



Israeli Disinformation Campaign Reaction Reveals Establishment Hysteria Over Russia & China Threats

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Glenn Greenwald (GG): American politics since 2016 has been dominated by grave warnings of the danger of Russia, and in particular, Russia's attempt to launch clandestine influence campaigns designed to manipulate the beliefs and minds of American citizens. That was essentially the primary basis on which Russiagate was launched in addition to the false conspiracy theory that the Trump campaign collaborated with the Russians to hack DNC emails. Over the last four years, the focus has turned to Chinese disinformation campaigns as well and in fact, this extraordinary step that the US Congress and the Biden administration just took together to ban an app that a third of American citizens voluntarily use, or at least force a sale of it to a more compliant American company, TikTok was also based on claims that the Chinese are using it to launch influence campaigns aimed at American citizens. And yet, as it turns out, Israel, unsurprisingly, but not really proven until today, has been doing exactly the same thing as what Russia and China are alleged to have been doing, namely, launching influence campaigns using manipulation and fake content and the like to manipulate American citizens to becoming more pro-Israel. Here from Haaretz, the Israeli newspaper, earlier today, quote: *Israel Secretly Targeted American Lawmakers With Gaza War Influence Campaign*. "In an attempt to sway global public opinion on the war in Gaza, fake accounts and sites spread pro-Israel and Islamophobic content". Remember, this is an Israeli daily newspaper. "The operation was orchestrated by Israel's Diaspora Affairs Ministry and run by a political campaign firm". And here's what the article reports, quote, "The Israeli government is behind a large-scale influence campaign primarily aimed at Black lawmakers and young progressives in the United States and Canada. The operation, whose existence was first reported by Haaretz in March, was launched after the start of the war in Gaza and was intended to sway certain segments of public opinion on Israel's conduct. The influence campaign made extensive use of fake websites and social media to promote content that is pro-Israel, anti-palestinian, and anti-Muslim, as well as disinformation about antisemitism on American campuses, according to an investigation by the watchdog site Fake Reporter Organisation, published today. The influence operation was run by a private Israeli online

political campaigning firm called STOIC that was hired for the project. According to sources information obtained by Haaretz, the operation was commissioned by Israel's Diaspora Affairs Ministry, but carried out by a different party for fear that its exposure could entangle Israel in a crisis. The ministry oversees a number of firms for a number of different purposes and goals. Among the candidates for the job was the organisation Voices of Israel, which received half of its original funding from the Israeli government, though it was not tapped for the task in the end".

Now, as I said and I said from the beginning of Russiagate when all this hysteria emerged about Russia using fake Facebook accounts and Twitter bots, that every major country does this to every other country. You don't think the United States government uses these kinds of clandestine influence campaigns aimed at the people in foreign countries, especially adversary countries? There's been a ton of reporting on how the United States does exactly that, and that was the main reason I was so resistant to this idea that Russia was some grave threat to American democracy, that what it had done in 2016 and what they're saying they're ready to do in 2024, again, is somehow a unprecedented threat to American democracy. But the question remains, why has the US government treated similar influence campaigns from Russia and China in such maximalist and shrieking ways, and yet has issued, thus far at least, no warning or concern about a very similar influence campaign that is secret and manipulative and deceptive, aimed at American citizens from Israel. Just to remind you of what has been in the discourse about these kinds of information campaigns here from BuzzFeed News in October of 2017. *Hillary Clinton Suggests Russian Interference in the US Election was a quote, "cyber 9/11"*. "The former presidential candidate made repeated references to Russian interference in US politics while on a speaking tour in London". Quote, "We had a really well respected security intelligence veterans saying this was a 'cyber 9/11' in the sense that it was a direct attack on our institutions", she said." The journalist who was responsible for introducing the Steele dossier hoax into American discourse before the 2016 election was David Corn of Mother Jones, and obviously he was never fired for perpetuating that fraud. In fact, he's been richly rewarded for having done so. He still writes at Mother Jones, and just last week he wrote an article with this headline, quote, *Here come the Russians again*. The Russians are coming again. Quote, "The director of national security recently warned that Russia remains, quote, 'the most active foreign threat to our elections'". And it goes on and on about the threat of Russian influence campaigns and bots and fake accounts and the like.

