

Oliver Stone Receives Gary Webb Award

For his brave work in the field of documentaries, director Oliver Stone was the 2016 recipient of the Gary Webb Freedom of the Press Award, which he received from Consortiumnews.com's editor Robert Parry on June 3.

Robert Parry: Everyone knows Oliver Stone is a great screenwriter, director and producer. He's done famous movies. But I also thought people should recognize that he has done very significant support for documentary projects. He has been involved in them, he has helped fund them.

What he's done, which is almost unique at this moment in American history, is he tries to deal with people who are often leaders of other countries that are under attack by the United States, or being harshly criticized. Some of these leaders are being demonized and they're being turned into cardboard characters that can be easily denounced and dismissed.

And what Oliver Stone has done, like in his documentary about some of the leaders of South America [*South of the Border*], is to show this from their side, what they're thinking, what makes them tick. And that is so important at a time when the United States can engage in horrible wars. We've seen the effects of demonizing leaders. And it's not to say these leaders are great guys, no one's suggesting that, but that when we demonize and make them not into human beings anymore, then it becomes very easy to go to war with them and their countries. We saw this happen with Saddam Hussein for instance, in Iraq, and to the horrible cost to the people of that region and to the American soldiers who had to execute this war.

So we've seen the consequences of not dealing honestly and fairly with people and not trying to explain to the public that these are multi-dimensional leaders. They are people that you may end up not liking, that you may disagree with, but you should at least know what drives them.

Oliver Stone is really one of the very few people with the courage to say, "I'm going to do this, I'm going to present these people as real people, and we can factor that in to how the American people want to feel about this issue."

He supported a documentary project that I was interviewed in regarding Ukraine [*Ukraine on Fire*], trying to offer a more subtle, more nuanced view of what happened there and now he's doing a program for Showtime, which will deal with interviews with Russian President Vladimir Putin, another person who, even more importantly than some of the others, we have to understand [*The Putin Interviews*].

Because the idea of rushing into a conflict with Russia in this kind of blind way that we did in Iraq and have done in other countries, dealing with a nuclear-armed Russia, is even more dangerous. Not just for the American people, but for all people. So this is why we wanted to honor Oliver Stone with this award.

I want to thank him for coming and accepting it.

Oliver Stone: Thank you very much. I'm very honored. I know who Gary Webb is and that's a great story. That's how I look at it as a dramatist, I suppose I'm a little cold that way. But it was a sad story. They made a movie, it died at the box office, it wasn't happy, but it was a pretty good movie [*Kill the Messenger*]. Jeremy Renner played Gary Webb.

It just shows you how movies that go against the American image sometimes just don't make it. First of all they don't get made, it was very hard for those people to make that movie, it took many years, it died at the box office. I've been there. And you can make a movie that somehow is pro-American, put Tom Hanks in it, and you do pretty well, judging from the last Clinton Eastwood film about the pilot [*Sully*], which made a lot of money.

Making a film about Edward Snowden was another lesson for me in disappointment. It's like making a film about [NSA whistleblower] Tom Drake. It took three years, actually, and when we finished all the work and had been talking to Ed, getting his side of the story, in fact it was his story, it was his point of view, it was not NSA in anyway, they wouldn't cooperate.

But many people helped us, and Ed approved it and so on, [and then] we couldn't get any financing out of America at first. We got everything to get started out of Germany and France and some other European countries. We made the movie with a limited budget, we got a small American distributor and the film died here.

We didn't want to distribute it here first. We wanted to distribute it in France and start there. They wouldn't let us because it was an American production and they wanted to stick to America first. But those are the kind of problems you have.

So it's very hard to get these movies made, very hard. And on television, almost forget it. Because they can criticize inside a family, but it's very rare that they will step outside and go to a broader criticism of our country. And we need this, we are filled with ourselves, we are filled with arrogance.

I'm even worse on this than Bob because Bob is tempered. It pisses me off sometimes, the arrogance of us, and the way we see the world. We so rarely are

able to step outside of ourselves and have any empathy for “the other.” The other is what terrifies us, the other is always “the other.” There’s always the Creature from the Black Lagoon, the Red Planet.

I grew up in the 1950s, I was born in '46, I still remember the first Cold War and it was horrifying. I was telling someone earlier that was younger than I that in the 1950s my father was social and he had many liberal friends from the 1930s who were socialists, Democrats, sometimes even ex-communists or communists.

They were in that society, the businessman, the “grey flannel suit society,” but there was no future for them. They could not really say what they meant because it would be noted. It would be noted they were a pink-o, or whatever they called it at that time, and then promotions would not come to them. They always were on the lower-income side of the equation.

