes to hundreds of American journalists who in return published fake stories at the CIA's request. CIA-recruited journalists worked in most major news organizations, including CBS News, Time, Life, Newsweek and The New York Times, just to name a few.⁵ Later on, the campaign expanded to include foreign media as well.⁶ As reported by the Free Press:⁷

"In 1976, Senator Frank Church's investigation into the CIA exposed their corruption of the media. The Church Committee reported: 'The CIA currently maintains a network of several hundred foreign individuals around the world who provide intelligence for the CIA and at times attempt to influence opinion through the use of covert propaganda.

These individuals provide the CIA with direct access to a large number of newspapers and periodicals, scores of press services and news agencies, radio and television stations, commercial book publishers, and other foreign media outlets' ...

The tactic was straightforward. False news reports or propaganda would be provided by CIA writers to knowing and unknowing reporters who would simply repeat the falsehoods over and over again."

Reuters and BBC News Were Paid for Propaganda Campaign

While Operation Mockingbird may sound like ancient history, there's plenty of evidence to suggest it's still in full swing. During the Cold War, CIA propaganda disparaged communist ideologies. Today, it promotes radical socialist ideas that support a technocratic economic system instead.

While the propaganda messages change with the times, the basic modus operandi of their dissemination remains the same. If anything, the system has only gotten more efficient and effective, as the number of major media outlets has shrunk over these past decades, and a vast majority of journalists and news anchors simply parrot what's reported by the three global news agencies.

The CIA also isn't the only intelligence agency using the media for its own propaganda purposes. Leaked documents⁸ reveal Reuters and BBC News have been involved in a covert program by the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) to weaken Russia's influence on its neighbors. In his extensive February 20, 2021, GrayZone article, Max Blumenthal writes:⁹

"Working through a shadowy department within the UK FCO known as the Counter Disinformation & Media Development (CDMD), the media organizations operated alongside a collection of intelligence contractors in a secret entity known simply as 'the Consortium.'

Through training programs of Russian journalists overseen by Reuters, the British Foreign Office sought to produce an 'attitudinal change in the participants,' promoting a 'positive impact' on their 'perception of the UK' ...

In effect, the British government was seeking to infiltrate Russian media and propagate its own narrative through an influence network of Russian journalists trained in the UK ...

'These revelations show that when MPs were railing about Russia, British agents were using the BBC and Reuters to deploy precisely the same tactics that politicians and media commentators were accusing Russia of using,' Chris Williamson, a former UK Labour MP who attempted to apply public scrutiny to the CDMD's covert activities and was stonewalled on national security grounds, told The Grayzone.

'The BBC and Reuters portray themselves as an unimpeachable, impartial, and authoritative source of world news,' Williamson continued, 'but both are now

hugely compromised by these disclosures. Double standards like this just bring establishment politicians and corporate media hacks into further disrepute."

Reuters, BBC Hired to Promote Pro-NATO Narratives

The leaked documents show both Reuters and the BBC received "multimillion-dollar contracts to advance the British state's interventionist aims." The FCO funded:

- The cultivation of Russian journalists
- The establishment of "influence networks" in and around Russia
- The promotion of pro-NATO narratives in Russian-speaking regions

In its proposals, Reuters stated it has 15,000 journalists and staff within its global network, including 400 journalists within Russia. Reuters and BBC carried out their covert influencing mission in partnership with other high-profile media companies, including Bellingcat, Meduza and Mediazona.

Overseeing the operation was the Zinc Network, an intelligence contractor, which was also responsible for the establishment of a network of Russian and Central Asian YouTubers who were not registered as external sources. The Zinc Network also claimed to have the ability to "activate a range of content; to support anti-government protests inside Russia."

This isn't the first time Reuters and the BBC have been implicated in a Mockingbird-type media influencing operation. Documents declassified in January 2020 showed the British government funded Reuters "throughout the 1960s and 1970s to assist an anti-Soviet propaganda organization run by the MI6 intelligence agency," Blumenthal writes.¹⁰ The BBC, meanwhile, was used as "a pass-through to conceal payments" to Reuters.

180-Degrees From the Truth

It's no small irony that most of the organizations claiming to promote truth and counter disinformation are in fact doing the exact opposite. The Counter Disinformation & Media

Development (CDMD) group sounds very much like the Centre for Countering Digital Hate (CCDH).

