Twitter Thread by Rudy Havenstein, Check out the fact-checkers.



Rudy Havenstein, Check out the fact-checkers.
@RudyHavenstein

So let's check in on "Newsguard," one of the Orwellian groups (e.g., The Atlantic Council) that totally reliable sites like @voxdotcom and @axios use to decide what is "Unreliable" and "fight disinformation."

One example:

OK, so "The Daily Wire" and "https://t.co/oEa89coNak" are unreliable. Fair enough, maybe they are (I don't use either one of them).

So let's look into one of our new official arbiters of "reliability," Newsguard!

What's their advisory board look like?

https://t.co/5N8op70VE1

- **Don Baer**, former chairman of Burson, Cohn & Wolfe and former White House Communications Director (Clinton administration)
- **John Battelle**, co-founding editor of Wired and founding chief executive of Industry Standard magazine
- **Silvia Bencivelli**, author, radio-tv presenter, journalism professor at University of Rome, and contributor for La Repubblica, Le Science, and Focus. (Bencivelli provides editing and editorial guidance for NewsGuard's Italian Nutrition Labels.)
- **Yves Clarisse**, author and journalist who worked for 33 years for Reuters in various positions, most recently as editor-in-chief of the French language service of the news agency. (Clarisse provides editing and editorial guidance for Newsguard's French Nutrition Labels.)
- **Arne Duncan**, former Secretary of Education (Obama Administration), former chief executive of Chicago Public Schools, and managing partner at Emerson Collective
- **Alina Fichter**, former member of Chief Editorial Team for ZEIT Online, former John S. Knight fellow of media innovation at Stanford, previously economics reporter for Süddeutsche Zeitung and tech editor for die ZEIT. (Until January 2020, Fichter provided editing and editorial guidance for NewsGuard's German Nutrition Labels.)
- **Giampiero Gramaglia**, Director of the School of Journalism in Urbino and Professor of Journalism at La Sapienza University in Rome, editor-in-chief of AffarInternazionali.it, former Editor-in-Chief of ANSA. (Gramaglia provides editing and editorial guidance for NewsGuard's Italian Nutrition Labels.)
- **(Ret.) General Michael Hayden**, former Director of the CIA, former Director of the National Security Agency and former Principal Deputy Director of National Intelligence (George W. Bush administration)
- **Leo Hindery, Jr.**, Chairman & CEO of Trine Acquisition Corp; former CEO of Tele-Communications Inc. (TCI) and AT&T Broadband; former Chairman of the National Cable Television Association
- **Elise Jordan**, political analyst, NBC, and former speechwriter for Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice
- **Jessica Lessin**, founder and editor-in-chief of The Information
- **Kate O'Sullivan**, general manager for digital diplomacy of Microsoft, which includes the company's Defending Democracy Program
- **Kavita Patel**, former director of policy for the White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs and Public Engagement (Obama Administration), primary care physician at Mary's Center, a community clinic in Washington, D.C., and Nonresident Fellow at the Brookings Institution
- **Anders Fogh Rasmussen**, former Prime Minister of Denmark, former secretary general of NATO and founder of the Alliance of Democracies Foundation
- **Tom Ridge**, the first Secretary of Homeland Security (George W. Bush administration)
- **Gianni Riotta**, Italian journalist and educator, columnist La Stampa, teaches at Princeton University and Luiss Datalab. Former Editor of Il Sole 24 Ore and Rai TG1, he is a member of the Edmo Advisory Board and the Council on Foreign Relations
- **Richard Sambrook**, director of the Center for Journalism at Cardiff University, former Director of Global News for the BBC. (Sambrook provides editing and editorial guidance for NewsGuard's UK Nutrition Labels.)
- **Richard Stengel**, former editor of Time magazine and Undersecretary of State for Public Diplomacy (Obama administration) and author, "Information Wars: How We Lost the Global Battle Against Disinformation and What We Can Do About It"
- **Brigitte Trafford**, corporate affairs advisor, previously headed in-house teams at Virgin Media, ITV, Dow Jones and Lloyds Banking Group
- **Ed Vaizey**, former Member of British Parliament for the constituency of Wantage, former Minister of Culture and Digital
- **Jimmy Wales**, co-founder of Wikipedia

OK, so maybe a few names jumped out at you immediately, like, oh I don't know, (Ret.) General Michael Hayden, former Director of the CIA AND former Director of the National Security Agency in the run-up to the Iraq War in 2003! Google him, he's famous!