Just today, the EU Commission issued a warning ahead of the 2024 elections, not just for the United States, but also in Europe that, quote, "disinformation actors have pushed, among other things, false information about how to vote, discouragement of citizens from voting, division and polarisation, and fake accounts and manipulation". Now, obviously they weren't warning about Israel having done this. They don't speak ill of Israel, only about Russia and China doing it. Here is their report as well from earlier today. Quote, *European elections: EU institutions are prepared to counter disinformation*. "Being in the global forefront of addressing threats related to foreign information manipulation and interference, the EU is working in close cooperation with its like minded partners outside of the EU via force such as

the G7 Rapid Response Mechanism, among others. To raise resilience to external interference attempts, the EU rather has developed a dedicated toolbox to counter foreign information manipulation and interference, including a set of tools ranging from situational awareness and resilience building to legislation and diplomatic levers". Now remember that fear mongering over foreign influence campaigns, they ultimately ended up blaming not only Trump's victory over Hillary Clinton, but also Brexit on Russian disinformation. This hysteria, built up around foreign influence campaigns, has been one of the primary excuses invoked to justify having the government be able to censor the internet; that we need to protect our populations from influence and disinformation campaigns launched by foreign countries. But they'll never say that about Israel, only about China and Russia. The New York Times in September 2023: *China uses, quote, "Deceptive" Methods to Sow Disinformation, the US says.* "The accusations reflect worry in Washington, that China's information operation poses a growing security challenge to the United States". According to the State Department's report released on Thursday. China's efforts have evolved from a primary focus on promoting or defending the country's political views on issues like Taiwan and Hong Kong to one that aims to sow disinformation to discredit the United States at home and abroad. This has included accusations about the origins of the Covid pandemic, the new security partnership between the United States and Australia, and Russia's invasion of Ukraine."

Here from Reuters in 2024, just to give you a sense for how dominant and pervasive these threats are regarding Russia and China. *Foreign attempts to sway US election dangerously high and are rising, officials say.* Quote, "An increasing number of foreign actors, including non-state actors, are seeking to influence US elections, and Russia, China and Iran, while the most significant, are far from alone, US officials told a Senate committee on Wednesday. 'Specifically, Russia remains the most active foreign threat to our elections', Director of National Intelligence Avril Haines said. Quote, "The Russian government goals in such influence operations tend to include eroding trust in US democratic institutions, exacerbating sociopolitical divisions in the United States, and degrading Western support to Ukraine". They regard any messaging that's contrary to the US financing of the war in Ukraine as being a Russian government plot. That's why if you oppose their war in Ukraine, the Biden administration's, you'll immediately be deemed either an asset of or an operative for the Kremlin because, according to them, you're promoting their views. Quote, "Democratic Senator Mark Warner, the Senate's intelligence committee's chairman, said declassified information assessment identified not just Russia, China, Iran, but also Cuba, Venezuela and Islamic militants 'and a range of foreign hacktivists and profit-motivated criminals' are seeking to influence US politics". I mean, I just read you that report from the Israeli newspaper Haaretz, based on reporting from this watchdog site, also reported today by The New York Times, that Israel has a massive campaign of deceit and disinformation designed to secretly influence American citizens and American lawmakers to adopt pro-Israel views. It is inconceivable that our government would ever condemn that at all, let alone in the terms we're hearing here. Here from CNN in January of 2024, Nancy Pelosi House Speaker Emerita. She spoke on what she claimed was Russian...

