



**Pekka Kallioniemi** @P\_Kallioniemi

Sep 5, 2024 · 21 tweets · [P\\_Kallioniemi/status/1831613044746580260](#)

In today's #vatniksoup, I'll discuss the Kremlin's funding of Tennessee-based media company TENET Media. TENET Media is best-known for their promotion of Russian narratives and for strong support for Donald Trump in the upcoming 2024 US elections.

1/20



Carsten Reisinger/Shutterstock @watchTENET/YouTube (Licensed)

## Media start-up from Benny Johnson, Tim Pool, and Dave Rubin was secret Russian influence campaign, indictment alleges

Famous pro-Trump commentators may have been unwittingly duped.



David Covucci

Tech

Posted on Sep 4, 2024

Updated on Sep 4, 2024, 6:01 pm CDT

First, it's worth stating that the funding originated from Kremlin-controlled RT, and that the funding was masked through shell companies in countries like Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, and Mauritius, with the money being described as payments for electronics.

2/20

Between in or about October 2023 and in or about August 2024, RT sent wire transfers to U.S. Company-1 totaling approximately \$9.7 million, which represented nearly 90% of U.S. Company-1's bank deposits from all sources combined. The wires were sent from shell companies in Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, and Mauritius, and were often accompanied by wire notes ascribing the payments to the purchase of electronics. For example, the wire note for a \$318,800 wire payment from a shell entity in Turkey to U.S. Company-1 on March 1, read: "BUYING GOODS-INV.013-IPHONE 15 PRO MAX 512GB."

U.S. Company-1 never disclosed to its viewers that it was funded and directed by RT. Nor did U.S. Company-1 or its two founders register with the Attorney General as an agent of a foreign principal.

The two individuals involved from RT, identified as Kostiantyn Kalashnikov and Elena Afanasyeva, have been charged with conspiracy to commit money laundering and conspiracy to violate the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA). These two also instructed the content creators.

3/20

The screenshot shows the official website of the Office of Public Affairs, U.S. Department of Justice. The page features a dark blue header with the department's seal and navigation links. Below the header is a white navigation bar with links for About, News, Documents, Internships, FOIA, Contact, and Information for Journalists. The main content area is white and displays a press release titled "Two RT Employees Indicted for Covertly Funding and Directing U.S. Company that Published Thousands of Videos in Furtherance of Russian Interests". The release is dated Wednesday, September 4, 2024, and is marked as "For Immediate Release". A "Share" button is visible next to the date. The press release text begins with "Employees of Russian State-Controlled Media Outlet Deployed Nearly \$10 Million to Publish RT-Curated Content, Which Garnered Millions of Views, Through a Tennessee-Based Online Content Creation Company". A sidebar on the left lists various news categories, with "Press Releases" selected. At the bottom left, there is a link for "Archived News".

TENET was founded in 2022 by Lauren Chen and Liam Donovan, who is also the president of the company. Chen is a contributor to Charlie Kirk's non-profit Turning Point USA and she also wrote opinion pieces for RT between 2021 and 2022.

4/20



# PROFILE



## LAUREN CHEN

Lauren Chen is a conservative millennial YouTuber, blogger, political commentator, and TV host. Born in Quebec, Canada, and raised in Hong Kong, Lauren earned a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science with a Minor in Middle-Eastern Studies and Arabic. She has starred in popular conservative shows including, Pseudo-Intellectual on Blaze TV and Roaming Millennial: Uncensored on CRTV. Lauren currently stars on her own YouTube channel, Lauren Chen, which has garnered over half a million subscribers and amassed almost 80,000,000 views. She has also appeared on Fox News, One America News, Newsmax, The Daily Wire, Rebel Media, and PragerU.

Contributor

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## Lauren Chen



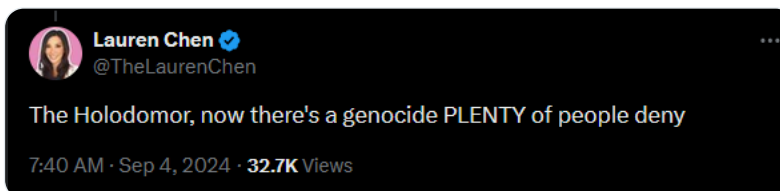
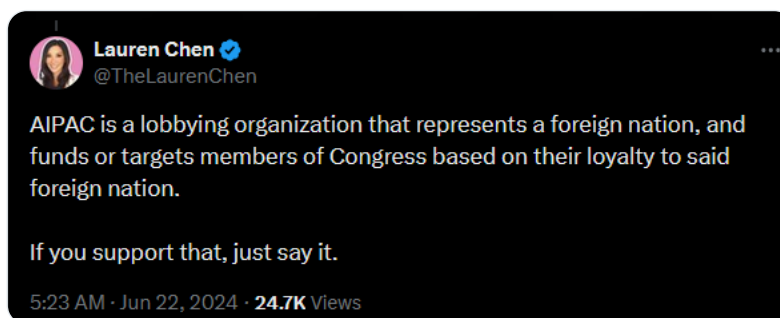
*Lauren Chen is a political and social commentator. She began as a YouTuber, and has since gained millions of views on the platform and hundreds of thousands of followers. She has also appeared on Fox News,*

*BlazeTV, RT, OANN, Newsmax, The Daily Wire, Rebel Media, PragerU and The Rubin Report.*

*Lauren was born in Canada, raised in Hong Kong, and came to the US for university. She has a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science with a Minor in Middle East Studies and Arabic. The topics she is most passionate about include dating culture, family values, individual liberty, gender equality, and issues surrounding race.*

*Follow her on Twitter [@thelaurenchen](#) and [Telegram](#)*





I have previously written about the shift in tactics of Russian information operations, suggesting that instead of using bot & troll accounts with limited following, they've started supporting social media superspreader accounts with huge reach.