The CCDH is an opaquely funded group run by Imran Ahmed, who is also a member of the Steering Committee on the Countering Extremism Pilot Task Force under the British government's Commission for Countering Extremism.

Ahmed has gone on record saying he considers anti-vaxxers "an extremist group that pose a national security risk,"¹¹ and admits tracking and spying on 425 vaccine-related Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and Twitter accounts.¹²

In addition to stating that medical and scientific professionals must "convince the public that COVID is dangerous and give them confidence that a vaccine is safe and effective,"¹³ the CCDH is also calling for deplatforming anyone who questions vaccines,¹⁴ and to "hold platforms accountable" through fines, criminal sanctions and other measures that can impact the platform's bottom line.

So, just as the CDMD is actually not countering disinformation but, rather, creating it, the CCDH is not in the business of countering digital hate; it's actively creating and promoting online hate by baselessly labeling millions of law-abiding parents — whose only crime is to be concerned about their children's health — as extremist threats and enemies of the state.

Media Have Become Integral Part of Intelligence Spy Network

Other media reports^{15,16,17} have also highlighted the role of intelligence agencies in the global effort to eliminate "anti-vaccine propaganda" from public discussion, and the fact that they're using sophisticated cyberwarfare tools to do so. For example, independent investigative journalist Whitney Webb writes:¹⁸

"British and American state intelligence agencies are 'weaponizing truth' to quash vaccine hesitancy as both nations prepare for mass inoculations, in a recently announced 'cyber war' to be commanded by AI-powered arbiters of truth against information sources that challenge official narratives ...

The UK's GCHQ [Government Communications Headquarters¹⁹] 'has begun an offensive cyber-operation to disrupt anti-vaccine propaganda being spread by hostile states' and 'is using a toolkit developed to tackle disinformation and recruitment material peddled by Islamic State' to do so.²⁰

In addition, the UK government has ordered the British military's 77th Brigade, which specializes in 'information warfare,' to launch an online campaign to counter 'deceptive narratives' about COVID-19 vaccine candidates.

The newly announced GCHQ 'cyber war' will not only take down 'anti-vaccine propaganda' but will also seek to 'disrupt the operations of the cyberactors responsible for it, including encrypting their data so they cannot access it and blocking their communications with each other.'

The effort will also involve GCHQ reaching out to other countries in the 'Five Eyes' alliance (U.S., Australia, New Zealand and Canada) to alert their partner agencies in those countries to target such 'propaganda' sites hosted within their borders."

Intelligence-Led Information Warfare Against the Public

Clues that U.S. intelligence agencies — not just the CIA but also the FBI — support this cyberwar against the public can also be found in a white paper²¹ published in the InfraGard Journal in June 2019. InfraGard, a nonprofit national security group, collaborates with the FBI²² on educational and information-sharing initiatives "that help mitigate threats" to national security.²³

The InfraGard paper²⁴ claims the American anti-vaccine movement is being orchestrated by Russian government-aligned organizations seeking to "sow discontent and distrust in topics and initiatives that serve U.S. interests,"²⁵ and that "The biggest threat in controlling an outbreak comes from those who categorically reject vaccination."²⁶

“ Primer's ultimate goal is to use their AI to entirely automate the shaping of public perceptions and become the arbiter of 'truth,' as defined by the state. ~ Whitney Webb”

Other evidence includes the fact that the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Special Operations Command have awarded a multimillion-dollar contract to the U.S.-based "machine intelligence" company Primer, to develop "the first-ever machine learning platform to automatically identify and assess suspected disinformation."²⁷

According to Webb, "Primer's ultimate goal is to use their AI to entirely automate the shaping of public perceptions and become the arbiter of 'truth,' as defined by the state."²⁸

The self-appointed arbiter of truth NewsGuard — which rates websites on criteria of "credibility" and "transparency" — is also partnered with both the U.S. State Department and the U.S. Department of Defense,²⁹ which strongly suggests government support (if not direct involvement) of censorship.

NewsGuard is also funded by the PR firm Publicis, which also appears to have an important role in this information war.