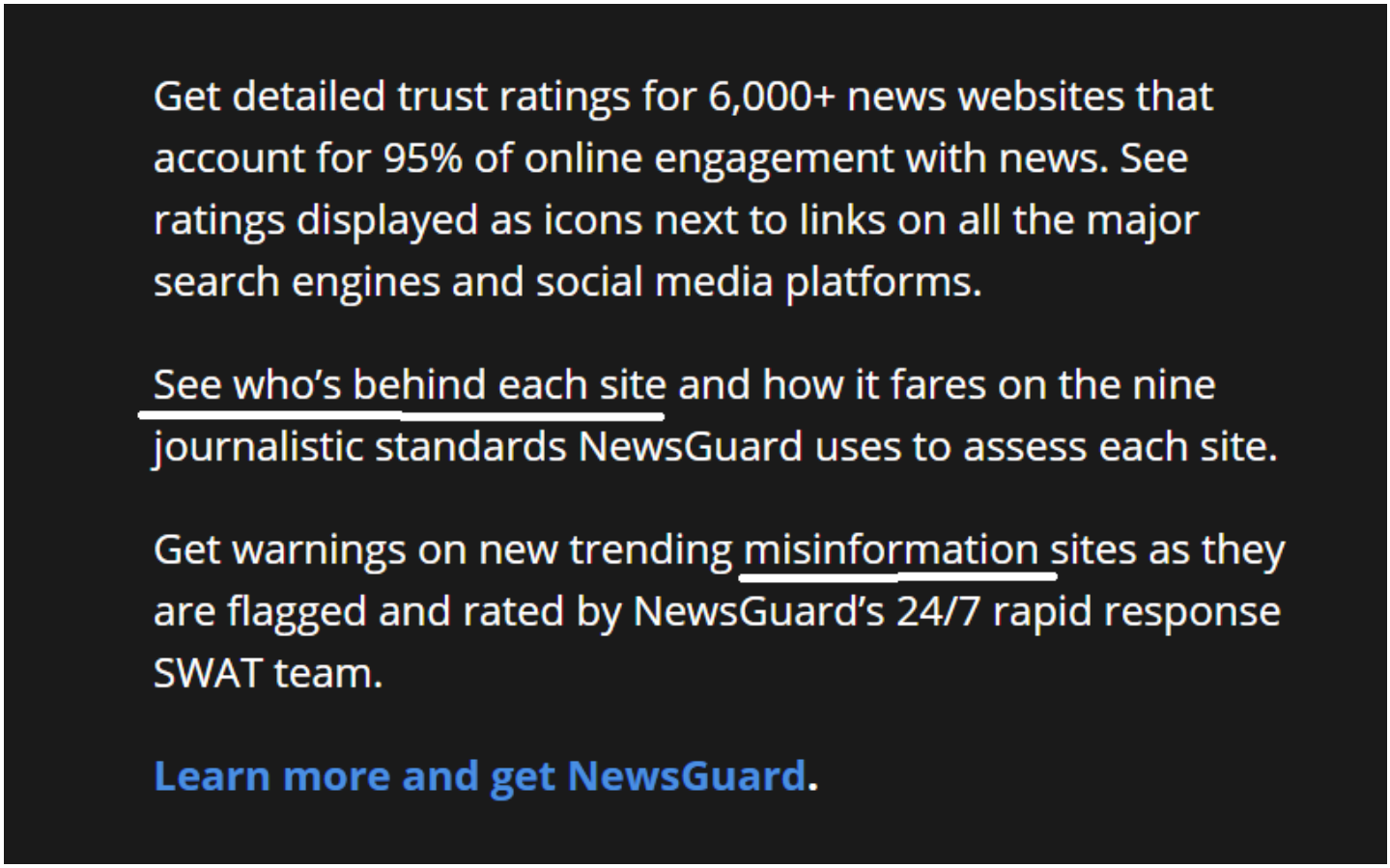


Newsguard is all about "seeing who's behind each site," (like how Michael Hayden is behind Newsguard?)

All they want to do is fight "misinformation." That's laudable, right?

Also, Newsguard has a "24/7 rapid response SWAT TEAM!!"

