

Ray McGovern: The Man Who Got Russiagate Right and Tried to Warn the Public—To No Avail

For Years, Ray McGovern, George H.W. Bush’s CIA Briefer, Tried to Warn the Public About the Russiagate Fraud but Was Shut Out of the Mainstream Media

By [James Bradley](#) and [Jeremy Kuzmarov](#)

Global Research, November 14, 2021

[CovertAction Magazine](#) 5 November 2021

Region: [Russia and FSU](#), [USA](#)

Theme: [Intelligence](#), [Media Disinformation](#)

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As new evidence comes to light, will the 27-year CIA veteran ever receive the credit he deserves? Or will the media continue to spotlight the liars and charlatans who peddled the hoax?

On September 17, Special Counsel John Durham—appointed by Trump Attorney General William Barr to investigate possible crimes committed in the Russiagate investigation—issued an [indictment against Michael Sussman](#), a lawyer for Hillary Clinton’s 2016 presidential campaign, on charges of lying to the FBI General Counsel by claiming the existence of a “secret server” that allowed the Trump organization to communicate with Russia-based Alfa Bank.

[Sussman’s 27-page indictment offers a window into the origins of the Russiagate scam](#), which aimed to divert public attention away from emails leaked by WikiLeaks that showed how the Democratic National Committee had rigged the 2016 primary against Bernie Sanders.

Over the last five years, one of the fiercest critics of Russiagate has been [Ray McGovern](#), a 27-year CIA analyst (1963-1990) and morning briefer of Vice President George H.W. Bush from 1981 to 1985 who in 2003 founded Veterans Intelligence Professionals for Sanity (VIPS) in response to the manipulation of intelligence during the buildup to the 2003 Iraq War.

McGovern studied Russian language and history at Fordham University and became a CIA analyst in the early 1960s, considering himself at the time a Cold Warrior taking up the good fight against “godless communists.”

McGovern’s outlook began to change when he read cables that contradicted the government’s narrative about a monolithic communist bloc.

These cables showed fissures among the Soviets, Chinese and Vietnamese communists. The Soviets had amassed 35 army divisions on the Chinese border and were promoting insurrection by Uighurs in the Xinjiang province—a strategy adopted today by the U.S.

When the Vietnam War broke out, McGovern worked with Sam Adams, who told him that Gen. William Westmoreland had kept the Vietnamese revolutionary strength at artificially low levels.

Westmoreland had wanted to project an image of U.S. success, which was punctured during the 1968 Tet Offensive when the National Liberation Front (NLF) and North Vietnamese army seized major South Vietnamese cities.

The CIA Director at the time, Richard Helms, kept Adams's reports buried, saying that his job was "to protect the Agency" and there was no way he could do so "if we get in a pissing match with the U.S. army at war."

For McGovern, the suppression of Adams's reports provoked a crisis of conscience because lots of people were killed because of a lie. McGovern, however, says that he didn't have the courage to become a whistleblower at the time and to speak out publicly.



In this February 6, 1968, photo, First Lt. Gary D. Jackson of Dayton, Ohio, carries a wounded South Vietnamese Ranger to an ambulance after a brief but intense battle with the Viet Cong during the Tet Offensive near the National Sports Stadium in the Cholon section of Saigon. [Source: tampabay.com]

McGovern was always weary of opportunists within the Agency who would distort the truth to get ahead like future CIA Director and Defense Secretary Robert Gates, whom McGovern called out in an internal evaluation for his "ill-disguised ambition" (McGovern was Gates's boss).

In the early 1970s, McGovern served in the U.S. embassy in Moscow, where he was involved in talks that led to the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT) of 1972, which included the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty.

The latter was torn up by the Bush administration in 2002 at the urging of John Bolton.

In the mid 1970s, McGovern took a break from the CIA to obtain a Master's degree in theology from Georgetown University, where he came under the influence of Jesuit priests who were active in social justice causes. He also developed an admiration for Father Daniel Berrigan, whose religious views drove his resistance to the Vietnam War.

During his time as George H.W.'s morning briefer, McGovern became close with Secretary of State George Shultz who supported his goal of improving U.S.-Soviet relations.

Despite the revitalization of the Cold War under President Ronald Reagan, McGovern says that the 1980s were a period of optimism which saw the signing of landmark treaties like the 1987 Intermediate Range Nuclear Range Forces Treaty (INF). It required the U.S. and the Soviet Union to eliminate and permanently forswear all their nuclear and conventional ground-launched ballistic and cruise missiles with ranges of 500 to 5,500 kilometers.