The people who made money were the people who talked the American Game and that was the only way to get to the top. So it was a scary world, a conformist world, even more conformist than now. Far more conformist. People did not differ.

We – Peter [Kuznick], I, all these people here – we suffered in the American school system for that. I didn’t know history until [I started researching] the *Untold History of the United States* in 2008, I really started to study American history and all the sources.

Peter Kuznick, my co-author, [and the research], they gave me a college education at the age of 60. I needed it. Americans have no idea [of] their history, no idea. It’s really stunning. And we have taken this book and this documentary everywhere and we’ve made progress. Progressive people have supported this in reviews. The mainstream ignored it completely, completely. So these documentaries, going back to *Castro*, have been a struggle but they give me, sometimes, the best satisfaction I’ve ever had from my work.

I worry about Bob [Parry] very much. I’m a big supporter of his but I’m scared for him. I always say, “How can you say that and walk around your neighborhood?” This is Arlington, Virginia. Maybe he’s safer here than he would be somewhere else. We need Bob’s voice. He writes beautifully, first of all, which is important for a journalist. And he’s compelling and he tells a narrative. And what’s better is he repeats it, because you have to repeat as a teacher, for people to really start to memorize and remember. It’s a sad narrative and it’s so pathetic that we have reached this place of lying to ourselves. The lies do get bigger, more dangerous.

And now, in particular, perhaps because we’re getting older, I feel that it’s

gotten to proportions of extreme exaggeration. Where now [the sentiment is] "Our president is a Manchurian Candidate for the Russians. The Russians are here, the Russians are in our schools, the Russians are in our businesses, the Russians are everywhere." Whatever went wrong is blame-able on the Russians.

This is what's really happened. That was somewhat the case with the hysteria of 1947, '48, '49, '50. It was a hysteria about not being strong enough. I don't know how to overcome that because if you don't feel strong enough, you're never going to feel strong. You're never going to have the weaponry, you're never going to have the muscle to go down to the beach and take on the bully that's always waiting for you.

Our fear is everywhere. It's in our souls. And as long as we're outwardly motivated to find an enemy, it'll be terrorism, it'll be Noriega, Hussein, Gaddafi, and Syria, of course, Mr. Assad. And now it'll be, "the Russians are back." It doesn't end.

I've never seen it so personal as the demonization of Mr. Putin. In the old days we never insulted "Khrushchev's Russia" or "Chernenko's Russia." Now it's always Putin. There's a death here, a gay person is killed there, it's "Putin's Russia." It's really crazy and bad journalism on top of that. Very bad.

So, we've got to hope for some of these young people to pick up the slack and start really investigating the news because you can get lazy very easily in this country. There's a lot of consumerism, you can be happy and try to escape from this century. How long can we keep it up? I really don't know. I think our karma is due. You can't kill too many million people and get away with it forever. I'm surprised we got away with the Vietnam War, the way we did. And the reason I think we did was because we fought very hard against that reputation.

Mr. Reagan turned things around in his way and then of course Communism collapsed, so we always had a narrative to go. We ran out of a narrative from '91 to about 2001, but we certainly made up a lot of lies. The kids don't know this. So to them this is a new enemy.

I can tell you this from personal observation from being in Russia many times, is that the Russian people are not pushovers, at all. They did fight to the bitter end during World War II. They gave their lives in enormous quantities, they gave everything. They don't give up. We can't insult them and insult them and batter them like we have been doing and expect them to concede things that we expect. They won't do it.

They will go to the end on this and it will be a big mistake for us. We will lose so much more than they do, because we're so much richer. And I don't

understand why we can spend ten more times on our military than they do and still have this fear of them. It's a fear that never goes away.

So, to the destruction of fear and to the enlightenment of the species, I salute you too [Robert Parry], for spreading the word. Thank you very much.

[To read Parry's announcement of the award in May, [click here.](#)]

In Case You Missed...

Some of our special stories in April focused on the continuing Russia-gate imbroglio, President Trump's missile strike on Syria, and the danger of the mainstream media mediating "truth."

