

Who Is Taking Over the Internet?

by Jason Ross

June 12—Reddit is one of the world’s top internet sites, with 1.2 billion visits in April 2021, making it the eighth-most visited site in the United States, ahead of Twitter, Instagram, and eBay (not to mention *Fox News* and the *New York Times*). So why has so little attention been paid to who runs it?

In 2017, a foreign policy hawk from NATO’s Atlantic Council think tank, Jessica Ashooh, was appointed Reddit’s Director of Policy. Prior to her promotion to Reddit, Ashooh was Deputy Director of the Atlantic Council’s Middle East Strategy Task Force, working with and under former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and Stephen Hadley. Albright considered the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Iraqi children a “price” that was “worth it,” while Hadley was Condoleezza Rice’s deputy national security adviser—at the times of the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq—and from 2005 to 2009 was George W. Bush’s National Security Adviser.

Ashooh’s particular focus appears to be Syria. She has called for bombings, the overthrow of President Bashar al-Assad, and military support for the (fictional) “moderate” rebels trying to take over the country: “As long as [Assad] remains in power and remains the figurehead of the Syrian government ... this conflict won’t end,” she wrote in the *New York Times*. In the *Washington Post*, she condemned Obama for being too soft on Assad, and demanded that Trump “restore U.S. credibility” by “order[ing] targeted, punitive strikes against the Assad regime.”

Ashooh comes from a New Hampshire family of Lebanese descent, whose most notable member is her uncle Richard, who served as one of Trump’s Assistant Secretaries of Commerce and was formerly an executive at British weapons contractor BAE. In her doctoral thesis at Oxford, she wrote about George W. Bush’s Middle East policy.

So how did this person, with no particular internet or marketing background, become a top executive at an

anarchic message board created with a devotion to free-speech and an anti-establishment reputation? Simple—to change Reddit’s character. (Readers of this publication may recall Reddit’s cancellation of an ask-me-anything session with former NSA Technical Director Bill Binney.)

NATO Institutions Everywhere

Reddit is not alone in becoming staffed with intelligence hawks. In 2018, Facebook and the Atlantic Council announced a partnership for checking for misinformation, to decide which sources are “trustworthy.”



CC/Atlantic Council

So-called “social media” internet platforms are being taken over by a NATO-British-Atlantic Council nexus exerting increasing censorship to consolidate its financial, military, and ideological power.

Earlier in 2021, Facebook hired NATO press officer Ben Nimmo as its intelligence chief. And we can recall that earlier this month, former U.K. Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg was the Facebook official who announced the two-year duration of former President Trump’s sentence in Facebook prison.

Microsoft has worked to install in its Edge browser a piece of software called NewsGuard, which displays little green and red badges for trustworthy and naughty news sites. Who runs NewsGuard? Former DHS Secretary, NSA Director and CIA Director Gen. Michael Hayden, and former Secretary General of NATO Anders Fogh Rasmussen.

A senior Twitter executive responsible for South-

west Asia was outed in 2019 as an active-duty officer in the British Army's 77th Brigade, which is devoted to online operations and psychological warfare.

The NATO-British-Atlantic Council links are even more directly seen in the Atlantic Council's partnership with the Integrity Initiative—a British group that purports to defend democracy from disinformation, while serving mainly to plant disinformation of the “everyone we disagree with is a Russian bot” variety.

A few days before the 2019 UK general election, Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn promoted documents leaked on Reddit that showed that his opponent, Boris Johnson, was negotiating with American companies, putting much of the UK's National Health Service up for sale. This could have severely damaged Johnson's standing in the election, but Reddit came to the rescue, claiming that the documents were Russian disinformation. Headlines that could have read “Johnson selling off NHS” were transformed into “Corbyn promotes Russian propaganda.”

The ‘Equalizer’ Internet Is No More

So, what did Jessica Ashooh do at her new position at Reddit? Just last year, she oversaw the banning of over two thousand Reddit “communities” in a single

day, including /r/The_Donald and /r/ChapoTrapHouse.

The Reddit co-founded by free speech absolutist Aaron Swartz, who, charged with attempting to download and publish the entirety of the academic platform JSTOR, committed suicide when faced with a 40-year prison sentence—that Reddit is no more.

The internet as a cultural phenomenon was seen decades ago as the potential great equalizer, a forum for all views to be discussed, and for people from around the world to come to better understand each other.

The transformation of Reddit is just one example of the brazenly direct takeover of media by military and intelligence agencies, with the hiring of spooks by the dozens for MSNBC, CNN, and other agencies, the de-ranking of alternative media, and the attacks on independent sources of news and commentary, such as Substack.

This is emphatically not an issue of private companies making private choices, independent of the First Amendment. It is the same slime mold, centered in London, Wall Street, and Washington, that exerts such financial, military, and ideological power.

This article draws on research by Alan Macleod, in his “Jessica Ashooh: The Taming of Reddit and the National Security State Plant Tabbed to Do It” available [here](#).

New EIR Offprint Special Report Now Available

The Great Leap Backward: LaRouche Exposes the Green New Deal

Executive Intelligence Review has released this Special Report to warn of the extreme danger to mankind represented by the Green New Deal, also called “The Great Reset” by the leaders of the Davos World Economic Forum.

Already being implemented, this plan is taking over the direction of national economies from sovereign governments, using the power of central banks and the too-big-to-fail private financial institutions, cutting off credit to fossil fuel power generation and to industrial and agricultural enterprises claimed to emit too much carbon. Meanwhile it is creating a new huge bubble in the “sustainable fuel” sector, hoping to prop up the increasingly bankrupt financial system.

Stopping it by returning to a Hamiltonian American System credit policy, requires an understanding which is the purpose of this report.



EIR subscribers who have received this Special Report as their 68-page Feb. 12 issue: Get an Offprint edition for someone you know who should have it!

Special Report is available in soft cover printed copy for \$30 plus shipping, or as a PDF for \$20 (requires e-mail address).

<https://store.larouchepub.com/product-p/eirsp-2021-1-0-0.htm>