Soviet Premier Mikhail Gorbachev and U.S. President Ronald Reagan sign INF Treaty. [Source: [wikipedia.org](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intermediate-Range_Nuclear_Force_Treaty)]

McGovern hoped that the diplomatic breakthroughs of the 1980s combined with the end of the Cold War would usher in a new era of U.S.-Russian cooperation.

Unfortunately, this possibility has been undermined by the U.S.'s breaking of a promise not to extend the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) toward Russia's border, by the Obama administration's support for an anti-Russian coup d'état in the Ukraine in 2014, and by the political climate sparked by Russiagate.

On Monday October 4th, CAM Managing Editor Jeremy Kuzmarov participated in a three-way Zoom discussion with McGovern and James Bradley, *New York Times* best-selling author of [*Flags of Our Fathers*](#) (2001) and host of the podcast [*The Untold Pacific*](#).

In 2016, Bradley had set about to write a new best-seller about Putin, Donald Trump, prostitutes, and pee. However, he realized the whole story was a hoax after meeting with McGovern in his kitchen and then traveling to Moscow to undertake further research.

Today Bradley wonders why for years, Bob Woodward, Carl Bernstein and the entire staff of *The Washington Post*, Wolf Blitzer, Chris Matthews, *The New York Times*, and others somehow could not find Ray's house and write down what Ray said with pen and paper. Perhaps his secret, he thought, was that he had GPS and they didn't. But then he realized it was something far more ominous: that the media stars were not paid to uncover the truth, but to promote propaganda—like under totalitarian regimes.

Below is an edited transcript of the discussion with Bradley, McGovern and Kuzmarov:

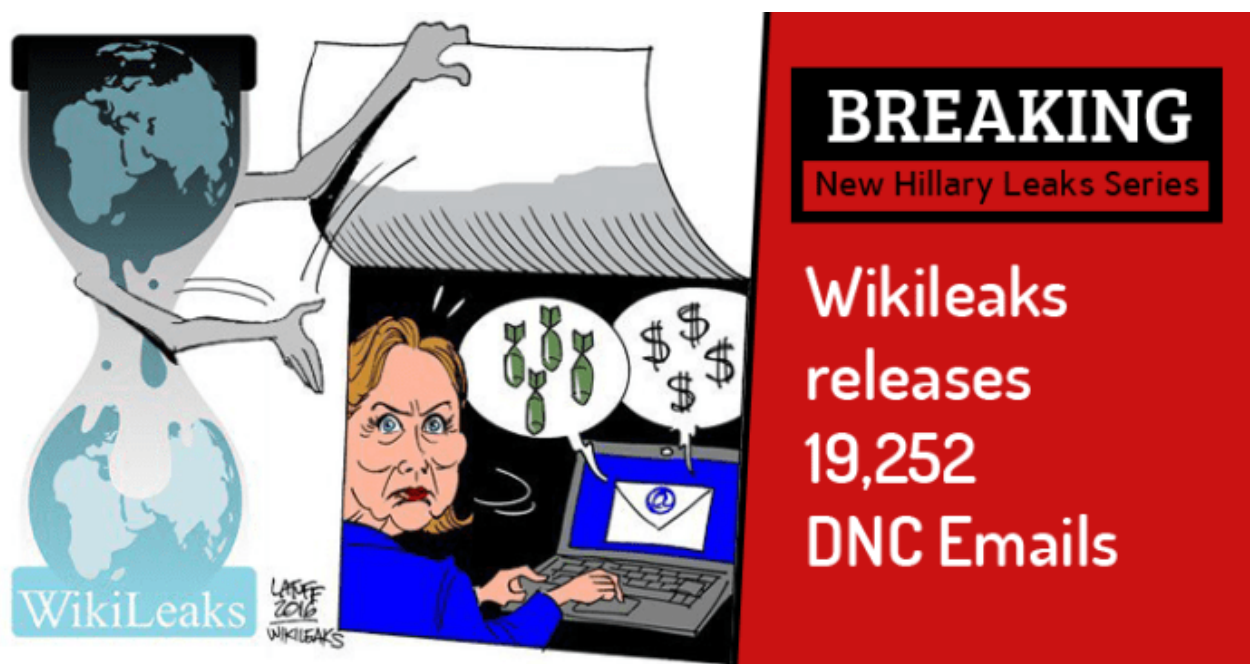
James Bradley: Ray, you posted the truth at *Consortium News* about Russiagate, but when I was in the U.S. in the years from 2016, Hillary's Russia fable seemed to be America's new religion. At an investor conference in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, I heard this:

If you go to the entrance of Disneyland and survey everyone entering, you will find 100% of the kids believe in Mickey Mouse and 60% of the adults believe in Russia, Russia, Russia.