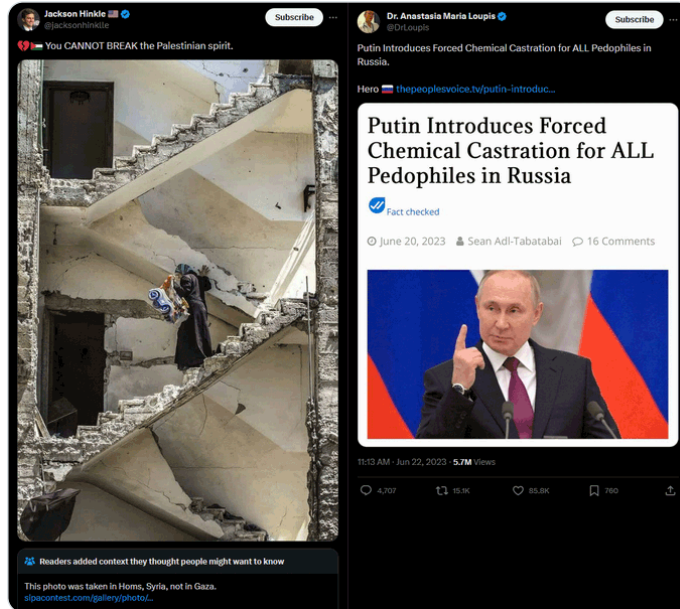


**Pekka Kallioniemi** ✓  
@P\_Kallioniemi · Follow



In today's #vatniksoup, I'll discuss social media superspreaders. Due to their effectiveness, superspreader accounts are often used to spread "low credibility" content, disinformation and propaganda, and today this is more often done by hostile state actors such as Russia.

1/14



11:01 AM · May 27, 2024

5.8K Reply Copy link

Read 48 replies

Next, let's look at the people involved in TENET media. Tim Pool, Benny Johnson, Dave Rubin and Lauren Southern are probably the biggest names in the bunch, and this group alone has a combined follower count on X of around 7 million. They also produce content on YouTube.

6/20



**Benny Johnson**  

@bennyjohnson

i make internet

 Media Personality  Tampa Florida  [bennyjohnson.com/subscribe](https://bennyjohnson.com/subscribe)

 Joined June 2008

3,415 Following 2.7M Followers 14 Subscriptions



**Tim Pool**  

@Timcast

Host of Timcast IRL And CEO @Timcastnews  
Host of The Culture War Podcast on @watchTENETnow

 Media & News Company  Harpers Ferry  [Timcast.com](https://Timcast.com)

 Born March 9  Joined March 2009

947 Following 2.1M Followers



**DAVE RUBIN REPORT**  
ONE VIEWS. MON-FRI 11AM ET - 8AM PT

**Dave Rubin**  
@RubinReport  
Florida Man  
linktr.ee/rubinreport | Joined December 2008  
928 Following 1.5M Followers

This is a Twitter profile card for Dave Rubin. The header features a blue background with the text "DAVE RUBIN REPORT" and "ONE VIEWS. MON-FRI 11AM ET - 8AM PT". A circular profile picture of Dave Rubin is on the left. To the right of the profile picture are three dots and a "Follow" button. Below the name and handle, it says "Florida Man". There is a location pin icon, a link to "linktr.ee/rubinreport", and "Joined December 2008". At the bottom, it shows "928 Following" and "1.5M Followers".