So cool!
https://t.co/EDN3UXvBR9



Ok, I'm not a journalist or a former CIA director, so I have no idea what's true or not unless someone tells me, so hey, Columbia Journalism Review - what do you think of Newsguard Advisory Board Member Michael Hayden? https://t.co/UCQseaJqbZ

"Hayden has a long history of making misleading & outright false statements...It is something of a wonder that someone responsible for so many reprehensible acts is now considered a totally above-the-fray, honest commentator on all issues intelligence."

Oh dear.

ON THE SUBJECT OF DONALD TRUMP and his relationship with intelligence agencies, there's one commentator you are bound to see quoted more than anyone else: Michael Hayden, the former NSA chief and CIA director under George W. Bush.

It doesn't matter what cable channel you prefer (CNN, MSNBC, or Fox News), what talk show you watch (*The Late Show* with Stephen Colbert, *Real Time* with Bill Maher), or website you read (*The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, or *The Wall Street Journal*), Hayden is everywhere, commenting on the day's news, while inevitably being portrayed as Mr. Reasonable: a post-partisan straight shooter who will tell you *How It Really Works*.

But members of the media who play along with this fantasyland portrayal of Hayden should be embarrassed. Hayden has a long history of making misleading and outright false statements, and by the estimation of many lawyers, likely committed countless felonies during the Bush administration. It is something of a wonder that someone responsible for so many reprehensible acts is now considered a totally above-the-fray, honest commentator on all issues intelligence.

Michael Hayden "has lied so brazenly and so often, anything he says must be treated with instant suspicion."

He even lied to Congress? Sounds bad.

Yet he's on the Newsguard Advisory Board (and I'm sure many others), protecting us from misinformation.

https://t.co/UCQseaJqbZ

In the Senate's blistering 2014 CIA torture report, the name "Michael Hayden" is singled out more than *200 times*. He was named CIA director in 2006, after the worst of the CIA's crimes went down, but it was his job to be chief defender of the agency in Bush's second term when many of the stories of torture first came to light.

TRENDING: What I learned about journalism after 27 years in prison

The Senate's report ends with a special appendix that is over three dozen pages long that is almost exclusively dedicated to Hayden. It is filled with his testimony to Congress, next to the actual facts showing statement after statement he made was inaccurate, misleading, false, or outright lies. Three dozen pages!

The Senate Committee documented in meticulous detail why no one should take Michael Hayden's word on anything, yet even at the time of the report's release, he was allowed to skate away in interviews with only the slightest questioning. Andrew Sullivan wrote at the time, "How does any media institution justify having this person comment on this report? He has lied so brazenly and so often, anything he says must be treated with instant suspicion."

Hayden is also a Principal of the Chertoff Group. Michael Chertoff was the 2nd Secretary of Homeland Security, he calmly watched as New Orleans drowned, worked at Covington & Burling (#GIK) & founded a group that makes/lobbies for full body scanners. Yay!

https://t.co/Tj1o2f1FV1

So there's a lot of names on the Newsguard Advisory Board - I don't want to get hung up on one guy who happened to have been head of the NSA as we rolled into Iraq, then ran the CIA, who has a long history of, um, lying?

I'm just glad he's out there preventing misinformation.



OK, how about Anders Fogh Rasmussen, former Prime Minister of Denmark.

Denmark is cool, right? Nobody lies to the public in Denmark.

What a great guy to be on the Newsguard Advisory Board, to prevent misinformation from getting out!



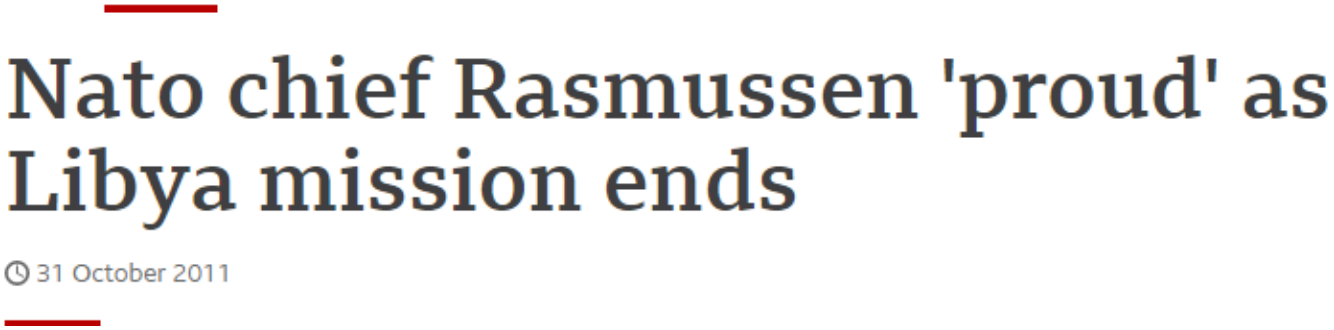
Oh.