Most Mainstream Media Are Now Propagandists

Were it not for the mainstream media pumping out misleading if not flat-out false information on a daily basis for months on end, the COVID-19 pandemic would have been a mere blip on the public's radar. None of the draconian, freedom-robbing measures would have been remotely possible.

Considering the consistency of the narratives across the world this past year, it's inconceivable that there isn't some central "agency" of sorts directing it all. And, if so, there clearly must be a reason behind it. One does not fear-monger for no reason whatsoever. It has a purpose.

Historically, fear has been used by every would-be authoritarian and totalitarian regime you can think of, so there's every reason to suspect the same applies now. The main difference is that today's totalitarian ruler is more or less wholly unknown.

Who is it that wants to rule the world's population through fear? Who is trying to take control over the whole globe? Who is guiding and instructing virtually all government leaders? Intelligence agencies and their media partners undoubtedly play key roles, but they're unlikely to be the true core of the power structure behind it all.

No, the real power and leadership resides with the technocratic elite, the members of which have quietly and diligently worked to forward the agenda of a New World Order (NWO) for decades. What was once known as the NWO is now referred to as the Great Reset and the Fourth Industrial Revolution, with a public focus on a "green" carbon-based economy to "build back better" by reinventing capitalism, as defined by the World Economic Forum.³⁰

The not-so-public focus is technological surveillance and control over every facet of everyone's life, from health and civic involvement to labor, education and economy. Unfortunately, members of the technocracy no longer carry member cards or pay membership dues, which obscures their affiliation, but certain organizations are so intimately involved in furthering the Great Reset agenda that you can safely assume a majority of their members play some role in this scheme.

The Council on Foreign Relations

Aside from intelligence agencies, another key player behind the Great Reset is the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR). As explained by Swiss Policy Research, "Executives and top journalists of almost all major U.S. media outlets have long been members of the influential Council on Foreign Relations."³¹

Not to be confused with the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations or the European Council on Foreign Relations, CFR is a nonprofit think tank, the 5,000-plus members of which also include past and present presidents, politicians, secretaries of

state, CIA directors, bankers, lawyers, academic professors and corporate leaders, just to name a few.³²

CFR also operates the David Rockefeller Studies Program, which in turn advises the White House on foreign policy matters. Overall, the CFR wields incredible power and influence over the U.S. White House and its policies. As reported by Swiss Policy Research:³³

"In his famous article about 'The American Establishment,' political columnist Richard H. Rovere noted: 'The directors of the CFR make up a sort of Presidium for that part of the Establishment that guides our destiny as a nation ...

[I]t rarely fails to get one of its members, or at least one of its allies, into the White House. In fact, it generally is able to see to it that both nominees are men acceptable to it.' It was not until the 2016 election that the Council couldn't, apparently, prevail."