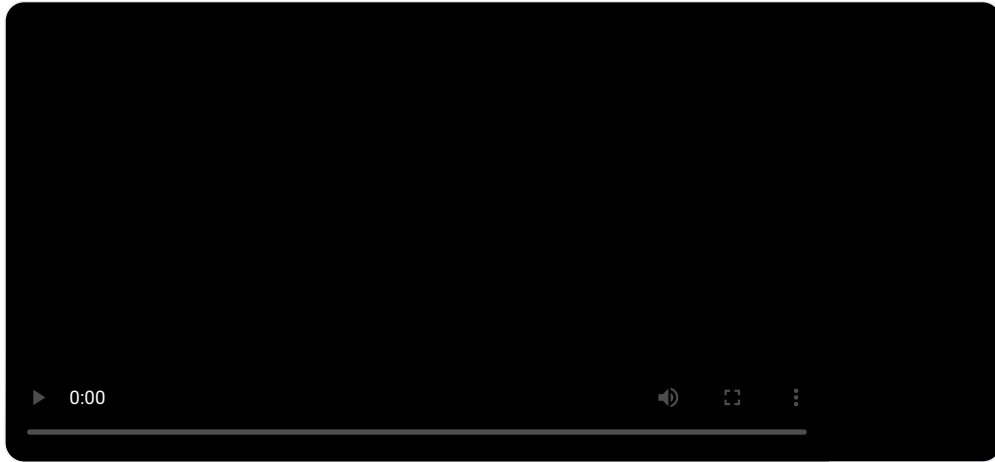
**LS**  
NEWS-COMMENTARY-CULTURE

**Lauren Southern** ✓  
@Lauren\_Southern  
Watch my documentaries at: [laurensouthern.net](http://laurensouthern.net) Best Selling Author. Filmmaker.  
Media Personality | contactlsouthern@gmail.com  
[youtube.com/channel/UCl6A...](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCl6A...) | Joined July 2010  
1,342 Following 562K Followers

This is a Twitter profile card for Lauren Southern. The header features a blue background with the text "LS" and "NEWS-COMMENTARY-CULTURE". A circular profile picture of Lauren Southern is on the left. To the right of the profile picture are three dots, a purple icon, and a "Follow" button. Below the name and handle, it says "Watch my documentaries at: laurensouthern.net Best Selling Author. Filmmaker." There is a location pin icon, "Media Personality", "contactlsouthern@gmail.com", a link to "youtube.com/channel/UCl6A...", and "Joined July 2010". At the bottom, it shows "1,342 Following" and "562K Followers".

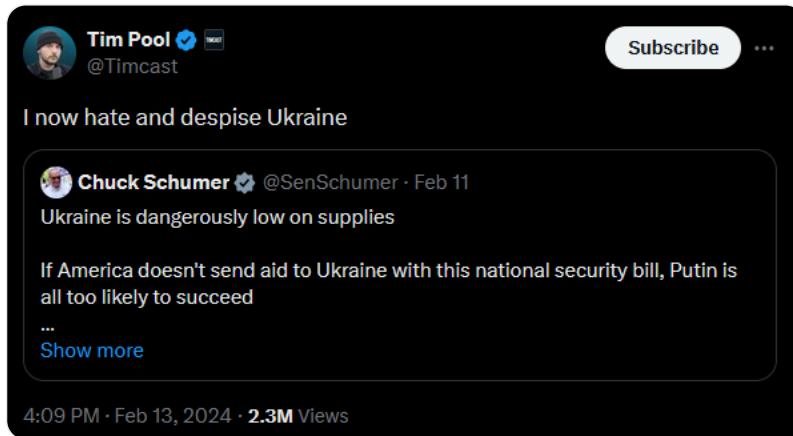
Out of the four, Pool was the one who went ALL IN with his videos. In one of his videos, he claimed that “Ukraine is the enemy of this country”, that Ukraine triggered the conflict by blowing up the Nord Stream pipeline, also suggesting that “we should apologize to Russia”.





Tim's also been vocal over Ukraine on X, and especially on the US military aid to the country. He's also suggested that Trump could potentially de-escalate the war quickly. Incidentally, these posts became much more common after TENET got their funding from Russia.

8/20





Tim Pool    
@Timcast

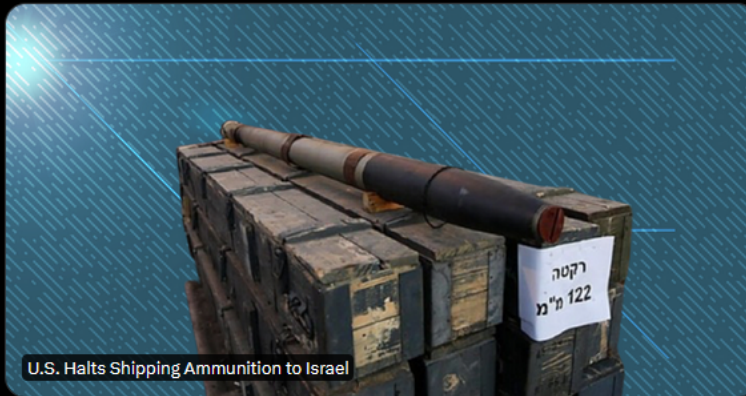
Subscribe ...

Trump got impeached for freezing military aid to Ukraine

Biden faces no consequences for freezing military aid to Israel

This proves the Ukrainians run the US

now when someone asks "who is they tho" you respond "the ukrainians"



U.S. Halts Shipping Ammunition to Israel

From scnr.com

4:50 PM · May 6, 2024 · 1.1M Views



Tim Pool    
@Timcast

Follow ...

The people screaming about Trump working for Russia are the same people demanding social media censor "misinformation"

Stop listening to these people

6:38 PM · 3/22/19



Johnson's main talking points have revolved around stopping the Ukraine aid and emphasizing the domestic problems in the US (naturally caused by the evil Democrats). Apparently, he was paid 400,000 USD per month and also received a signing bonus of 100,000 USD.

**Arieh Kovler** @ariehkovler

Eventually they did a deal. Benny Johnson would (unknowingly) work for the Russians for \$400,000 a month in exchange for 4 monthly videos. Plus a 100k signing bonus.