My Conclusion: Brain-Dead Public Fooled by Hillary Fable.

Ray, first question, "How is this possible?"

Ray McGovern: In early June of 2016—an election year—it became clear that WikiLeaks had, as Julian Assange said, emails relating to Hillary Clinton. Long story short, those emails were extremely damaging to Hillary Clinton because, in a word, it showed that she and the Democratic National Committee (DNC) had stolen the nomination from Bernie Sanders. Pure and simple.



[Source: thehackernews.com]

Now Julian Assange published the emails on the 22nd of July, just before the Democratic Party Convention, and a cry went up. 'Why did Russia do this?' It was a magnificent diversion of attention. Nobody really read the emails which were pristine pure. Everything coming out of WikiLeaks really is. So, it was a masterful choice to blame this thing on Russia. And it enabled the Clinton campaign to curry favor with the people who profiteer on tension with Russia.

James Bradley: Future historians take note, Ray McGovern just described that the alleged Russian email hack did not exist at all. Putin had no involvement. It was not like they got it 20% wrong. No, it was a total bunch of garbage, and the names like CIA, CNN, FBI were attached to that. Garbage day after day is that what you're saying?

Ray McGovern: Yes it is.



[Source: independent.co.uk]

My wife's admonitions are ringing in my ears. "Ray, for God sakes, always make clear how you feel about Donald Trump." So here it is: I think Donald Trump was the worst president the United States ever had. And that's saying something where you think about George W. Bush and some others. But you know, fair is fair. Truth is truth, and I have this problem with made up stuff. As it turned out, all these people—John Brennan, the head of the CIA, people from the National Security Agency (NSA) and the Department of Justice—fabricated this story and thought it would work.



[Source: [msnbc.com](https://www.msnbc.com)]

James Bradley: Now, how could they do that? How could they get away with that?

Ray McGovern: Well, the answer is simple. James Comey [FBI Director] admits, he says so look, we were operating in an environment in which Hillary Clinton was sure to win. Now, if you're operating in that kind of environment, you're gonna do everything you possibly can to help her win. Stay in office. Get rewarded.

It's not until now, 2021, that there are two indictments. I hope there will be more. Even the *Wall Street Journal* is now saying that this whole thing was concocted, that these sleazy lawyers that worked for Hillary Clinton, these sleazy intelligence people and law enforcement people, they all made it up out of whole cloth.

The question now is whether there is going to be enough courage in any of these sectors, Congress or anywhere else, to hold these people accountable.

James Bradley: Let's go back to 2016. People with fancy titles are investigating and they spent millions and millions of dollars for four years and they couldn't figure it out. Cyber experts claimed to have found vodka in Donald Trump's underwear. I'm not joking. Lawyers and judges that I knew, people that make decisions on movies and books, they all believed these stories. And that goes on for year after year.

Ray McGovern: Well, James, you didn't get to write the book and I for one am glad about that. About Putin, pee, and prostitutes. But Michael Isikoff and David Corn did. These two fellas that were pretty good criticizing George W. Bush, but with regards to the Democrats, they did write the book and the book is completely discredited now, but they're still traipsing around, being prominently interviewed.

James Bradley: Going back to 2016, how did you know better than everybody else that the Russiagate narrative was false?

Ray McGovern: I'll bet anybody who's educated and can look at our media such as it is also knew. It helps to have had the opportunity to dissect the Soviet media. There are some clear parallels. Here's a little story: When Bill Casey became head of the CIA, at the very first cabinet meeting, he complained: "I come into the CIA, and I find that fully 80% of the sources they use are open source, media sources." What's the lesson there? You can piece things together just by reading the media intelligently and thinking about what the dynamics are in an election year.