Are we sure this is the same Anders Fogh Rasmussen? Must be a common Danish name.

"Libya is finally free." - Anders Fogh Rasmussen, 2011

Um, who wants to tell him?

https://t.co/ov7dxJy6bJ



OK, so there was the Libya thing. No big deal.

Then Anders went on head up NATO, an organization which would probably never mislead anyone about anything. Newsguard chose wisely.



› Anders Fogh Rasmussen, NATO Secretary General

19 Jul. 2013
Anders Fogh Rasmussen, NATO Secretary General.

I guess Anders was Prime Minster too, which is ok.

Then he went to his payday I mean reward as a Citigroup advisor.

https://t.co/VzANOteIfR

Anders Fogh Rasmussen, Former Secretary General of NATO and Former Prime Minister of Denmark, joins Citi

April 02, 2020 04:51 AM Eastern Daylight Time

According to Wikipedia - this will become important at some point - "As Prime Minister, Rasmussen strongly supported the 2003 Iraq War."

As we know, the Iraq War was a war based solely on truth, with no misinformation.

Anders is perfect to oversee a fact-checking group!



Take it away, Anders:

"Iraq has weapons of mass destruction. This is not something we think. We know it....there is no doubt in my mind." (March 2003)

https://t.co/AcbXEnzSp2



To wrap up with Anders for now, he has his own global consulting firm https://t.co/RiAObKzzkV, set up a [now-deleted] "Friends of Ukraine" site https://t.co/KyPvW9tLVQ, & became an advisor to the President of Ukraine.

Busy guy! Perfect arbiter of truth.

https://t.co/7lTgIz7F8O

Newsguard says of their advisors, "Members of the advisory board provide strategic advice to NewsGuard. They play no role in the determinations of ratings or the Nutrition Label write ups of websites unless otherwise noted."

Maybe the strategic advice is to attack anti-war sites



Anyway, that's just the tin-foil talking.

Let's move on to another Newsguard Advisor...let me throw a dart...hang on...

Boom!

"Tom Ridge, the first Secretary of Homeland Security (George W. Bush administration)"



Sure seems like some prominent people closely connected to the Iraq War are on Newsguard's advisory board. For an organization supposedly dedicated to the truth, this seems odd.

Anyway, here's Ridge with Rachel Maddow in 2009.
https://t.co/RzHlPptxqd

Tom Ridge is completely un-apologetic for his role is supporting a war that killed hundreds of thousands of innocent people, in a country that had nothing to do with 9/11. https://t.co/q3CL5bBG8I

MADDOW: And that point I understand. But when I look at your record, I feel like, you know, you didn't slip in a reference to the president and a reference to Iraq once in this mention in 2004. You were a crucial authoritative part of making what turned out to be a false case to the American people about Iraq being a threat, and us needing to attack them.

February 2003, you said on ABC, "I agree that as the president has said, the world community has said this is a rogue regime that has chemical biological weapons, trying to develop nuclear weapons, has means of delivery. That's the reason this individual needs to be disarmed. The point in fact is that the world community has known for 12 years he's got chemical biological weapons, means of delivery, and that's precisely the reason of the United States and its partners are trying to disarm Saddam Hussein. He's a threat to his region, he's a threat to our allies. He's a threat to us."

You made that case on national television a month before we started invading. Do you regret that?

RIDGE: No.

So after the Iraq debacle, Ridge atoned by working with Jimmy Carter building houses for poor people with Habitat for Humanity.

Oh, wait - I mean, in 2015 Ridge hooked up with the Jeb Bush campaign, along with these other unrepentant warmongers.
https://t.co/CifIR78C4J

> The list of advisers provided to Reuters by a campaign aide includes Paul Wolfowitz and Stephen Hadley, as well as former George W. Bush Homeland Security Secretaries Tom Ridge and Michael Chertoff, and Bush adviser Meghan O'Sullivan.

