

Integrity Initiative: A Look Into the Deep State?

by

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Early in 2018, I encountered the name [Andy Pryce](#). He had been [making statements to the press about Russia](#), where he was described as 'Head of Counter Disinformation and Media Development' at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

I asked some former Foreign Office people I know if they had ever heard of a 'counter disinformation' team - they hadn't. The earliest press reference I could find to him and his job was in September 2017, so this was apparently a relatively new role.

Also in September 2017, [Pryce took part](#) in an event called '[DEMOCRACY AND PROPAGANDA: Can independent media defend universal values?](#)', held in the Hilton Hotel in London. This was organised jointly by the European Endowment for Democracy and the EU Eastern Partnership, which, it turns out, [is an FCO programme](#) that "works to counter and reduce the effect of destabilising disinformation".

Pryce took part in [the first round of Ukrainian-British interagency consultations](#) on countering cyber threats held in London in March this year.

He took part in the [2018 EU DisinfoLab](#), in April.

In October he took part in the [Atlantic Council's Global Forum on Strategic Communications and Digital Disinformation](#) event, held in Washington DC. Of note here is that this was a two day event. Andy Pryce's contribution came on day two, which [has not been made available](#) on video.

To get to the bottom of what Andy Pryce is, and what he does, I decided Freedom of Information was probably the best approach. I [asked about the scope of his role](#) and the size of his team, and was both bemused and amused that the request for information [was refused on the basis of 'national security'](#): the Freedom of Information act says that national security can only be used as grounds for refusal where intelligence services are involved.

Nearly a year since the submission of that question, the FCO's response is now under investigation by the Information Commissioner.

It came as no surprise, then, to find Andy Pryce's name on the list of 'UK Cluster' Integrity Initiative members.

What is the Integrity Initiative?

On 5 November this year, [Anonymous released a series of documents](#) which it claimed were from an organisation called Integrity Initiative. The existence of the hack was picked up two weeks later by Russian press. To date there has been zero substantive coverage of the hack in British, US or European press.

On 26 November, Integrity Initiative [published a statement](#) on the Russian media coverage of the hack. In it they said:

The Integrity Initiative was set up in autumn 2015 by The Institute for Statecraft in cooperation with the Free University of Brussels (VUB) to bring to the attention of politicians, policy-makers, opinion leaders and other interested parties the threat posed by Russia to democratic institutions in the United Kingdom, across Europe and North America.

The Integrity Initiative aims to unite people who understand the threat, in order to provide a coordinated Western response to Russian disinformation and other elements of hybrid warfare.

The documents included in the leak comprised of a handbook, funding information and lists of people organised by 'cluster'.

According to the handbook, Integrity Initiative aims to:

bring to the attention of politicians, policy-makers, opinion leaders and other interested parties the threat posed by Russia to democratic institutions in the United Kingdom, across Europe and North America.

And it has achieved this by organising:

a network of clusters across Europe and North America

These clusters are made up of:

people who understand the threat posed to Western nations by a flood of disinformation.

So Integrity Initiative claims to have built a network of networks of people who operate to counter Russia's 'disinformation'. As Patrick Henningsen pointed out in [last Monday's UK Column News](#), this includes actual interference in the appointment of someone to a government position, using Twitter attacks to prevent the appointment of Colonel Pedro Baños as director of Spain's Department of Homeland Security. Isn't this exactly the type of behaviour that western governments and media claim of Russia?

The UK Cluster

The UK cluster is particularly interesting. As well as staff from the Integrity Initiative's parent organisation The Institute for Statecraft, there are people representing hedge fund interests, think tanks like DEMOS, RUSI, Henry Jackson Society, European Council on Foreign Relations, and Chatham House, as well as from the Ministry of Defence (including EU Joint Headquarters at Northwood), the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and several journalists.

Three names jump out from the others:

- Andy Pryce, the Foreign Office Head of Counter Disinformation and Media Development, who we met at the beginning of this article
- Ben Bradshaw MP, who has been promoting an anti-Russian outlook, including [claiming that Russia "interfered" with the Brexit referendum](#), and
- Sir Andrew Wood, former British ambassador to Russia, and one of the founders of Orbis Business Intelligence, the privatised British intelligence operation which features Christopher Steele, the author of the Trump 'dodgy dossier'.

At the time of writing, Ben Bradshaw has not responded to our questions regarding his membership of the UK cluster. Sir Andrew Wood denied knowing what this cluster is. However, in a separate email, his colleague at Chatham House explained that our email was referring to "*the hack on the Institute of Statecraft database I mentioned yesterday*" and went on to advise that Sir Andrew should not reply.

What is The Institute for Statecraft?

As admitted in the Integrity Initiative statement on the document release, the project belongs to a little known think tank called The Institute for Statecraft, a charity registered in Scotland.

The Institute for Statecraft

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Promoting Peace and Security through the skilful use of State Power

Statecraft is the skilful, effective and strategic employment of all the forms of power a modern state needs to ensure the security and prosperity of its people.