["Democrats' Blind Obsession on Russia-gate"](#) by Daniel Lazare, Apr. 1, 2017

["Trump's Foreign Policy Incoherence"](#) by Robert Parry, Apr. 3, 2017

["MLK's Warning of America's Spiritual Death"](#) by Gary G. Kohls, Apr. 4, 2017

["Mainstream Media as Arbiters of Truth"](#) by Robert Parry, Apr. 4, 2017

["Team Trump Ponders Climate 'Engineering'"](#) by Jonathan Marshall, Apr. 5, 2017

["Another Dangerous Rush to Judgment in Syria"](#) by Robert Parry, Apr. 5, 2017

["The Ugly Underbelly of Russia-gate"](#) by James W Carden, Apr. 6, 2017

["NYT Retreats on 2013 Syria-Sarin Claims"](#) by Robert Parry, Apr. 6, 2017

["Dashed Hopes for Trump's Foreign Policy"](#) by Gilbert Doctorow, Apr. 7, 2017

["Trump's 'Wag the Dog' Moment"](#) by Robert Parry, Apr. 7, 2017

["Trampling the US Constitution for War"](#) by Daniel C Maguire, Apr. 8, 2017

["Trump's 59-Tomahawk 'Tweet'"](#) by Alastair Crooke, Apr. 8, 2017

["Luring Trump into Mideast Wars"](#) by Daniel Lazare, Apr. 8, 2017

["Where Was CIA's Pompeo on Syria?"](#) by Robert Parry, Apr. 8, 2017

["Bill Maher's Muddled Attacks on Islam"](#) by JP Sottile, Apr. 9, 2017

["Trump Plunges Toward World War III"](#) by Norman Solomon, Apr. 10, 2017

["How Media Bias Fuels Syrian Escalation"](#) by Rick Sterling, Apr. 10, 2017

["Neocons Have Trump on His Knees"](#) by Robert Parry, Apr. 10, 2017

["Trump Should Rethink Syria Escalation"](#) by Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity, Apr. 11, 2017

["Trump's Syria Attack Trampled Many Laws"](#) by Marjorie Cohn, Apr. 11, 2017

["Russia's Disdain for Tillerson and Trump"](#) by Gilbert Doctorow, Apr. 11, 2017

["To Russia with More Russia-Bashing"](#) by Nat Parry, Apr. 12, 2017

["Trump Withholds Syria-Sarin Evidence"](#) by Robert Parry, Apr. 12, 2017

["Trump Finds His Groove with Warmaking"](#) by Dennis J Bernstein, Apr. 12, 2017

["Pushing Australia into War with China"](#) by John Pilger, Apr. 12, 2017

["Tillerson's Bad Hand in Kremlin Showdown"](#) by Gilbert Doctorow, Apr. 13, 2017

["Trump Lurches into Chaos and Conflict"](#) by Alastair Crooke, Apr. 14, 2017

["Did Al Qaeda Fool the White House Again?"](#) by Robert Parry, Apr. 14, 2017

["Handing Killer Drones to Donald Trump"](#) by Jesselyn Radack, Apr. 15, 2017

["Neocons Point Housebroken Trump at Iran"](#) by Jonathan Marshall, Apr. 15, 2017

["Obama/Trump: Contrasting Deceivers"](#) by Sam Hussein, Apr. 16, 2017

["Trump Uses Tiny Nation to Insult Russia"](#) by Ted Snider, Apr. 16, 2017

["What Russia-gate Has Wrought"](#) by Robert Parry, Apr. 16, 2017

["A Personal Look Inside Modern Islam"](#) by Arnold R. Isaacs, Apr. 17, 2017

["Through the 'War on Terror' Looking Glass"](#) by Nicolas JS Davies, Apr. 17, 2017

["Dropping the \(Non-Nuclear\) Big One"](#) by Dennis J Bernstein, Apr. 18, 2017

["NYT Mocks Skepticism on Syria-Sarin Claims"](#) by Robert Parry, Apr. 18, 2017

["Erdogan's Neo-Fascist Turkish Allies"](#) by Jonathan Marshall, Apr. 19, 2017

["Why Hillary Clinton Really Lost"](#) by Robert Parry, Apr. 19, 2017

["Russia-Bashing Helps Wall Street Democrats"](#) by Norman Solomon, Apr. 20, 2017

["Why Not a Probe of 'Israel-gate'?"](#) by Robert Parry, Apr. 20, 2017

[“Populism v. Elites in French Election”](#) by Andrew Spannaus, Apr. 21, 2017

[“How US Race Laws Inspired Nazism”](#) by David Swanson, Apr. 22, 2017

[“Coal Miners’ Futures in Renewable Energy”](#) by Jonathan Marshall, Apr. 22, 2017

[“The Pro-War Twist of the ‘Resistance’”](#) by James W Carden, Apr. 24, 2017

[“The Risk of Brushing Aside Intelligence”](#) by Lawrence Davidson, Apr. 25, 2017