Pool also agreed 100k a video but no bonus. Weak negotiating skills.

er negotiations, in which Founder-2 also participated. Commentator-2's contract, which was between Co and U.S. Company-1, provided for weekly videos to be livestreamed by U.S. Company-1. In exchange for a fee of \$100,000, Commentator-2's production company granted U.S. Company-1 "a non-exclusive license, during the applicable License Term, to display, transmit, and all content created . . . under this Agreement."

ally:  
 Commentator-1's contract, which was between U.S. Company-1, provided for "four weekly videos to be livestreamed by U.S. Company-1. In exchange for a fee of \$100,000, Commentator-1's production company granted U.S. Company-1 "a non-exclusive license, during the applicable License Term, to display, transmit, and all content created . . . under this Agreement."

15

10:27 PM · Sep 4, 2024 · 931K Views

**Benny Johnson** @bennyjohnson

Politicians are waving Ukraine Flags in the halls of Congress and chanting "Ukraine" as they vote to send another \$60 billion overseas.

Insane.

**\$60.8 BILLION IN UKRAINE AID**

**ON PASSAGE**

**H. R. 8035**

	YEA	NAY	PRES	NV
REPUBLICAN	100	112	1	5
DEMOCRATIC	210			3
INDEPENDENT				
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>

U.S. HOUSE

TIME REMAINING 0:00

C-SPAN 45 YEARS

From **Rand Paul**

9:41 PM · Apr 20, 2024 · 397.7K Views

**Tucker Carlson & Andrew Tate's perfect take on Ukraine**  
 Benny Johnson • 132K views • 1 year ago

**Chip Roy SAVAGES Dems sending BILLIONS to Ukraine**  
 Benny Johnson • 180K views • 1 year ago  
 SUBSCRIBE TO THE PODCAST <https://link.chtbl.com/hDPO8U2P> Sign up for The Benny Newsletter: <https://www.bennyjohnson.com/newslett...> Follow Benny on All of His Channels: <https://www.bennyjohnson.c...>

**Trump SOLVES Ukraine War: "We would have a deal made in 24 hours"**  
 Benny Johnson • 1.1M views • 1 year ago  
 SUBSCRIBE TO THE PODCAST <https://link.chtbl.com/hDPO8U2P> Sign up for The Benny Newsletter: <https://www.bennyjohnson.com/newslett...> Follow Benny on All of His Channels: <https://www.bennyjohnson.c...>

**Ukraine War: Trump's PERFECT Answer**  
 Benny Johnson • 5.5M views • 1 year ago  
 SUBSCRIBE TO THE PODCAST <https://link.chtbl.com/hDPO8U2P> Sign up for The Benny Newsletter: <https://www.bennyjohnson.com/newsletter> Follow Benny on All of His Channels: <https://www.bennyjohnson.co...>

**VIVEK GOES NUCLEAR!**  
 INSTANT REGRETT! CNN Has On-Air PANIC ATTACK As Vivek FLIPS Script on Host |...  
 173K views • 7 hours ago

**TRUDEAU'S GOV'T COLLAPSING!**  
 PANIC! Canadian Libe TURN on Trudeau | CHAOS as 'Castro Jr' Set To LOSE Power in...  
 72K views • 9 hours ago

**WTF! WALZ'S FAM FOR TRUMP!**  
 The Entire Family Of Kamala's Vice President Just ENDORSED TRUMP | Greatest Troll Of...  
 160K views • 10 hours ago

**IDIO! KAMALA BUSTED!**  
 Kamala CAUGHT! FAKES Phone Call with Wired Headphones to HIDE From Press |...  
 77K views • 17 hours ago

**KAMALA CRINGE!**  
 Kamala Breaks-Out Fake Black Accent in Detroit, Crowd CRINGES | Joe Says 'Not...  
 32K views • 1 day ago

**NFL STAR ROBBED IN SAN FRAN!**  
 Top NFL Draft Pick SHOT in San Francisco Before Season Kickoff | 'Third World...  
 45K views • 1 day ago

**amazon CAUGHT RIGGING ELECTION!**  
 We Caught Amazon Red-Handed RIGGING The 2024 Election AGAINST Trum...  
 221K views • 1 day ago

**TRUMP TO EXPOSE EPSTEIN FILES!**  
 Trump Vows To RELEASE The EPSTEIN LIST, Clintons PANIC | 'I Will Name Everyon...  
 134K views • 1 day ago

**TIM POOL SUING KAMALA HARRIS!**  
 BOMBHELL! Tim Pool Announces LAWSUIT Against Kamala Campaign | This...  
 159K views • 1 day ago

**TRUDEAU REKT!**  
 Steelworker HUMILIATES Justin Trudeau To His Face As He TANKS in The Polls: 'You're...  
 88K views • 1 day ago

**TRUMP SURGING IN NEW POLLS!**  
 Polling Expert Warns Kamala Will TANK in the Polls After Debate | 'She's PANICKING!'  
 233K views • 2 days ago

**NEW KAMALA ACCENT JUST DROPPED!**  
 Kamala Breaks-Out Fake Black Accent in Detroit, Crowd CRINGES! Rants About...  
 291K views • 2 days ago