[With Russiagate], there was also the technical aspect. In our little group of Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity [VIPS] that came about, we had three high-level officials from the NSA who had expertise in intercepting messages. Two of them had been technical directors. They said, "you know, this thing smells." This business about the Russians hacking, we can figure it out. We know about that and thank God Ed Snowden has given us the charts, the graphs, the pictures of how the NSA operates.

On the 12th of December, we [put a piece out to the President](#) saying look, this is all contrived. The way we know is that we would have the emails if it were a hack; a Russian hack or a hack by anybody else. The network would pick them up, it's foolproof and if by some rare chance, we miss it, well, our allies, the Five Eyes (U.S., Canada, Australia, the

United Kingdom, New Zealand) will pick it up.

Our specialists have integrity, but we had a lot of problems because a lot of people don't want to believe it. So, you have people like journalist James Risen calling Bill Binney—formerly of the NSA and the smartest guy I've worked for—a conspiracy theorist and calling me the same. This is the kind of stuff we ran into.

But for my part, as one of the leaders of VIPS, it doesn't get any better when you have scientists and technical experts who spent decades doing this work whom you rely on. And who have integrity; who joined [VIPS] because they wanted to tell the truth. You depend on them and you really have a leg up, so that was a big, big factor in how we got it right.

James Bradley: Jeremy, so tell us what your 2016 was like?

Jeremy Kuzmarov: I studied history including the history of the McCarthy era. I had taught courses on the history of the Cold War, which I was teaching at that time, so I was like “this sounds kind of familiar.” It's this knee-jerk reaction of blaming the Russians again. Then the work that the VIPS were doing was really valuable to provide good strong grounding for the suspicion people like me had.

There's a book I highly recommend called [Creating Russophobia](#) by a Swiss journalist named Guy Mettan and it's published by Clarity Press. The author goes back several hundred years, tracing this long history of Russophobia in Western Europe, which was used to justify colonial empires. In the late 17th century, Peter the Great allegedly had this grand Russian plan [called the Grand Embassy] to take over Europe, but the document was exposed as a forgery. Harry Truman, though, was still invoking it to justify the U.S. containment strategy in the late 1940s and aggressive U.S. Cold War policies.

For much of modern European history, Russia had to be a bad guy to justify expansionist policies and then the United States just kind of took that up in the McCarthy era and the Cold War era and it continues to this day.

James Bradley: My experience was kind of a downer. I had finished *China Mirage*, my fourth book which is about China, China, China—as Russia, Russia, Russia was in 2016. I documented Henry Luce lying to the American public through *Time* magazine for 30 years. Pearl Buck, the number one author of the 1930s lying for 20 years; the book is about how the smartest people in America got fooled by China, China, China. and then I'm thinking prostitutes, Putin, and pee, but when I visit Ray, he tells me the truth and I realize Russia, Russia, that we just need an enemy.

Ray McGovern: Let's face it, if we're gonna build anti-ballistic missile systems, even if they don't work, you need a plausible enemy, and Russia, Russia, Russia was a plausible enemy and now it's Russia, China, Russia, China, China, China, Russia. So hey, this is a gravy train man, and this is great for Lockheed Martin. It's great for Raytheon and so forth.

And you know, I wish that were funny—but it's not. More than half of our discretionary spending goes to these fat cats. People are hungry. People are malnourished and people can't find a job and people can't find a house to live in. This is serious stuff.



Tent city in Venice Beach, California, that is part of a national epidemic of homelessness resulting from the underfunding of human welfare initiatives and overfunding of the military. [Source: ktla.com]

James Bradley: I think it also has to do with entertainment. I think television is about entrainment technology [in which the brain synchronizes with external stimuli]. The TV executives try to make getting the information pleasurable. Whether it's a ball game or whether it's Russia, Russia, Russia. And you know the type of personalities you're hearing from. Listen to Chris Matthews for four years in a row when he lied every single night, you got to be hypnotized.



Chris Matthews brought pleasure to his Trump-hating viewers by mocking Trump's supposed "bromance" with the evil Vladimir Putin. [Source: dailycaller.com]

Many of the people most taken in by Russiagate were highly educated. I'm talking about lawyers. San Francisco criminal attorney; Wisconsin attorney, who is head at the University of Wisconsin. Very educated people. How can they believe this? John Pilger said the key is the word education, James. It's easier to propagandize the educated.

Ray McGovern: Well, education, I mean you can look at the Latin roots for that. To lead out. You try to lead out the best of people's brains so that they can grasp the truth, but you

could just as easily lead them out, and lead them astray.