[“Donald Trump’s Failing Presidency”](#) by Robert Parry, Apr. 25, 2017

[“France Circles Back to Status Quo”](#) by Gilbert Doctorow, Apr. 26, 2017

[“Intel Vets Voice Doubts on Syrian Crisis”](#) by Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity, Apr. 26, 2017

[“More NYT ‘Spin’ on the Syria-Sarin Case”](#) by Robert Parry, Apr. 28, 2017

[“The Existential Question of Whom to Trust”](#) by Robert Parry, Apr. 30, 2017

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So, please consider a tax-deductible donation either by [credit card online](#) or by [mailing a check](#). (For readers wanting to use PayPal, you can address contributions to our PayPal Giving Fund account, which is named “The Consortium for Independent Journalism”).

Oliver Stone Honored with Press Freedom Award

Director Oliver Stone – in recognition of his brave work in documentary films – has been selected as the winner of the 2016 Gary Webb Freedom of the Press Award, reports Robert Parry.

By Robert Parry

Though most people know Oliver Stone as a famous screenwriter and movie director, he has also lent his talents and resources to a number of documentary films that embrace the core journalistic idea that there are usually two sides – if not more – to a story.

In doing so, Stone has taken on controversial subjects, both in challenging conventional history as with Showtime's "Untold History of the United States" and daring to treat foreign leaders – who were undergoing demonization by the U.S. government and media – as complex figures who deserve to have their say as well.

Not surprisingly, Stone has faced intense criticism for deviating from mainstream U.S. groupthink, which seek to portray international adversaries as cardboard villains deserving only of American hatred and bombs.

But Stone learned as a decorated young soldier in the Vietnam War how that propaganda process can lead to unspeakable horrors, including the unnecessary deaths of millions of people and the devastation of entire nations and regions.

The Vietnam War – and the U.S. government's lies that justified it – taught Stone a powerful lesson that is as true now as it was then, that a healthy democracy should encourage a diversity of viewpoints, appreciate all sides of a conflict, and have the courage to engage in serious self-criticism, not simply assume that what the authorities are saying is true.

Stone's documentaries have included close-up studies of Latin American leftist leaders challenging U.S. hegemony in the hemisphere, including Cuba's Fidel and Raul Castro, Venezuela's Hugo Chavez, Bolivia's Evo Morales, Ecuador's Rafael Correa, the Kirschners of Argentina, Brazil's Lula da Silva and Paraguay's Fernando Lugo.

Stone recently produced a documentary on the Ukraine crisis, entitled "Ukraine on Fire," which offered a nuanced understanding of Ukraine's modern history as well as explaining the behind-the-scenes story of the violent overthrow of elected President Viktor Yanukovich and the secret U.S. hand in turning Ukraine into a flashpoint for a new Cold War.

In June, Showtime is scheduled to release Stone's series of interviews with Russian President Vladimir Putin, spanning two years, entitled "The Putin Interviews."

Because of his courage and tenacity in presenting sides of important stories that many powerful interests in the United States would prefer the American people not hear, the Board of Directors for the Consortium for Independent Journalism (which publishes Consortiumnews.com) presents Oliver Stone with the Gary Webb Freedom of the Press Award for 2016.

Background of Award

The award is named in honor of investigative reporter Gary Webb who in 1996

courageously revived interest in one of the darkest scandals of the 1980s, the Reagan administration's tolerance of cocaine trafficking by the CIA-organized Nicaraguan Contra rebels who were fighting to overthrow Nicaragua's leftist Sandinista government.

The Contra-Cocaine scandal was originally exposed by Associated Press reporters Robert Parry and Brian Barger in 1985, but the major U.S. newspapers accepted the Reagan administration's denials and treated the story as a "conspiracy theory."

So, when Webb revived the story in 1996 for the San Jose Mercury News and described how some of the Contra cocaine fueled the spread of crack across urban America, the major newspapers again rallied to the defense of the Contras and the Reagan administration's legacy.

The assault on Webb was led by The New York Times, The Washington Post and the Los Angeles Times – and was so ferocious that Webb's editors at the Mercury News sacrificed him to protect their own careers. Webb found himself cast out from the profession that he loved.

It didn't even matter that an internal CIA investigation by Inspector General Frederick Hitz confirmed, in 1998, that the CIA was aware of the Contra cocaine trafficking but had put its goal of ousting the Sandinistas ahead of any responsibility to expose the Contra criminality.