Nancy Pelosi (NP): They're in front of my house all the time. I have a feeling for what

feelings they have. But we have to think about what we're doing. And what we have to do is try to stop the suffering in Gaza. This is women and children and people who don't have a place to go. So let's address that. But for them to call for a ceasefire is Mr. Putin's message. Mr. Putin's message; make no mistake, this is directly connected to what he would like to see.

GG: So American citizens protesting outside Nancy Pelosi's house and elsewhere who are calling for a ceasefire, according to Nancy Pelosi, are not only doing Russia's bidding, somehow Russia has prioritised a ceasefire in Gaza as its main foreign policy goal and is using American citizens, including young students, to direct and manipulate them to do that, not only that, said Nancy Pelosi, but she also said this.

NP: Same thing with Ukraine; it's about Putin's message. I think some of these protesters are spontaneous, some organic and sincere. Some, I think, are connected to Russia. And I say that having looked at this for a long time now.

Interviewer: You think some of these protests are Russian plans.

NP: They're plans. I think some financing should be investigated. And I want to ask the FBI to investigate them.

GG: Do you see how much they weaponized fears about foreign information campaigns, foreign influence campaigns? There are protesters who oppose Nancy Pelosi's support of Israel, who are protesting, and she immediately accuses them of being plots from the Kremlin and says, I want the FBI to go after them and investigate them to see if they have ties to the Russians. I mean this is derangement. You have no basis whatsoever for saying that these protesters have any connection to the Kremlin, but she wants to call on the FBI to go and investigate them. Now she also had a different conspiracy theory about foreign influence campaigns and these protesters outside of her house that she shared with us in late January of 2024. Here's what she said.

VIDEO

GG: So those are protesters outside of her house and she said, Go to China. You're all paid by China. This is what they do with all the dissent in the United States. Let's just hear the rest of this.

VIDEO

GG: She just said again, Go back to China, where your headquarters is. These are people, American citizens protesting against the war in Gaza and she first says they're Russian, and now she says they're Chinese. Here is Nikki Haley in 2023 warning about the same exact thing. Their two parties are in complete cahoots on this script.

Nikki Haley: We really do need to ban TikTok once and for all. And let me tell you why. For every 30 minutes that someone watches TikTok every day, they become 17% more anti-Semitic, more pro-Hamas based on doing that. We now know that 50% of adults 18 to 25

think that Hamas was warranted in what they did with Israel. That's a problem.

GG: I mean, every official who supported a ban on TikTok did so based on the claim not only that it's used by China to launch disinformation to influence campaigns in the United States, but more importantly, that it allows too much anti-Israel disinformation or anti-Israel content, and that it's contaminating the minds of our young people to be opposed to the Israeli war in Gaza. That's why, after four years of lingering in Washington, TikTok got banned not because it was simply controlled by the Chinese, but because specifically it was permitting too much criticism of Israel to flourish on the platform. This is how continuously our government uses fear mongering of influence campaigns that originate with foreign governments, of exactly the kind that we discover today, Israel has been launching in secret, using deceptive means against American citizens. Here from The New York Times November of 2023, *Lawmakers Renew Calls to Ban TikTok after Accusations of Anti-Israel Content*. "The criticism has put the popular video app on the heels of a precarious time". And it quotes all sorts of people saying that the reason TikTok has to be banned is because it's a foreign influence campaign from China to turn American young people against Israel. So you can see how much not just fear mongering, but how much actual control of the internet has been seized and censorship imposed, based on the claim that Russia and China are manipulating American citizens to think a certain way. And yet, I can guarantee you that none of the people who are warning of that will raise a single iota or voice of objection to learning that Israel is doing exactly the same thing. And I think the question that we should ask is what accounts for those extremely different standards?

GG: Thanks for watching this clip from System Update, our live show that airs every Monday through Friday at 7 p.m. eastern exclusively on Rumble. You can catch the full nightly shows live or view the backlog of episodes for free on our Rumble page. You can also find full episodes the morning after they air across all major podcasting platforms, including Spotify and Apple. All the information you need is linked below. We hope to see you there.

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