I love looking back at some notes today I did about 15 years ago and it's then that I started realizing and started saying in every speech that the most significant event or difference that I noticed in my professional career and then after I retired is the fact that we no longer have a free media and that's big. I mean, hello, the Russians didn't have a free media [in the Soviet era], but they had a way with their underground *Samizdat*; they had ways of producing them with what you would call mimeograph machines that got the word around to people [about what was really going on].

Americans don't know how to read between the lines of *Pravda*—*The New York Times*. *The Washington Post*. And they don't really care much about mimeographic notes from people who do know. Or people who do care. So, the media is the key.

As you know James—I've mentioned this before on your show—I've coined this term [MICIMATT](#). It sort of rhymes with Mickey Mouse and it stands for what Eisenhower warned about which has gotten much greater in scope from his time 60 years ago. It's now not the military-industrial complex. It's the military-industrial-congressional-intelligence-media-academia-think tank complex.

My God, look at the role of the intelligence and law enforcement agencies and the so-called deep state and media. I say that the media is the fulcrum. It won't work without the media. And who controls the media? And of course, you've got academia involved. I mean my old alma mater, Fordham, has received all kinds of money to set up a center for national security. They [gave John Brennan a doctorate](#) in—get this—humane letters. The same guy who promoted torture and ran the drone killer program!

This society has been corrupted—by money, by government money, by our taxpayer money and the think tanks. The think tanks are depending on which party they're responsive to. They don't give you the truth, they give you the party line literally. So MICIMATT, it caught on. A couple of people really liked it including Steve Cohen, one of my idols. He was a real specialist on Russia before he died, he said Ray, you got that right.

James Bradley: Ray, let's go back. Let's do this historically—it's 2016. At your kitchen table you didn't say James this is a fable that's going to last for four years. It's going to rip around the world, is going to be in the Tokyo newspapers. It's going to be beamed into Siberian homes and the whole world is going to believe a fable. But you didn't say that so as we got into 2017, there could have been somebody listening; how many calls did you get Ray? I mean they couldn't find VIPS.

Ray McGovern: Well, I used to get on CNN, maybe twice a year, C-SPAN, I got on established media, maybe once or twice a year, but that ended about a decade ago and they don't want to hear what I have to say. They don't wanna hear what anybody has to say who may diverge from the party line. I don't see Jeremy interviewed very much either despite the good work he does [at CAM].

My friends up there in New York that I went to university with, for them if it's not in *The New York Times*, it doesn't exist. For friends in Washington, it has to be in *The Washington Post*. Otherwise, they just don't want to believe it.

It's hard also to unlearn something, and especially hard to admit that you were wrong. In

that respect, it's a psychological thing. But now the proof is in the pudding; the truth is out at last. In the *Wall Street Journal*. Not yet in *TheNew York Times*, *The Washington Post*.

James Bradley: OK, just a minute, in 2017 you got zero calls from major media, there's no attempt. There's no editorial that shows up anywhere. San Francisco, Houston, Austin, Spokane, Tuscaloosa, quoting Ray, or the VIPS and saying this is *****. It doesn't happen at all in 2017?

Ray McGovern: Well, there's one exception there, and that is when we presented our technical case to President Trump. Somebody in his retinue, apparently, said: "You mean this? You mean we can prove by technology that this is a hoax."

And Trump ordered then CIA director Pompeo to talk to Bill Binney, the former NSA technical director, one of the brightest guys on the block. So what happens? Well, Pompeo waits months and then he invites Binney to a little session at the 7th floor of the CIA building, where I've spent a lot of years, and he said, so Mr. Binney, just so you know, the only reason that I invited you here was because the President instructed me to. Now, what do you have to say?

Now you have to know Bill Binney to appreciate his response. He says, well, "your people are lying to you, the technology shows that they're lying to you." Pompeo himself didn't understand the technology, but those people there with him did. But Pompeo couldn't understand Bill Binney, he professed not to be able to and it's not clear whether he ever reported back to President Trump.



Binney on the Tucker Carlson show detailing findings on the mythical Russia hack. [Source: oxford.universitypressscholarship.com]

Later, Binney was interviewed by James Risen and Risen tricked him by asking Binney who he voted for. Bill not being very sophisticated politically, said he voted for Trump, and Risen said gotcha and the whole thing went down the drain. They began calling us dupes of Russia and that's all the publicity we got, so it's in error to say we got no publicity, what we got was that and that's about all we had to show.