Because of the false impression that Webb had manufactured a fake story, he remained unemployable in mainstream journalism. In 2004, with his life in tatters and his financial resources spent, Webb took his own life, a tragic casualty in the difficult fight for a truly free press in America, a press that doesn't just rubber stamp government propaganda and accept official lies as truth.

[For more on that history, see Consortiumnews.com's "[The Sordid Contra-Cocaine Saga](#)."]]

Investigative reporter Robert Parry broke many of the Iran-Contra stories for The Associated Press and Newsweek in the 1980s. You can buy his latest book, *America's Stolen Narrative*, either in [print here](#) or as an e-book (from [Amazon](#) and [barnesandnoble.com](#)).

Last Call for Spring Fund Drive

From Editor Robert Parry: Our Spring Fund Drive ends tonight – and we are about \$500 short of our goal of \$30,000. If you can help us reach our target, we would be most appreciative.

You can donate by [credit card online](#) (we accept Visa, Mastercard, American Express and Discover), by PayPal (our PayPal account is named after our original email address, “consortnew @ aol.com”), or by [mailing a check](#) to Consortium for Independent Journalism (CIJ); 2200 Wilson Blvd., Suite 102-231; Arlington VA 22201.

We also are registered with PayPal’s Giving Fund under the name Consortium for Independent Journalism. And, since we are a 501-c-3 non-profit, donations by American taxpayers may be tax-deductible.

Thank you for your support.

Robert Parry

Wrapping Up Spring Fund Drive

From Editor Robert Parry: Thanks to the generosity of our readers, we have gotten to within about \$5,000 of our spring fund-drive goal of \$30,000, an important target so we can continue this important independent news Web site.

If you haven’t contributed yet, any amount that you can afford will help. You can donate by [credit card online](#) (we accept Visa, Mastercard, American Express and Discover), by PayPal (our PayPal account is named after our original email address, “consortnew @ aol.com”), or by [mailing a check](#) to Consortium for Independent Journalism (CIJ); 2200 Wilson Blvd., Suite 102-231; Arlington VA 22201.

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Thank you for your support.

Robert Parry

In Case You Missed...

Some of our special stories in March focused on Donald Trump's early troubles as President, the Russia-gate controversy, and the deepening crises in North Korea and Syria.

["How the Press Serves the Deep State"](#) by Daniel Lazare, Mar. 1, 2017

["Another Hatchet Job on Snowden"](#) by Ray McGovern, Mar. 3, 2017

["The Politics Behind 'Russia-gate'"](#) by Robert Parry, Mar. 4, 2017

["A Path Forward on North Korea"](#) by Ann Wright, Mar. 5, 2017

["Global Warming's Threat to Trump's Mar-a-Lago"](#) by Jonathan Marshall, Mar. 6, 2017

["Official Washington Tips into Madness"](#) by Robert Parry, Mar. 6, 2017

["Risks in Demonizing Diplomacy with Russia"](#) by Jack Matlock, Mar. 6, 2017

["Official Washington Hails an Anti-Russia Hawk"](#) by James W Carden, Mar. 7, 2017

["America's Deadly New 'National Bird'"](#) by Dennis J. Bernstein, Mar. 8, 2017

["America's Homegrown Assault on Democracy"](#) by Norman Solomon, Mar. 8, 2017

["North Korea Fears 'Regime Change' Strike"](#) by Jonathan Marshall, Mar. 8, 2017

["Fresh Doubts about Russian 'Hacking'"](#) by Robert Parry, Mar. 8, 2017

["The Five Blinding Myths About Iran"](#) by Ted Snider, Mar. 9, 2017

["Steve Bannon's Apocalyptic 'Unravelling'"](#) by Alastair Croke, Mar. 9, 2017

["Another Russia 'Fake News' Red Herring"](#) by Robert Parry, Mar. 9, 2017

["Dreams of 'Winning' Nuclear War on Russia"](#) by Jonathan Marshall, Mar. 10, 2017