So you ask - Rudy, isn't Tom Ridge also on the Board of Directors of another MSM "fact-checking" organization and home for wayward neo-con warmongers, The Atlantic Council?

Yes, yes he is.
https://t.co/XFoDwuyJh6

Anyway, you could write a book on Tom's corporatist ties & all the boards & lobbyists & connections (he almost was McCain's VP choice).

Let do another: Elise Jordan, political analyst, NBC, and former speechwriter for Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice!
https://t.co/5aIOfYDXh7

> \u201cAny letting the Saudis off the hook came from the White House,\u201d former Agent Mark Rossini said. \u201cI can still see that photo of Bandar and Bush enjoying cigars on the balcony of the White House two days after 9/11.\u201d
>
> Here's the pic: CHENEY, BANDAR, RICE & BUSH, 9/13/01 pic.twitter.com/Fju2bWxtQd
>
> — Rudy Havenstein, Check out the fact-checkers. (@RudyHavenstein) September 7, 2019

OMG. Please tell me this is a DIFFERENT Elise Jordan.



I mean, I'm sure she's very nice, but she also has worked for some people and entities not known for their aversion to lying.

Perfect to be an advisor to arbiter of truth at Newsguard I guess. Why not.

https://t.co/QZReJCh8ub



Elise Jordan

Columnist TIME
Political Analyst, NBC News and MSNBC

Elise Jordan is a columnist for TIME and a political analyst for NBC News and MSNBC. She was most recently a policy advisor and speechwriter to Senator Rand Paul's presidential campaign. During the Bush administration, Elise worked in the White House Office of Presidential Speechwriting and at the State Department as speechwriter to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. In 2007, she joined the National Security Council, where she worked on press and communications strategy for the administration's Afghanistan, Iraq, and Pakistan policies. While at the White House, Elise also worked for extended periods at the U.S. Embassy Baghdad and the Commanding General's Strategic Advisory Group at the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) headquarters in Kabul, Afghanistan. Elise's writing on foreign policy and politics has been featured in publications such as The Atlantic, Buzzfeed, Daily Beast, Marie Claire, National Review, TIME, and the Wall Street Journal. She was born and raised in Holly Springs, Mississippi, and is a graduate of Yale University.

"During the Bush administration, Elise worked in the White House Office of Presidential Speechwriting and at the State Department as speechwriter to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice."



Moving on to the more mundane...

"Ed Vaizey, former Member of British Parliament for the constituency of Wantage, former Minister of Culture and Digital"
https://t.co/zgxMzIqT5j

Ed Vaizey had £2,000 furniture delivered to 'wrong address'; MPs expenses

Ed Vaizey, a key ally of David Cameron, had £2,000 worth of furniture delivered to his London home when he was claiming his Commons allowance on a second home in Oxfordshire.



Ed Vaizey has paid back the furniture cost Photo: IAN JONES

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MPs' expenses
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Come on, Ed. Think bigger. https://t.co/fodMEmS67S

ONE Oxfordshire MP claimed 8p for a 350-yard car journey, latest expense claims have shown.

Ed Vaizey was paid 8p in expenses when one of his staff drove the short distance in his Wantage constituency on February 25.

He claimed another 16p for a worker's 700-yard journey on the same day.

The Culture Minister said: "If my staff are doing work, they are entitled to claim their expenses for it."

Asked whether it was right that staff drove such short distances, he said: "You have to remember that if you don't drive, you have got to walk back."

Note that Ed Maizey - advisor to MSM truth-determiner Newsguard, is described by The Telegraph as "a key ally of David Cameron." https://t.co/HImn9eWGa8

News > UK > UK Politics

David Cameron refuses to say the Iraq War was 'wrong' or 'a mistake' following damning Chilcot Report

The Prime Minister also rejected calls to apologise for the Conservative party's role in the invasion

Jon Stone | @joncstone | Wednesday 06 July 2016 14:18 | 31 comments

If you're starting to get the impression that the Newsguard MSM "fact-checkers" might be tied at the hip to prominent people quite comfortable with Iraq War-style large-scale propaganda operations, you win a T-shirt.