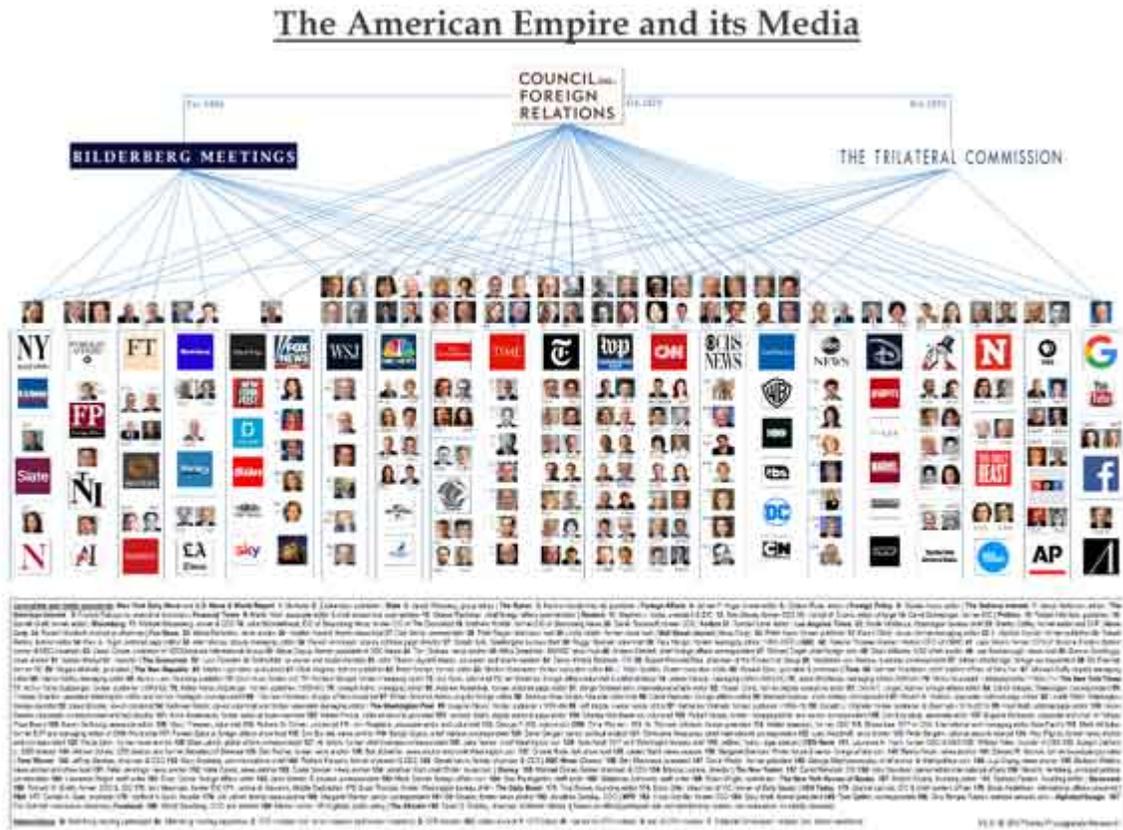
The Synchronization of Fake News

CFR has two international affiliates: the Bilderberg Group and the Trilateral Commission, both of which were established by CFR leaders "to foster elite cooperation at the global level."

Well-known names in the Trilateral group's U.S. branch include David Rockefeller, Henry Kissinger, Michael Bloomberg and Google heavyweights Eric Schmidt and Susan Molinari, vice president for public policy at Google. Many of its board members are also members of the Aspen Institute, which grooms and mentors executives from around the world about the subtleties of globalization.

As you can see in the graphic below, major media are well represented in all three groups. As mentioned, CFR members also include current and former CIA directors. In his book, "American War Machine,"^{34,35} Peter Dale Scott also documents the ties between CFR, the CIA, the national security apparatus and the banking industry. Taken together,

these ties explain how a false narrative (whatever it might be) can be so widely coordinated and synchronized.



Richard Stengel – Technocracy Poster Boy

Knowing what you now know about the CFR, comments by Richard Stengel, the top state media appointee for President Biden's transition team, will probably make a lot more sense.

During a 2018 CFR forum on fake news, Stengel – a CFR member and Atlantic Council fellow, former State Department official for the Obama administration, former managing editor for Time magazine, strategic adviser to Snap Inc., which runs Snapchat and Bitmoji and a political analyst on MSNBC – insisted governments must use propaganda on their citizens.³⁶

He repeated this sentiment in November 2020, after being appointed to President Biden's transition team, saying he's "not against propaganda. Every country does it, and

they have to do it to their own population. And I don't necessarily think it's that awful."³⁷

As reported by The GrayZone:³⁸

"A committed crusader in what he openly describes as a global 'information war,' Stengel has proudly proclaimed his dedication to the careful management of the public's access to information."

Stengel has even proposed abolishing — "rethinking" — the First Amendment, which guarantees the freedom of speech and press, "for practical reasons in society."³⁹

Stengel's presence in the Biden administration may be an augury of things to come, considering he created a nonclassified government entity during his Obama years, specifically to combat Russian disinformation.⁴⁰ This entity, the Global Engagement Center, now facilitates the U.S. government's efforts to spread its own propaganda around the world.

Stengel, with his close ties to several key centers of technocratic power — the U.S. government, the CFR, the Atlantic Council, mainstream media and Big Tech — is a veritable poster boy for modern technocracy, which makes his shameless promotion of censorship and propaganda more than a little understandable.

Pre-Mockingbird Media Manipulation

While Operation Mockingbird has earned a place in history as a point at which the free press was compromised, in reality, the infiltration of the press occurred long before the 1950s.