["A Flawed UN Investigation on Syria"](#) by Gareth Porter, Mar. 11, 2017

["Restoring a Responsible 'Conservatism'"](#) by Graham E. Fuller, Mar. 12, 2017

["The Democrats' Dangerous Diversion"](#) by Nicolas JS Davies, Mar. 12, 2017

["When 'Disinformation' Is Truth"](#) by Robert Parry, Mar. 13, 2017

"The Misguided 'Vault 7' Whodunit" by Jesselyn Radack, Mar. 14, 2017

"Celebrating the Balfour Disaster" by Lawrence Davidson, Mar. 14, 2017

"America First or Saudi Arabia First?" by Kristen Breitweiser, Mar. 14, 2017

"Greens' Stein Faults Two-Party System" by Dennis J Bernstein, Mar. 15, 2017

"The Kagans Are Back; Wars to Follow" by Robert Parry, Mar. 15, 2017

"Trump Slips into 'Endless War' Cycle" by James W Carden, Mar. 16, 2017

"Trumping Trump and Howling at the Moonves" by JP Sottile, Mar. 16, 2017

"Contrasting Tales of Two Besieged Cities" by Steven Chovanec, Mar. 17, 2017

"The Trump/Obama 'Leak War'" by Rick Sterling, Mar. 17, 2017

"NYT's 'Tinfoil Hat' Conspiracy Theory" by Robert Parry, Mar. 19, 2017

"The Missing Logic of Russia-gate" by Robert Parry, Mar. 20, 2017

"A Breach in the Anti-Putin Groupthink" by Gilbert Doctorow, Mar. 21, 2017

"David Rockefeller & October Surprise Case" by Robert Parry, Mar. 21, 2017

"Fear Spreads in Immigrant Communities" by Dennis J Bernstein, Mar. 22, 2017

"What Russia Wants – and Expects" by Gilbert Doctorow, Mar. 22, 2017

"Democrats Trade Places on War and McCarthyism" by Robert Parry, Mar. 23, 2017

"Pretending Israel Is Innocent of Apartheid" by Lawrence Davidson, Mar. 24 2017

"Risks to US from War on North Korea" by Jonathan Marshall, Mar. 25, 2017

"How US Flooded the World with Psyops" by Robert Parry, Mar. 25, 2017

"Another Journalist Killed in Mexico" by Dennis J Bernstein, Mar. 26, 2017

"Life and Death in Vietnam's 'Television War'" by Don North, Mar. 27, 2017

"US Media's Global Warming Denialism" by Jonathan Marshall, Mar. 27, 2017

"The Surveillance State Behind Russia-gate" by Ray McGovern & Bill Binney, Mar. 28, 2017

"The Sleazy Origins of Russia-gate" by Robert Parry, Mar. 29, 2017

"Israel Hits Back Against Boycott" by Marjorie Cohn, Mar. 30, 2017

["Trump Succumbs to Bush/Obama Perpetual War"](#) by Ann Wright, Mar. 30, 2017

["Aiding Saudi Arabia's Slaughter in Yemen"](#) by Dennis J Bernstein, Mar. 30, 2017

["Duping Americans on Healthcare and War"](#) by Nicolas JS Davies, Mar. 30, 2017

["Blaming Russia for Everything"](#) by Robert Parry, Mar. 31, 2017

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You Protect Our Independence

From Editor Robert Parry: At Consortiumnews, we've never had some billionaire who pays our bills and pulls our strings. From our start in 1995, we've relied on readers to support our work and to protect our independence. We also operate on a very tight budget, especially for a daily news operation that plays such a big role in challenging the many misguided groupthinks of Official Washington.

This combination of our own frugality and the generosity of our readers has enabled us to survive more than two decades and to become a burr under the saddle of the Establishment, which prefers nothing more than to deliver its propaganda to the citizenry without question or resistance. But the reason that we are viewed as such a problem is that we challenge the slick propaganda with sound journalism and solid reasoning.

Also, because we know our readers are busy, we limit our special fund appeals to three times a year: early spring, late summer/early fall, and the end of the year. We are now in our spring fund drive and need your help to reach our rather modest \$30,000 goal.

You can donate by [credit card online](#) (we accept Visa, Mastercard, American Express and Discover), by PayPal (our PayPal account is named after our original email address, "consortnew@aol.com"), or by [mailing a check](#) to Consortium for Independent Journalism (CIJ); 2200 Wilson Blvd., Suite 102-231; Arlington VA 22201.

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Thank you for your support.

Robert Parry

Spring Fund Drive Begins

From Editor Robert Parry: We are setting our spring fundraising goal at \$30,000, so we can continue publishing this independent-minded news site, which produces journalism that demands real facts from all sides in important public debates while rejecting Washington's groupthinks.

You can donate by [credit card online](#) (we accept Visa, Mastercard, American Express and Discover), by PayPal (our PayPal account is named after our original email address, "consortnew@aol.com"), or by [mailing a check](#) to Consortium for Independent Journalism (CIJ); 2200 Wilson Blvd., Suite 102-231; Arlington VA 22201.

