

Who Guards the Guardians? “Newsguard”, the “Integrity Initiative” and Other Threats to Independent Media

By [Michael Welch](#), [Whitney Webb](#), and [Patrick Henningsen](#)

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Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [GLOBAL RESEARCH NEWS HOUR](#),
[Media Disinformation](#), [Politics](#), [US NATO War Agenda](#)

“Quis custodes ipsos custodet?”

(translation: “Who guards the guardians?”)

– Juvenal (from The Satires – [Satire VI, lines 347-348](#))

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[CKUW 95.9FM, the radio station out of which the Global Research News Hour is produced each week, depends on listener support to survive and thrive. The station is having its annual fund-raiser until February 15th. The next episode will be a live broadcast at 2:00pm EST, 11:00 am PST and 7:00pm GMT on February 15th. The show can be streamed at [ckuw.ca](#). Please consider a donation to show your support for Global Research News Hour and similar spoken word shows which break from the corporate media mono-culture of ideas. Donations can be made at [fundrive.ckuw.ca](#)]

Global Research is in the [direct line of fire](#) of the forces described in this week’s interview. Support from our audience is crucial to retaining editorial independence and providing alternative and accurate information and analysis each week. Take a moment to make a [donation to the site](#) and pledge your support. – MAW]

Three decades ago, authors **Edward Hermann** and **Noam Chomsky** made the point in [Manufacturing Consent](#) that conventional news media in actual practice serves and defends the social, economic and political agendas of privileged groups within domestic society, the state and the global order.

It is estimated that [six major corporations](#) own and control 90 percent of everything Americans see, read and hear. Consequently certain narratives will get emphasis, and the spectrum of debate will be restricted. Without popular support, elite power interests seeking to maintain an agenda of corporate plunder and military intervention cannot prevail. Hence, the need for talking points about “humanitarian interventions”, “self-defence against the terrorists”, and “fiscal prudence” to distract and divert attention from corporate pillage.

The arrival of the internet and social media in the last two decades changed the playing field

and gave independent analysts with dissenting opinions on issues ranging from foreign policy in the Middle East, to 9/11 to domestic U.S. and Canadian politics a chance to share their views with millions. According to a [September 2016 Gallup poll](#), Americans indicated that their trust in mass media, principally newspapers, radio and tv had fallen to its lowest level in history – 32 percent. According to a [Pew Centre poll](#) conducted a year later, two out of three Americans get their news via social media, with 45 percent of those getting their news from facebook, 18 percent from Youtube, and 11 percent from twitter.

A major benchmark was reached during the 2016 U.S. Presidential election campaign. Despite reporting that [appeared to favour](#) the Democratic candidate **Hillary Clinton**, Republican **Donald Trump** emerged victorious, much to the [chagrin and exasperation](#) of the punditry at that time.

The assumption, [first hinted at by Ms. Clinton](#), was that Russia was hacking into the election and using all manner of cyber tools in order to rig the election in Trump's favour.

The powers that be now have a convenient pre-text for disrupting the spread of independent media outlets that threaten their grip on the public's imagination. To protect us from foreign interference and "Kremlin-supported media" we have seen Facebook [forge a partnership with the Atlantic Council](#) to control the spread of fake news and disinformation. A body called the [Integrity Initiative](#), formed in autumn 2015, to alert "politicians, policy-makers, opinion leaders and other interested parties" to the threat posed by Russia to domestic democratic institutions in the United Kingdom, the U.S., Canada and across Europe. And just last year, a new start-up called [Newsguard](#) wants to install a plug-in on all the world's most popular browsers that would utilize the fact-checking expertise of their corps of professional journalists to discern, according to their own criteria, disinformation sites from 'reliable' ones.

This week's Global Research News Hour looks into these would-be defenders of democratic discourse and goes into some depth, based on the figures spearheading these efforts, to determine the ulterior motives behind these services.