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The Institute for Statecraft defines statecraft as "*the skilful, effective and strategic employment of all the forms of power a modern state needs to ensure the security and prosperity of its people.*"

They claim to promote peace and security "*through the skilful use of State Power*" and to [have over 90 fellows](#) who specialise in the fields of security and intelligence, although not all are listed on their website. [Some of their published work](#) is sponsored by NATO's Public Diplomacy Division.

According to the leaked handbook, The Institute for Statecraft "*gets its funding from multiple sources to ensure its independence. These include: private individuals; charitable foundations; international organisations (EU, NATO); UK Govt (FCO, MOD)*"

Confirmation of Foreign and Commonwealth funding is made in the Integrity Initiative statement mentioned above, in which they say:

For its first two years, the Integrity Initiative was funded by private individuals. Funding for 2017 and 2018 was provided by a grant from the UK Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO). This reflects their appreciation of the importance of the threat, and a wish to support civil society programmes seeking to rebuild the ability of democratic societies to resist large scale, malicious disinformation and influence campaigns.

A slightly deeper look at the Institute for Statecraft reveals that all is not as it seems however. The charity, registered in Scotland, lists as its principle address Gateside Mills, in Fife. The same address is registered in its Companies House records, and in its recently filed audited accounts.

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Charity Details

The Institute for Statecraft, SC040870

Registered charity from 24 September 2009

Charity Details

Address:	Gateside Mills Gateside Cupar Fife
Postcode:	KY14 7SU
Is the supplied address a principal office or a trustee address?:	Principal Office
Website:	http://www.statecraft.org.uk
Regulatory Type:	Standard
Link to Companies House:	https://beta.companieshouse.gov.uk/
OSCR Registration Logo:	

Download this charity's registration logo

But as the UK Column's David Scott discovered last week, Gateside Mills is an empty, semi-derelict, partly demolished building. Why, we wonder, would such a prestigious think tank be potentially breaking the law in this way? How could they have legal documents served on them, for example? We have asked the Scottish Charity Regulator for comment, but they had not replied by the time of publication.

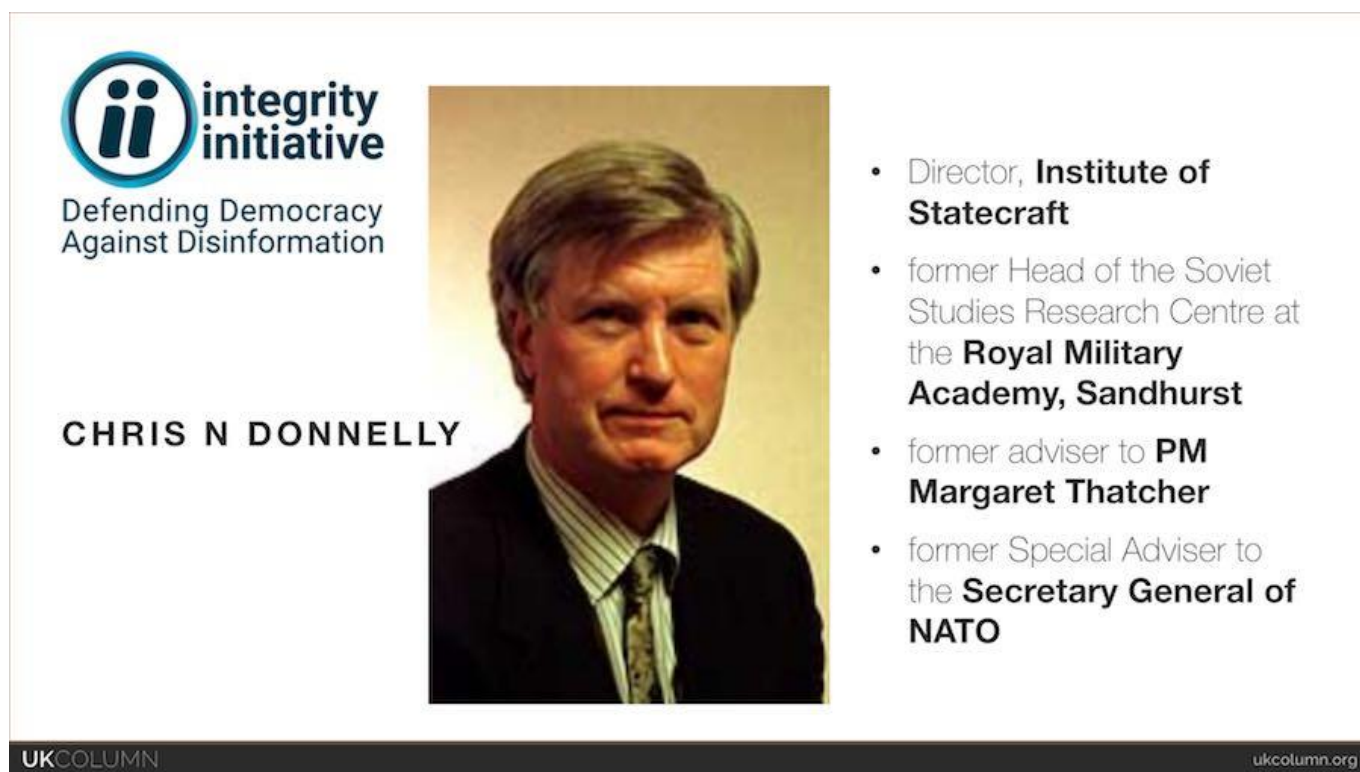
This is not the only issue with Statecraft addresses. Their founding director, former NATO special adviser Chris N Donnelly, seems unable to spell his own address. He misspells Burnside as Burnsides. This might seem like a minor mistake, but in the circumstances of what seems like a deliberate falsification of the organisation's registered address, it is perhaps of note.