**THIS IS BUILT!**  
 Did The Eagles ENDORSE Kamala? NFL Team Responds to VIRAL Ads Around Phil...  
 118K views • 2 days ago

**KAMALA CAMP CAR CRASH!**  
 Kamala's Campaign Motorcade CRASHES! 'Blood and Broken Bones...  
 197K views • 2 days ago

**Ford & Lowe's BANNED!**  
 VICTORY! Ford and Lowes SURRENDER & APOLOGIZES for WOKE Activism, ENDS DE...  
 69K views • 2 days ago

**TRUMP NUKES COMMIE KAMALA!**  
 Trump Posts 'Commie Kamala' A.I. Meme | Libs Have UNHINGED MELTDOWN  
 102K views • 2 days ago

In the case of Lauren Southern, the Russian connection is more evident - in 2018, she visited Moscow to meet with Aleksandr Dugin, a political philosopher who provided the blueprint

for Russian imperialism in his 1997 book Foundations of Geopolitics.

10/20



## Why is this Pizzagate truther meeting with a Russian neo-fascist?

Far-right darlings Lauren Southern and Brittany Pettibone head to Russia to meet with Alexander Dugin.

CASEY MICHEL  JUN 10, 2018, 10:23 AM

SHARE



LAUREN SOUTHERN AND BRITTANY PETTIBONE MEET WITH ALEXANDER DUGIN. CREDIT: YOUTUBE

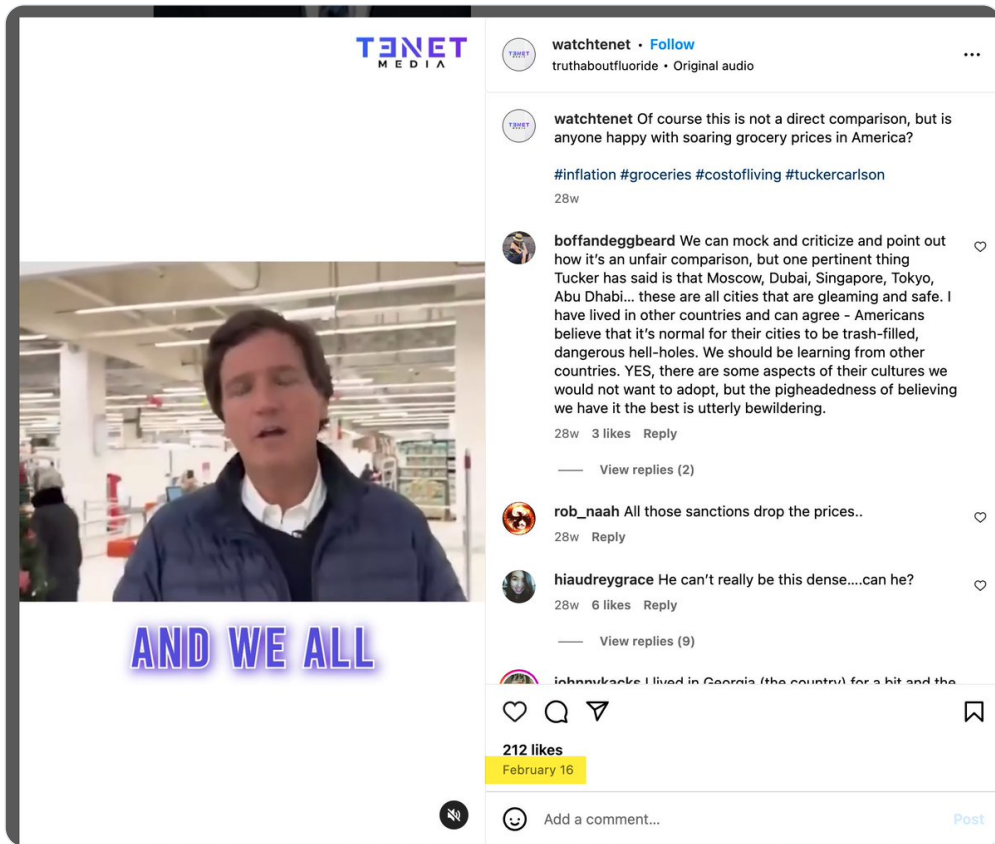
After they were barred from entering the U.K., far-right darlings Lauren Southern and Brittany Pettibone decided to head to a different country altogether: Russia.

Southern, though, claims that Dugin isn't actually a fascist, but merely a misunderstood philosopher. As she wrote on Twitter, "It's incorrect to call him a fascist."

Dugin's denials, of course, are akin to "white nationalists" or members of the so-called "alt-right" insisting they're not actually white supremacists. Indeed, Dugin's neo-fascism is all but impossible to miss.

Apparently the Russian operatives could influence the content posted by TENET media: Afanasyeva had requested the media company to post Tucker Carlson's visit to Russian/French grocery store, even though one of the producers felt like it was "overt shilling".

a. On or about February 15, 2024, AFANASYEVA (as “Helena Shudra”) shared with U.S. Company-1 a video of a well-known U.S. political commentator visiting a grocery store in Russia. AFANASYEVA posted the video in the Producer Discord Channel. Later that day, Producer-1 privately messaged Founder-2 on Discord: “They want me to post this” — referencing the video that AFANASYEVA had posted — but “it just feels like overt shilling.” Founder-2 replied that Founder-1 “thinks we should put it out there.” Producer-1 acquiesced, responding, “alright I’ll put it out tomorrow.”