I think Trump might have wanted to recognize us, but he showed himself not only dumb, but powerless in the face of what I call the deep state; the CIA, FBI, and Department of Justice. He couldn't make them follow his instructions and that's why we know so little about Russiagate.

James Bradley: So let's finish with 2018. Is 2018-2019 the same? Just like what you just described 2017? Or are there breakthroughs? Did one brave newspaper start a McGovern series?

Ray McGovern: No, it was about the same.

James Bradley: Talk a little personally what it's like not to be former CIA but just being a human being during that time. For me, it was disorienting. People I came in contact with—a Hong Kong publisher with a private jet, Russia, Russia, Russia. If you'd challenge them, they'd say you're out of your mind. A Tokyo corporate? He saw it on CNN so it must be true. I had to sit through a bunch of fables, Diplomat on a French cruise line, he's telling me about cables that don't exist. Somebody who's smart enough to be a big Wisconsin lawyer and the head at the University of Wisconsin—sending me emails with fables; it wasn't 10% off—it was totally made up.

Ray McGovern: Well James, you have got what I call a Trump derangement syndrome here.

In other words, if you're so emotionally opposed to this guy Trump, even if you're not attached to Hillary as a lot of people were, you just can't believe that he might be telling the truth one time or maybe like a broken clock, maybe two times a day. There was an emotional part of this; a kind of instinctual reluctance to believe anything that Trump said versus what the Democrats say.

I learned through this whole experience that the Democratic Party is fully as corrupt as the Republican Party. And I'm really sorry to say that because my father was an FDR supporter. When FDR died, I remember I was just a little kid, my father cried.

James Bradley: So, Jeremy, I'm talking to masters from Columbia University and people who are telling me a fable throughout 2017, 2018, 2019. And I didn't know how to deal with it. It was too strange? How about you?

Jeremy Kuzmarov: I published the book [*The Russians Are Coming, Again*](#) with John Marciano in 2018, but the book was completely ignored. The book was never reviewed [in any mainstream outlet] or acknowledged. And then I was blacklisted from my university, I was applying for jobs in academia, I got completely stonewalled at every application and even some were asking for courses on the Cold War with my specialty and I thought I'd just written the book and I'm going to relate the history to what's going on today—but nobody wanted to hear any of that.

So I mean, it was just, you feel what it's like to be a pariah.

A direct parallel can be seen between the Russia hysteria today and the First World War when the media and government created hysteria over Germany and the Kaiser. In [an essay I co-authored for a peace history website](#) (with Roger Peace), we tell the story of a guy named Raymond Fosdick, who later became First Under-Secretary of the League of Nations. He remembered [going to a church service and that the pastor got up and said, we're going to boil the Kaiser, and everybody got up and cheered](#). This was a kind of madness that had

overtaken society—a manufactured hysteria reminiscent in some ways of the anti-Russia and anti-Putin hysteria we've seen over the last five years.

In World War I, the Wilson administration set up this propaganda agency, the Committee on Public Information (CPI). They hired a lot of historians and they targeted the educated classes, whether in the textbooks, or the media, and tried to impact the mindset of people who have college degrees and read the newspaper every day.

There was a group of farmers in Oklahoma who acted to try to overthrow the government [in what was known as the Green Corn rebellion]; they said we're not going to send our sons to fight, we need them to farm our land, we're poor farmers. We need our sons here or else we're gonna go under and we don't believe this crap about the Germans.

Socialist organizer Oscar Ameringer wrote that “there was a great deal of native intelligence and common sense among these people [Green Corn rebels]. Their state of illiteracy protected them, partially at least, against the flood of lying propaganda with which their ‘betters’ of press pulpit and rostrum deluged the country while their native common sense allowed them to see through the pretensions of the warmongers better than could many a Ph.D.”

It's not that different today. A lot of people have common sense and don't believe this crap about the Russians. The propaganda, however, influences more the wealthy, educated people—many of them liberals who wanted to believe anything bad that was said about Trump.

The government are masters of the techniques of propaganda; they hire the best minds from Madison Avenue who have studied human psychology and know how to manipulate people's emotions. I'll give them that. They prey on the fact that people are not well informed about Russia. People know about Russia through Hollywood movies and they have watched one too many—films like *The Hunt for Red October*—where the KGB are the bad guys. They are conditioned to think Russia is an evil place and natural enemy.^[1]

So I think that the Clintons and their friends understood the impulse of Americans and how they have such distorted views about Russia, mostly through the movies, and they just played off that and they thought they could get away with it as you said.