Gateside Mills partially demolished - Image: David Scott

Institute for Statecraft Directors

For the purposes of this article we are going to focus on three directors of The Institute for Statecraft: Chris N Donnelly, Daniel Lafayeedney, and Oliver McTernan.



integrity initiative
Defending Democracy
Against Disinformation

CHRIS N DONNELLY

- Director, **Institute of Statecraft**
- former Head of the Soviet Studies Research Centre at the **Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst**
- former adviser to **PM Margaret Thatcher**
- former Special Adviser to the **Secretary General of NATO**

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Chris N Donnelly, was at one time adviser to Margaret Thatcher. From 1989-2003, he was a Special Adviser for central and eastern Europe to the secretary general of NATO. In fact, he served four secretaries general, including Lord Robertson. He then went on to found and head up the Advanced Research and Assessment Group at the Defence Academy of the UK. He is currently a director for The Institute for Statecraft and is also acting as programme Leader, Commonwealth Resilience Forum at [Commonwealth Argosy](#).

Daniel Lafayeedney was a fellow at the Advanced Research and Assessment Group at the Defence Academy of the UK, where he specialised in the development and implementation of capacity-building projects for high-level governance of the security sector in European and middle-Eastern countries, and in supporting the development of counter-radicalisation programmes for at-risk ethnic communities in the UK. He holds a law degree from the University of Aberdeen and a Diploma in International Comparative Law from San Diego University.

So both these men were at Sandhurst together as part of the Advanced Research and Assessment Group. Is this where they met? We don't know at this time. What we do know is that while they were both at Sandhurst, they attended the [Herzliya Conference](#), the so-called 'Bilderberg of the Levant'. This is the Israeli establishment and military industrial complex meeting for the discussion of Israeli national policy.

On the attendees list, Chris Donnelly did indeed identify himself as being a Senior Fellow at the Defence Academy of the UK. Daniel Lafayeedney did not: he identified himself as representing BICOM, the Britain Israel Communications and Research Centre, a pro-Israeli advocacy organisation with very close links to the UK Conservative Party via Poju Zabludovicz, BICOM's founder and former chairman, who funded David Cameron's Tory leadership campaign, as well as former BICOM board member Trevor Pears who also made donations to David Cameron and to Tory constituency offices in the run up to elections. We note the lack of Russian election interference here.

The third director we want to mention here is Oliver McTernan, the co-founder and director of Forward Thinking, an organisation which claims to be working to solve the middle east crisis. Chris Donnelly is also involved with Forward Thinking.

The screenshot shows the 'Our Team' section of the Forward Thinking website. On the left, under a red 'Our Team' header, is a profile for Oliver McTernan, Co-Founder and Director, with a photo of him in a suit. On the right, under a blue 'FORWARD THINKING' header with the tagline 'Frontline mediation. Challenging perspectives.', is a profile for Chris Donnelly. The navigation menu includes HOME, ABOUT US, NEWS, REVIEWS & ANALYSIS, PROGRAMMES, OUR TEAM, and CONTACT US. A 'Donations' button is visible in the top right. The footer contains 'UKCOLUMN' and 'ukcolumn.org'.

Oliver McTernan is a former Senior Adviser at the Club of Madrid and a Visiting Fellow, Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Harvard University. In 2002, he initiated and participated in the first official high-level post conflict talks between NATO and the government in Belgrade. For 25 years he was Executive Committee Member, Pax Christi International, responsible for the movement's East-West Dialogue programme during the Soviet period. He is the founder and a director of the St Sergius Trust Fund based in London and Moscow, and until founding Forward Thinking, he was a Roman Catholic priest based in the diocese of Westminster, having previously served in Islington and Notting Hill.

Again, What is The Institute for Statecraft?

This is a very good question. We have barely scratched the surface of what it, and its project Integrity Initiative are. Everywhere we look we find links to what could be described as the 'deep state', including, but not limited to (by a long way), the [Institute of Modern Russia](#), [77th Brigade](#), the [Information Warfare Initiative](#), [Prop or Not](#) and a host of other organisations which, rather than protecting us against disinformation, appear to be running covert disinformation operations via the corporate media and on social media.