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What makes Consortiumnews special is its commitment to old-fashioned journalistic principles. We try to be evenhanded and fair toward everyone regardless of popularity (or lack thereof) – and we insist on evidence before serious accusations are made.

We don't simply run with the media pack, which I realize can annoy some people at times when they want us to join in supporting a favored political agenda. But that is not our job. Our job is to objectively evaluate evidence and put it into a reasonable context, which is why we are often out of step with the mainstream media.

But that is also why our stories, overwhelmingly, stand the test of time. And our commitment to honest journalism is our promise to you, our readers. Thank you for your support.

Robert Parry

In Case You Missed...

Some of our special stories in February focused on the contentious beginning of the Trump presidency, the growing hysteria over Russia and the dangers of the New Cold War.

["Dangers of Democratic Putin-Bashing"](#) by Robert Parry, Feb. 1, 2017

["Ukraine Sabotages Trump's Russia Detente"](#) by Jonathan Marshall, Feb. 1, 2017

["'Deflategate' Cloud over the Super Bowl"](#) by Robert Parry, Feb. 2, 2017

["The Irony of Trump's Immigration Ban"](#) by Lawrence Davidson, Feb. 2 2017

["Trump Veers Off Course with Iran Threats"](#) by Alastair Crooke, Feb. 2, 2017

["A Reprise of the Iraq-WMD Fiasco?"](#) by James W Carden, Feb. 3, 2017

["Trump Bends to Neocon Pressures"](#) by Andrew Spannaus, Feb. 3, 2017

["Steering Trump Back to Endless War"](#) by Daniel Lazare, Feb. 4, 2017

["How US Believes Impossible Things"](#) by William Blum, Feb. 5, 2017

["What Trump's 'Great Wall' Misses"](#) by William Blum, Feb. 6, 2017

["Castigating Trump for Truth-Telling"](#) by Robert Parry, Feb. 7, 2017

["Trump's 'Great Wall' and the 'Drug War'"](#) by Jonathan Marshall, Feb. 8, 2017

["A Deadly Legacy: CIA's Covert Laos War"](#) by Don North, Feb. 8, 2017

["Trump's Foreign Policy at a Crossroads"](#) by Robert Parry, Feb. 9, 2017

["The Neocons' Back-Door to Trump"](#) by Robert Parry, Feb. 10, 2017

["Amnesty International Stokes Syrian War"](#) by Rick Sterling, Feb. 11, 2017

["Deciphering Trump's Opaque Foreign Policy"](#) by Alastair Crooke, Feb. 11, 2017

["A Documentary You'll Likely Never See"](#) by James DiEugenio, Feb. 13, 2017

["The Negotiation Option with North Korea"](#) by Jonathan Marshall, Feb. 14, 2017

["Trump Caves on Flynn's Resignation"](#) by Robert Parry, Feb. 14, 2017

["Trump's Dysfunctional White House"](#) by Lawrence Davidson, Feb. 15, 2017

["A Dangerous Hysteria on Russia"](#) by James W Carden, Feb. 15, 2017

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Another Russia ‘Fake News’ Red Herring

Exclusive: In the West, it’s now common for politicians to shout Russian “fake news” when embarrassing facts come out – as happened with Canada’s new foreign minister hiding a Nazi family skeleton, reports Robert Parry.

By Robert Parry

On Feb, 27, Consortiumnews.com published an article describing misrepresentations by Canada’s new Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland about her Ukrainian maternal grandfather whom she has portrayed as a hero who struggled “to return freedom and democracy to Ukraine” but left out that he was a Nazi propagandist whose newspaper justified the slaughter of Jews.

Over the next week, the article entitled “[A Nazi Skeleton in the Family Closet](#)” by journalist Arina Tsukanova (which I personally edited and fact-checked) circulated enough that Freeland was asked about it by the Canadian news media. As often happens these days, Freeland chose not to tell the truth but rather portrayed the article as part of a Russian propaganda and disinformation campaign.

Freeland told reporters, “I don’t think it’s a secret. American officials have publicly said, and even [German Chancellor] Angela Merkel has publicly said, that there were efforts on the Russian side to destabilize Western democracies, and I think it shouldn’t come as a surprise if these same efforts were used against Canada. ... I think that Canadians and indeed other Western countries should be prepared for similar efforts to be directed at them.”

Though Freeland did not comment directly on the truthfulness of our article, her office denied that her grandfather was a Nazi collaborator.

Other leaders of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s government joined in the counterattack. Citing the danger of Russian disinformation, Public Safety Minister Ralph Goodale, said, “The situation is obviously one where we need to be alert.”