Ray McGovern: That's the kind of a historical background that is very dangerous, Jeremy.

Jeremy Kuzmarov: Yeah, that's why they're cutting all the history programs. They don't want students learning all that.

Ray McGovern: That's why you're banned from the university. One of the strangest experiences I had was when I had an opportunity to challenge Donald Rumsfeld at 1:00 o'clock in the afternoon live, CNN, C-SPAN and I asked him why he lied about weapons of mass destruction and about ties between Iraq and al-Qaeda.

I had the quotes and he denied it and people could verify that he was wrong. As the time was running out, Rumsfeld says no, no, no. Let's stay for a second. Then I met Anderson Cooper and he asked me, “Weren't you afraid?” I thought for a second to myself: Anderson Cooper—heir to the Vanderbilt fortune. Pretty boy on CNN [who is paid \$12 million annually and [while studying at Yale worked for two summers for the CIA](#)]. He's not gonna be out on

the streets of Atlanta wearing his hat out collecting coins. “Not so,” I said. “Anderson, let me be really candid with you. It was a real high. Let me make a recommendation. You know you might want to try that. When you do your homework and ask real questions, you get a story.”

He said: “Will you be on my program later? I will get my people in touch with your people.” Then I said: “I don’t have any people, just give me a call on this phone.”

Postscript: I go on Anderson’s show. And the first thing he asked me is “Weren’t you afraid?” These guys have no concept of what journalism is supposed to be. It was just so revealing to me. That’s how bad it is. That’s what American people are exposed to by the TV almost every night.

It’s a really pernicious situation; everyone from Ben Franklin to Edmund Burke and others said that if you don’t have an educated populace, you’re not gonna have a democracy.

James Bradley: Disappointed here. Jeremy and I are doing a tribute to a guy who doesn’t have people. You don’t have people.

Ray McGovern: I have the best bunch and that is the Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity (VIPs). Our record stands up to any kind of scrutiny. We tried to warn about many things. We wrote a memo to Obama in 2009 about Afghanistan, for example. The title was [“Welcome to Vietnam, Mr. President.”](#) I mean hello. Some of these things are pretty simple. The more so when you’ve been through things like Vietnam, which I was.



[Source: archive.org]

James Bradley: Somebody told me once that maybe money has a little to do with this.

Ray McGovern: Money is the root of all evil. It's corruption, pure and simple, and it permeates various strata of our society, including the American legal system. My dad, Professor McGovern at Fordham Law School for 30 years, is probably rolling over in his grave seeing what happened to some of the people he trained.

James Bradley: We're seeing corruption in the legal system and more and more censorship.

Ray McGovern: When he was first running for president, Obama took a strong stand against the the big telecoms for violating our Fourth Amendment protections against illegal searches and seizures. John Brennan joined his campaign in June of 2008, and guess what—Obama changed his mind. He said, “I’m not going to hold the giant telecoms accountable. No, they are just doing that trying to protect national security.” And I did an article which said “count me out, Obama.” This intelligence professional sees through this sort of thing.

James Bradley: Now we’re in October 2021, is the political climate beginning to shift with regards to Russia? What do you think about today and tomorrow?

Jeremy Kuzmarov: Unfortunately, with what Ray called MICIMATT there always has to be an enemy. Trump is out of office and some of this anti-Russia hysteria is dissipating—a little bit, at least for now—but now the focus seems to be on China and we see this ramping up in the demonization. As we discussed in our [interview earlier this year](#), you hear about the Xinjiang province and the supposed “Uighur genocide” all the time. And now there is ramped up military ties to Taiwan and this recent deal with Australia [to sell them nuclear submarines to confront China]. So China is replacing Russia as the bogeyman, the justification for all that huge military spending. Biden actually [increased the military budget from Trump to \\$753 billion](#).



Cartoon mocking demonization of China in U.S. media. [Source: twitter.com]

As far as Russiagate, these newspapers have not acknowledged anything from what I’ve seen, neither *The New York Times* nor *Washington Post*. And they will still find any opportunity to slam Russia. We’ve seen it in the Navalny saga, the coverage of Russian politics is totally biased and tried to make Navalny into some kind of hero. But if you look into the policies he advocates for, he’s very regressive—like a Russian version of Trump—and has very limited support within Russia. And this story of poisoning is [rather fishy; we did an article about it](#).