In his February 9, 1917, Congressional remarks, Congressman Oscar Callaway, D-Texas, explained the origin and execution of the plan to control and manipulate public opinion and mindset through media, which had taken shape just two years earlier:⁴¹

"In March, 1915, the J.P. Morgan interests, the steel, shipbuilding, and powder interest, and their subsidiary organizations, got together 12 men high up in the newspaper world and employed them to select the most influential newspapers

in the United States and sufficient number of them to control generally the policy of the daily press.

They found it was only necessary to purchase the control of 25 of the greatest papers. An agreement was reached; the policy of the papers was bought, to be paid for by the month; an editor was furnished for each paper to properly supervise and edit information regarding the questions of preparedness, militarism, financial policies, and other things of national and international nature considered vital to the interests of the purchasers."

Operation Mockingbird was essentially the CIA's effort to consolidate, while simultaneously expanding, this secret hold over the media some three decades later. It's a sobering thought to realize that virtually no one alive today has ever been informed by a truly free and independent press.

While the situation has surely deteriorated in more recent years, the covert use of mainstream media to manipulate and misdirect the public to protect the interests of the elite few has been par for the course for over 100 years.

The Propaganda Multipliers

When it comes to the actual dissemination of fake news and propaganda, news agencies play a central role, and there's only three of them: The Associated Press (AP), Reuters and Agence France-Presse (AFP). As explained in the Swiss Policy Research post, "The Propaganda Multiplier":⁴²

"The key role played by these agencies means Western media often report on the same topics, even using the same wording. In addition, governments, military and intelligence services use these global news agencies as multipliers to spread their messages around the world.

A study of the Syria war coverage by nine leading European newspapers clearly illustrates these issues: 78% of all articles were based in whole or in part on agency reports ... 0% on investigative research. Moreover, 82% of all opinion

pieces and interviews were in favor of a U.S. and NATO intervention, while propaganda was attributed exclusively to the opposite side."

In short, until or unless at least one of these news agencies sends out a notice, national and local media are unlikely to report on certain events. Even photos and videos are often sourced directly from these global news agencies. This way, people hear, see and read the exact same message everywhere.

"This dependency on the global agencies creates a striking similarity in international reporting: from Vienna to Washington, our media often report the same topics, using many of the same phrases – a phenomenon that would otherwise rather be associated with 'controlled media' in authoritarian states," Swiss Policy Research writes.⁴³

Even media outlets that have foreign correspondents on their payroll do not expect those correspondents to conduct independent investigations. They too simply report whatever the Big Three news agencies want covered, and from the angle they want it covered. What you end up with is a sort of echo-chamber where only one view is presented. As one might expect, this setup makes for a perfect propaganda machine.

As noted by Swiss Policy Research, "Due to the rather low journalistic performance of the mainstream media and their high dependence on a few news agencies, it is easy for interested parties to spread propaganda and disinformation in a supposedly respectable format to a worldwide audience." Intelligence agencies and defense ministries are well aware of this and use it with regularity, as surely does the CFR and the rest of the technocratic apparatus.

In short, the current censoring and labeling of anything that threatens the technocratic agenda and the profiteering of its members as "misinformation" and "disinformation" is a top-down scheme. It's not random, by any means, and it's not driven by the opinions of private companies themselves. Social media companies, for example, are mere tools for the technocratic deep state, which operates worldwide.

The question then becomes, if propaganda is that deeply entrenched in our media structure, how do we know what is true and what is not? There's no easy answer to this

question, but the solution involves first becoming aware of the fact that media lies, and that there is a reason for why the media narrative is what it is. One way to evaluate the news is to ask yourself, "Why might they want me to think of this in this particular way?" Eventually, patterns begin to form.

Ultimately, to find the truth, you must be willing to look for it, and to look in places outside the mainstream media consortium. You have to ask questions and reason your way through the information you find. If something doesn't make sense yet you're told to accept it without question, it's probably propaganda.

Any number of COVID-19 restrictions, for example, have been illogical in the extreme, which tells us they're not about protecting people from infection. It's about something else, and that something else has often been the purposeful destruction of small businesses to facilitate wealth transfer from the middle- and lower class to the top echelon. Ultimately, that is the plan, and to stop it, we have to stop believing the propaganda. It's just that simple. And that challenging.