In another example, Afanasyeva told the company they should blame Ukraine for the Crocus City Hall terrorist attack, even though ISIS had previously claimed responsibility for the massacre. Chen replied that one of the influencers was “happy to cover it.”



c. The next day, on or about March 23, 2024, AFANASYEVA (as “Helena Shudra”) privately messaged Founder-1 on Discord asking that “one of our creators . . . record something about [the] Moscow terror attack.” Despite public reporting that the foreign terrorist organization ISIS had claimed responsibility for the attack, AFANASYEVA requested that U.S. Company-1 blame Ukraine and the United States, writing: “I think we can focus on the Ukraine/U.S. angle. . . . [T]he mainstream media spread fake news that ISIS claimed responsibility for the attack yet ISIS itself never made such statements. All terrorists are now detained while they were heading to the border with Ukraine which makes it even more suspicious why they would want to go to Ukraine to hide.” Founder-1 responded that Founder-1 would ask Commentator-3, and, the next day, confirmed that Commentator-3 said “he’s happy to cover it.”

According to the indictment, TENET media founders knew that both Kalashnikov and Afanasyeva were Russian, yet chose to work with them anyway. TENET media’s creators have a huge online reach - their 2,000 YouTube videos have amassed over 16 million views.

13/20

According to the indictment, the Tennessee company’s founders worked with Kalashnikov and Afanasyeva – whom they knew were Russian – to recruit influencers to make videos that were published across YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, and X. The indictment says its nearly 2,000 YouTube videos amassed more than 16 million views, which tracks with public statistics on Tenet Media’s YouTube channel.

Once the company launched in the fall of 2023, Kalashnikov and Afanasyeva were involved in the company’s day-to-day operations. Kalashnikov was introduced to employees as an outside editor, and according to the indictment, “monitored U.S. Company-1’s internal communications and edited content published by U.S. Company-1, without disclosing that he was an RT employee.”

Dave Rubin has already claimed that him and the other commentators were “victims of this scheme”, but apparently they had no trouble in receiving money from a fake persona called “Eduard Grigoriann” without doing background checks or performing their due diligence.

14/20

4. KALASHNIKOV, AFANASYEVA, Founder-1, and Founder-2 also worked together to deceive two U.S. online commentators (“Commentator-1” and “Commentator-2”), who respectively have over 2.4 million and 1.3 million YouTube subscribers. Founder-1 and Founder-2 contracted with Commentator-1 and Commentator-2 to produce videos, using Commentator-1’s and Commentator-2’s own names and leveraging their existing audiences, for license and publication by U.S. Company-1. KALASHNIKOV, AFANASYEVA, Founder-1, and Founder-2 worked together to mask U.S. Company-1’s true source of funding — *i.e.*, RT — by falsely portraying to Commentator-1 and Commentator-2 that U.S. Company-1 was sponsored by a private investor named “Eduard Grigoriann.” In truth and in fact, Grigoriann was a fictional persona. For example, during contract negotiations, Commentator-1 requested that Founder-1 provide a profile or article on “Eduard Grigoriann.” In response, Founder-1 sent Commentator-1 a one-page profile, provided to Founder-1 by another fictional persona purporting to represent “Eduard Grigoriann,” falsely describing “Eduard Grigoriann” as an “accomplished finance



Dave Rubin

@RubinReport

Statement on the DOJ indictment:

These allegations clearly show that I and other commentators were the victims of this scheme.

I knew absolutely nothing about any of this fraudulent activity. Period.

'People of the Internet' was a silly show covering viral videos which ended four months ago.

The DoJ has never contacted me regarding this matter and I have no intention to comment further.

This screenshot directly from the indictment speaks for itself...

4. KALASHNIKOV, AFANASYEVA, Founder-1, and Founder-2 also worked together to deceive two U.S. online commentators ("Commentator-1" and "Commentator-2"), who respectively have over 2.4 million and 1.3 million YouTube subscribers. Founder-1 and Founder-2 contracted with Commentator-1 and Commentator-2 to produce videos, using Commentator-1's and Commentator-2's own names and leveraging their existing audiences, for license and publication by U.S. Company-1. KALASHNIKOV, AFANASYEVA, Founder-1, and Founder-2 worked together to mask U.S. Company-1's true source of funding — *i.e.*, RT — by falsely portraying to Commentator-1 and Commentator-2 that U.S. Company-1 was sponsored by a private investor named "Eduard Grigoriann." In truth and in fact, Grigoriann was a fictional persona. For example, during contract negotiations, Commentator-1 requested that Founder-1 provide a profile or article on "Eduard Grigoriann." In response, Founder-1 sent Commentator-1 a one-page profile, provided to Founder-1 by another fictional persona purporting to represent "Eduard Grigoriann," falsely describing "Eduard Grigoriann" as an "accomplished finance

2

2:42 AM · Sep 5, 2024 · 430.1K Views

The indictment accuses Kalashnikov and Afanasyeva of working with the Tennessee company's founders to conceal the true origins of its funding. They told some contributors that the company was being backed by a wealthy European banker named Eduard Grigoriann. "In truth and in fact, Grigoriann was a fictional persona," the indictment said.