The main goal is to bring down Putin and that continues. This is because Putin is more of an independent nationalist. They want it back to the days of the 1990s when they had a pliable leader like Boris Yeltsin who sold out Russian interests. Putin is a much stronger leader, a much better leader for Russians and Russia. The country is doing a lot better now and there is a lot of support for Putin in Russia.

The U.S. agenda is to bring him down and create a puppet-type leader like Navalny and to expand NATO further. And to, you know, dominate and control the Central Asian region and its oil wealth and natural gas so that agenda persists. So, the anti-Putin hysteria will continue, the demonization of Russia.

And it'll be a competition with China because of China's economic challenge to U.S. hegemony and the geopolitical rivalry that is playing out in places like Africa. And that's a justification for the huge military budget. So I don't see an improvement in the political climate. The MICIMATT is so powerful, and the most powerful people control public opinion. I don't think there will be a change for the foreseeable future unless the U.S. experiences a worsening economic climate and can't afford a huge military anymore.

James Bradley: Well, Jeremy, I want to thank you for your comments, but can you do me a favor. Right after this, can you call CNN, MSNBC, Fox, *Washington Post*, *New York Times*, they could do a hook up. You could talk for 10 minutes and then their listeners and readers would know more than they've learned in the last 10 years about the situation. Could you do that?

Jeremy Kuzmarov: I'll try.

James Bradley: Ray, how about you—Mr. Hopeful or what?

Ray McGovern: Predictions about the future are difficult. My friend Julian Assange—a man who exposed the truth—has been detained for over 10 years now—an example of how crassly the U.S. government deals with dissent. They are using him as an example to show that if you publish material that embarrasses the United States, or if you publish the toolkit of U.S. intelligence agencies, we're gonna get you. We don't care if you're Australian, if you're living in Antarctica or Iceland, we'll get you because we're the USA.



Ray McGovern to the right of Julian Assange at the Ecuadorian embassy in London in 2013. [Source: raymcgovern.com]

No matter what happens to Julian now, the lesson has been served on all publicists, all publishers, all writers. WikiLeaks today is no longer publishing much and reporters like James Risen who has had good sources in the intelligence community, is reduced to writing propaganda for *The Intercept* and calling me and Bill Binney conspiracy theorists.

Until now, I had this beard for two and a half years to try to identify myself with my friend Julian and try to remember him.

What I've been doing further is to try to educate; lead people into understanding what reality is. I teach a lot and usually have students read Martin Luther King's famous "Letter from Birmingham Jail." There's one part of that thing that strikes me more than all the others, and that is when he talks about justice, and he talks about how the truth needs to prevail.

He describes the political circumstance of his time as being like a boil. Maybe some of you had boils when you were adolescents. I sure did. This situation [with Russia and the MICIMATT] is like a boil that can never be cured unless it's opened up with all this pus. The ugliness has to flow for the natural medicines to be applied. So too injustice must be exposed with all the friction its exposure creates. It must be exposed for the light of human opinion and of national consciousness before it can be cured.

Now we have to find our way to influence the Anderson Coopers of this world. Sometimes I think—and this is probably unfair—but sometimes I think the fault is not in our stars, but in ourselves. Are we not clever enough? Are we not imaginative enough to break in, to find some people with money that really think justice is important?

Maybe that's unfair, but I have this suspicion that a lot of us are kind of quite happy to

predict rain—and there’s a hell of a lot of rain around—and not start building orchids—pretty flowers. That is what we have to now do. Build orchids.

*

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James Bradley hosts the podcast [Untold Pacific](#), featuring stories from his decades of experience in Asia. James is the author of the New York Times #1 best-selling book, *Flags of Our Fathers* (2000) that was made into a movie by Stephen Spielberg and Clint Eastwood. Bradley wrote three other critically acclaimed books about the United States in Asia: *Flyboys*, *The Imperial Cruise* and *The China Mirage*.

Jeremy Kuzmarov is Managing Editor of *CovertAction Magazine*. He is the author of four books on U.S. foreign policy, including *Obama’s Unending Wars* (Clarity Press, 2019) and *The Russians Are Coming, Again*, with John Marciano (Monthly Review Press, 2018). He can be reached at: jkuzmarov2@gmail.com.

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