Whitney Webb, is the author of a major [expose on Newsguard](#) specifically. She shares her understanding of this informational Trojan Horse in our first half hour.

In our second half hour, geopolitical analyst **Patrick Henningsen** tracks the larger trend of assaulting independent journalism in the name of patrolling disinformation on the web. He introduces our audience to the Integrity Initiative, and the Facebook/Atlantic Council partnership. He also offers some thoughts about a [recently announced decision by the Canadian government](#) to appoint a panel of non-partisan bureaucrats to monitor elections for 'foreign interference' and the practical outcome of such efforts.

We end the show with an appeal to audiences to support host radio station CKUW during its annual Fundrive.

***Whitney Webb** is a staff writer for [MintPress News](#) and has contributed to several other independent, alternative outlets. Her work has appeared on sites such as Global Research, the Ron Paul Institute and 21st Century Wire among others. She also makes guest appearances to discuss politics on radio and television. She currently lives with her family in southern Chile.*

Patrick Henningsen is an American writer and global affairs analyst and founder of independent news and analysis site [21st Century Wire](#), occasional co-host of [UK Column](#) and is host of the [SUNDAY WIRE](#) weekly radio show broadcast globally over the Alternate Current Radio Network (ACR). He has written for a number of international publications and has done extensive on-the-ground reporting in the Middle East including work in Syria and Iraq.

(Global Research News Hour Episode 248)

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The [Global Research News Hour](#) airs every Friday at 1pm CT on [CKUW 95.9FM](#) in Winnipeg. The programme is also podcast at [globalresearch.ca](#) . Excerpts of the show have begun airing on [Rabble Radio](#) and appear as podcasts at [rabble.ca](#).

The Global Research News Hour now airs Fridays at 6pm PST, 8pm CST and 9pm EST on Alternative Current Radio ([alternativecurrentradio.com](#))

Community Radio Stations carrying the Global Research News Hour:

CHLY 101.7fm in Nanaimo, B.C - Thursdays at 1pm PT

Boston College Radio [WZBC 90.3FM NEWTONS](#) during the Truth and Justice Radio Programming slot - Sundays at 7am ET.

[Port Perry Radio](#) in Port Perry, Ontario -1 Thursdays at 1pm ET

[Burnaby Radio Station CJSF out of Simon Fraser University](#). 90.1FM to most of Greater Vancouver, from Langley to Point Grey and from the North Shore to the US Border.

It is also available on 93.9 FM cable in the communities of SFU, Burnaby, New Westminister, Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam, Port Moody, Surrey and Delta, in British Columbia, Canada. - Tune in at its new time - Wednesdays at 4pm PT.

Radio station [CFUV 101.9FM](#) based at the University of Victoria airs the Global Research News Hour every Sunday from 7 to 8am PT.

[CORTES COMMUNITY RADIO CKTZ 89.5](#) out of Manson's Landing, B.C airs the show Tuesday mornings at 10am Pacific time.

[Cowichan Valley Community Radio CICV 98.7 FM](#) serving the [Cowichan Lake](#) area of Vancouver Island, BC airs the program Thursdays at 6am pacific time.

Campus and community radio [CFMH 107.3fm](#) in Saint John, N.B. airs the Global Research News Hour Fridays at 10am.

Caper Radio CJBW 107.3FM in Sydney, [Cape Breton](#), Nova Scotia airs the Global Research News Hour starting Wednesday Morning from 8:00 to 9:00am. Find more details at www.caperradio.ca

RIOT RADIO, the visual radio station based out of [Durham College](#) in Oshawa, Ontario has begun airing the Global Research News Hour on an occasional basis. Tune in at dcstudentsinc.ca/services/riot-radio/

Radio Fanshawe: [Fanshawe's 106.9 The X \(CIXX-FM\)](#) out of London, Ontario airs the Global Research News Hour Sundays at 6am with an encore at 4pm.

Los Angeles, California based Thepowerofvoices.com airs the Global Research News Hour every Monday from 6-7pm Pacific time.

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