## The Fake “Eduard Grigoriann” Profile



**EDUARD GRIGORIANN**

Experienced finance professional and investor. Deeply engaged in business and philanthropy, leveraging skills and resources to drive positive impact. Supporting a range of organizations worldwide, with a dynamic presence mainly in Brussels and London, engaging in personal and professional pursuits in each location with a focus on poverty alleviation, championing free speech, and advocating for social justice causes.

**Life and Education**

Born in Brussels Ixelles neighborhood in 1975, to French-Armenian father and Belgian mother.

**1996-2000**  
Bachelor's degree in Economics and Management at \_\_\_\_\_ Cum Laude.

**2000-2003**  
Master's of Accounting, Finance and Political Science (financial analysis and management, corporate finance) at the \_\_\_\_\_ while working as a Junior Investment Banking Analyst at \_\_\_\_\_.

**Professional Experience**

**2002-2005**  
Financial analyst and consultant for \_\_\_\_\_ Belgium (multinational professional services firm offering audit, tax, and advisory services).  
Relocated to Singapore through \_\_\_\_\_ to work with Belgian companies looking to expand their operations in the region. Analyst services for \_\_\_\_\_ (corporate services firm that provides accounting and payroll services) and \_\_\_\_\_, Belgian holding company that invests in industrial sectors).

**2005-2012**  
Various positions at Bank-1 in Brussels and France. Junior Risk Management Analyst (responsible for analyzing risks associated with various Investments and developing risk management strategies). Senior Risk Management Analyst and Investment relations.  
Associate at Bank-1 Private Equity division (analyzing potential investment opportunities, conducting due diligence on companies, and working on deals).

Senior Relationship and Investment Manager at Bank-1 Private Banking division (managing the investments of high-net-worth clients).  
Director of Private Banking division and Wealth Management (overseeing a team of Investment managers, developing new products and services, building relationships with key clients, and managing the overall performance of the business).

**2012**  
Left Bank-1 to start own private equity and wealth management company, leveraging experience in both risk management and private equity to offer customized investment solutions to clients. Focusing primarily on hedge funds and private equity investments.

**Services**  
Investment management, tax planning, and philanthropic advising, investment in companies with growth potential

**Clients**  
Family offices, high-net-worth individuals, real estate developers, technology startups, etc.

**Vision**  
As an accomplished finance professional, Mr. Grigoriann has observed multiple instances of misrepresentations and bias in mainstream media, many of which had the potential to result into poor investment outcomes of his clients. With extensive experience of living and immersing himself in various cultures, he has acquired a distinctive and alternative perspective on world events that he believes is not always accurately represented to the public. In pursuit of his goal to encourage a more nuanced public discourse worldwide, Mr. Grigoriann intends to establish a conservative news outlet that offers expertise and experience for a wide audience in the Western world and beyond.

Benny also referred to himself and the other influencers as “victims”, and, as a strong advocate for freedom of speech, threatened to sue anyone who claims otherwise.

So I'm not gonna call him a Russian agent, but I really do think he is both greedy and naive.



On the other hand, this shows how easily these online political commentators can be bought to share specific political narratives, even when they're formulated by the spin doctors of a foreign state. I guess anything goes when you're paid 400,000 USD a month.

16/20

Tenet publicly launched in November 2023 with six contributors well-known in right-wing media, including Benny Johnson, Tim Pool, David Rubin, and Lauren Southern. The videos they create for Tenet regularly cover conservative staples including "migrant gangs," transgender people, online censorship, and attacks on Vice President Kamala Harris and President Joe Biden.

"While the views expressed in the videos are not uniform, the subject matter and content of the videos are often consistent with the Government of Russia's interest in amplifying U.S. domestic divisions in order to weaken U.S. opposition to core Government of Russia interests, such as its ongoing war in Ukraine," the indictment said.

Prosecutors said one of the Tenet founders began soliciting two commentators for work on behalf of "Grigoriann" around February 2023. One of the personalities, described as "Commentator-1," said he would need \$5 million annually "for him to be interested" in creating videos for the fake persona, Grigoriann. The other, identified as "Commentator-2," needed \$100,000 per weekly episode "to make it worth his while," according to the indictment.

The two commentators eventually entered into contracts, prosecutors said. The contract for Commentator-1 required four weekly videos that he would host and would be livestreamed by Tenet Media in exchange for \$400,000 per month and a \$100,000 signing bonus. Commentator-2 agreed to provide weekly videos for \$100,000 apiece, the indictment states.

In reality, the Russian intelligence services prefer if you don't know you're working for them. A foreign agent can be witting (knowingly working for a foreign govt) or unwitting (unknowingly working for a foreign govt). The latter are often referred to as "useful idiots".

