

A Note to Our Readers

As Consortiumnews.com forges ahead with publishing incisive articles offering fresh takes on current events, we also continue to develop a long-term strategy to ensure that Robert Parry's vision for independent journalism lives on.

By Nat Parry

For the past few weeks, since Robert Parry's health issues led to his hospitalization and to his untimely passing, his assistant editor, Chelsea Gilmour, and I have been handling the daily editing and upkeep of this website. We greatly appreciate the committed group of writers my dad has worked with over the years, who have continued to contribute quality content and offer unique perspectives on the most pressing issues of the day.

With Robert's passing, Consortiumnews lost not only its editor but also its most prolific writer. Therefore we have tried to not only uphold his high editorial standards, but also to fill the gap in content by reaching out to new contributors, who have for the most part been warmly received by this website's dedicated readership. Naturally, with any changes also come criticism, and we have experienced our share – including from a small but vocal clique of trolls on Twitter.

I suppose this comes with the territory when publishing a website that covers controversial topics, and particularly in the overheated political environment in the United States these days, it should be expected that any contrarian views will be met with hostility from various sectors.

Even with that in mind, it has been surprising to see some of the vitriol, which I can't help but chalk up to the general state of hysteria that is gripping the United States these days. This is the result, it seems, of both the Russiagate controversy and the general trauma of the Donald Trump presidency. I have lived in Denmark the past ten years and don't get back to the U.S. as much as I used to. The last time I was there, before heading back in mid-January to be with my dad as he dealt with his health issues, was during the election in November 2016. The atmosphere at that time was of course pretty heated with Americans coping with a highly divisive election campaign and coming to terms with the reality of a Trump presidency.

Following the news closely since the election, even from abroad, it was obvious that the Russiagate story was taking on a hysterical tone reminiscent of the Joe McCarthy era of the 1950s. We were seeing independent political movements like [Black Lives Matter](#), the [Standing Rock water protectors](#), and the [Green Party](#)

being dragged through the mud and tarred with the “Russian agent” epithet. It was also clear that Russiagate was claiming a disproportionate amount of attention in the U.S., even as major issues like climate change and questions of war and peace were downplayed or ignored.

It wasn't until I visited in January, however, that I realized how all-encompassing the Trump/Russia story is within the context of U.S. politics. Dividing my time between hospital visits to see my dad and working on the upkeep of Consortiumnews.com, I didn't have a lot of free time for TV watching, but every time that I did turn the TV on and flipped to a cable “news” channel, it was nothing but nonstop Russiagate coverage.

No matter how long I watched – whether 15 minutes, an hour, or two hours – the subject matter was always the same: all Russia, all the time. And of course, the coverage was highly slanted – always taking at face value the underlying allegations made by the intelligence community, despite their well-known track record for deceit. It's not clear to me whether Americans realize how abnormal this environment is.

Robert Parry did realize it though, and it was in this environment that he tried to build a home for independent journalism that took a fresh look at the big issues. His approach was always in the spirit of trying to present at least two sides to the story – and sometimes more than two sides. As he recalled in Consortiumnews.com's mission statement, as a young reporter, he was “expected to seek out those alternative views, not dismiss them or pretend they didn't exist.”

“But the major Western news outlets began to see journalism differently,” he wrote. “It became their strange duty to shut down questioning of the Official Story, even when the Official Story had major holes and made little sense, even when the evidence went in a different direction and serious analysts were disputing the groupthink.”

In this spirit, Consortiumnews has attracted a talented and knowledgeable team of writers who contribute from a variety of perspectives – as journalists, activists, academics, whistleblowers, and former intelligence officials who have grown weary of the politicization of their profession. This site has always been about the right of people to know what's real and what's not, what's proven and what's unproven. We hope that even in Robert's absence, this independent approach can carry on.

Although Chelsea and I are now handling the editing and day-to-day operations of the website, the Board of the Consortium for Independent Journalism – which publishes Consortiumnews.com – is currently conducting a search for a full-time

editor-in-chief who would take over the responsibilities on a more long-term basis.

During this transition period, we appreciate the continued support of readers who engage in lively debates on these pages and the writers who provide such interesting content on a daily basis. We will try to keep readers in the loop regarding next steps.

Thanks for your support.