In an article on March 6, Canada's Globe and Mail also rallied to Freeland's defense claiming that she was "being targeted by allegations in pro-Moscow websites that her maternal Ukrainian grandfather was a Nazi collaborator."

The newspaper also reached out to other experts to add their denunciations of Consortiumnews.com and other news sites that either reposted our story or ran a similar one.

"It is the continued Russian modus operandi that they have. Fake news, disinformation and targeting different individuals," said Paul Grod, president of the Canadian Ukrainian Congress. "It is just so outlandish when you hear some of these allegations – whether they are directed at minister Freeland or others."

The Globe and Mail also quoted Ukraine's ambassador to Canada, Andriy Shevchenko, citing our supposedly fake news as "another reason ... we should realize that Russia is waging a war against the free world. It is not just about Ukraine."

The ambassador then offered some advice about standing up to the Russians and their disinformationists: "I am absolutely sure they will seek new targets in the free world so I would encourage our Canadian friends to be prepared for that, to stay strong and we will be happy to share our experience in how to deal with all these information wars."

A Second-Day Story

The only problem with all these righteous condemnations was that the information about Freeland's grandfather was true – and Freeland knew that it was true.

In a second-day story, The Globe and Mail had to revisit the issue, reporting that "Freeland knew for more than two decades that her maternal Ukrainian grandfather was the chief editor of a Nazi newspaper in occupied Poland that vilified Jews during the Second World War."

In other words, not only was our story accurate but Freeland knowingly launched a deceptive attack on us and other news outlets to punish us for writing the truth.

And not only was our story correct but it was newsworthy, given Freeland's fierce support for Ukrainian nationalism and her deep hatred of Russia. Canadians have a right to know what drives those passions in their Foreign Minister. In this case, her worldview derived from her grandparents who sided with Adolf Hitler and who fled to the West as the Soviet Red Army defeated the Nazis.

Yet, instead of fessing up and acknowledging these facts, Freeland chose to dissemble and slander journalists who were doing their job. And the smears didn't entirely stop.

Even as the Globe and Mail admitted the reality about Freeland's grandfather, it continued to disparage the journalists who had exposed the facts. The second line of the newspaper's second-day article read: "Ms. Freeland's family history has become a target for Russian forces seeking to discredit one of Canada's highly placed defenders of Ukraine."

This pattern has become all too common in the West, to insult and discredit anyone who doesn't accept the "groupthink" about the New Cold War. Just as the major news media marched in lockstep over the Iraq-WMD falsehoods, so it has been toeing the line on the hysteria over supposed "Russian propaganda" and "fake news."

Hidden History

In its second bite at the apple, the Globe and Mail noted that "Ms. Freeland, who has paid tribute to her maternal grandparents in articles and books, helped edit a scholarly article in the Journal of Ukrainian Studies in 1996 that revealed her grandfather, Michael Chomiak, was a Nazi propagandist for Krakivski Visti (Krakow News).

"Krakivski Visti was set up in 1940 by the German army and supervised by German intelligence officer Emil Gassert. Its printing presses and offices were confiscated by the Germans from a Jewish publisher, who was later murdered at the Belzec concentration camp." All of that was reported in our Feb. 27 article.

The Journal of Ukrainian Studies article was written by Freeland's uncle, John-Paul Himka, a professor emeritus at the University of Alberta, who credits help from Freeland in the foreword. However, as the Globe and Mail wrote, "Ms. Freeland has never acknowledged that her grandfather was a Nazi collaborator and suggested on Monday that the allegation was part of a Russian disinformation campaign."

Some members of Freeland's family have tried to recast the storyline to portray Chomiak as something of a double agent, but Himka said he was never able to verify this information, which he called "fragmentary and one-sided," the Globe and Mail reported.

Himka added that he never knew that Chomiak had worked for the Nazis until after his father-in-law died and left behind copies of Krakivski Visti in his personal papers.

The day after her initial comments on our article, Freeland's office offered a brief statement: "Dating back many years, the Minister has supported her uncle's efforts to study and publish on this difficult chapter in her late grandfather's past."

But Freeland, who has a background as a journalist herself, did not explain why she chose initially to dissemble about her grandfather and to slander journalists who were telling the truth.

Investigative reporter Robert Parry broke many of the Iran-Contra stories for The Associated Press and Newsweek in the 1980s. You can buy his latest book, *America's Stolen Narrative*, either in [print here](#) or as an e-book (from [Amazon](#) and [barnesandnoble.com](#)).