17/20

## Russia relies on 'unwitting Americans' to spread election disinformation, US officials say

Russia is turning a fresh page in their propaganda playbook in a bid to influence public opinion ahead of the 2024 US presidential election by employing both witting and unwitting Americans as well as commercial public relations firms in Russia to spread disinformation, top intelligence officials said on Monday.

Issued on: 30/07/2024 - 10:07 ⌚ 4 min



Photo illustration shows a video marked as an "altered" in front of false images of CNN's Wolf Blitzer hawking a diabetes drug. © Stefani Reynolds, AFP

By: [NEWS WIRES](#)

The [Kremlin](#) is turning to unwitting Americans and commercial public relations firms in [Russia](#) to spread disinformation about the U.S. presidential race, top intelligence officials said Monday, detailing the latest efforts by America's adversaries to shape public opinion ahead of the 2024 election.



Fortunately, it seems that US officials have become more efficient in detecting foreign influencing in the US elections - in 2016 and 2020 they fumbled badly, but this time they were able to report on a massive funding scheme before the elections actually took place.

18/20



Of course, the usual suspects have already started deflecting on the subject. For example, David Sacks has shifted the topic to “paid Ukrainian influencers”, completely oblivious to the

fact that some people might actually defend a sovereign nation completely free of charge.

19/20



To conclude, Russia has shifted its online influencing strategy, and in addition to using vast bot and troll networks, they now provide monetary support for social media superspreader accounts via shell companies. And I think this is just the tip of the iceberg.

20/20



- Elon Musk** · [@elonmusk](#) · 18 Apr 23

Replying to [@bennyjohnson](#)

Wait for it...

1.6K 3.8K 63.3K 6.5M
- Elon Musk** · [@elonmusk](#) · 07 Nov 22

Replying to [@elonmusk](#), [@bennyjohnson](#) and [@kathygriffin](#)

For \$8

6.1K 8K 140K
- Elon Musk** · [@elonmusk](#) · 17 May 22

Replying to [@bennyjohnson](#)

Is this legit?

7.1K 7.6K 106K
- Elon Musk** · [@elonmusk](#) · 07 Nov 22

Replying to [@bennyjohnson](#) and [@kathygriffin](#)

Actually, she was suspended for impersonating a comedian

Rate proposed Community Notes →

21.9K 31.7K 495K

- Elon Musk** · [@elonmusk](#) · 18 May 23

Replying to [@bennyjohnson](#)

Does the public realize that Soros wants open borders? Literally not even checking to see if they're convicted serial killers on the run, which has happened more than once.

4.6K 14.2K 75.7K 2.6M
- Elon Musk** · [@elonmusk](#) · 05 Apr 23

Replying to [@bennyjohnson](#) and [@NPR](#)

Seems accurate

"State-affiliated media is defined as outlets where the state exercises control over editorial content through financial resources, direct or indirect political pressures, and/or control over production and distribution," Twitter's Help Center reads. 3 hours ago

Rate proposed Community Notes →

3.9K 10.1K 83.4K 4.4M

- Elon Musk** · [@elonmusk](#) · 02 Jun 23

Replying to [@Timcast](#)

I am on team humanity

3.2K 3.2K 44.8K 2.1M
- Elon Musk** · [@elonmusk](#) · 11 Mar 23

Replying to [@RepMattGaetz](#) and [@Timcast](#)

I used to think Bannon was smart & evil, but now I realize I was wrong about the first part

6.6K 4.3K 66.8K 4.5M
- Elon Musk** · [@elonmusk](#) · 23 Nov 22

Replying to [@Timcast](#)

🤔🤔

418 847 22.3K
- Elon Musk** · [@elonmusk](#) · 10 Jun 23

Replying to [@Timcast](#) and [@TheBabylonBee](#)

Seriously

152 194 5.2K 370K
- Elon Musk** · [@elonmusk](#) · 19 Apr 23

Replying to [@Timcast](#)

Will be fixed soon

678 637 13K 1.8M

- Elon Musk** · [@elonmusk](#) · 03 Dec 22

Replying to [@Timcast](#)

Correct

1.3K 3.8K 48.5K
- Elon Musk** · [@elonmusk](#) · 13 Dec 22

Replying to [@Timcast](#)

🔥🔥

1.5K 764 25.3K
- Elon Musk** · [@elonmusk](#) · 26 Apr 23

Replying to [@Timcast](#)

If you are taught to hate yourself, you will want to be someone else

4.9K 16.5K 145K 6.1M
- Elon Musk** · [@elonmusk](#) · 01 Jun 19

Replying to [@Timcast](#)

Working on Starship

715 2.7K 66.7K
- Elon Musk** · [@elonmusk](#) · 09 Jun 23

Replying to [@Timcast](#)

!


552 359 6.4K 584K

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JUSTICE DEPARTMENT

## Russian money was funneled to right-wing creators through a pro-Trump media outlet: prosecutors

The indictment on Wednesday of two RT employees includes allegations that the duo implemented a nearly \$10 million plan to fund an unnamed Tennessee-based company as one of their "covert projects"



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Sept. 5, 2024, 4:19 AM GMT+3  
By Ryan J. Reilly, Lisa Rubin, Brandy Zadrozny and David Ingram

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