

# Group Attacking Mercola Sued by Elon Musk

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✓ Fact Checked

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## STORY AT-A-GLANCE

- › One of the most influential instruments used to suppress the First Amendment right to free speech in the U.S. was the Center for Countering Digital Hate's (CCDH) "Disinformation Dozen" report, published March 24, 2021
- › The CCDH was a tiny, never-before-heard-of U.K.-based group with undisclosed funding, whose board members had unambiguous ties to the military-intelligence-industrial complex
- › AntiVaxWatch.org, a simple news aggregator with no listed employees or funding, sponsored the report. The creator of AntiVaxWatch is Brandon Hill, cofounder of Be the Change, which connects it to Eric Kessler of Arabella Advisors, a large, well-known dark money network that supports progressive causes with untraceable funds
- › In a June 1, 2023, report, the CCDH accused Twitter of failing to censor 99% of hate posted by Twitter Blue-subscribed accounts. According to Elon Musk, the CCDH's claims are "false, misleading, or both, and they are not supported by anything that could credibly be called research"
- › July 31, 2023, Twitter, now renamed X Corp, filed a lawsuit against the CCDH, arguing the CCDH is "actively working to prevent free expression" and spreading "troubling and baseless claims that appear calculated to harm Twitter generally, and its digital advertising business specifically." Musk also wants to know who funds the CCDH's fabrications

One of the most influential instruments used to suppress the First Amendment right to free speech in the U.S. was the Center for Countering Digital Hate's (CCDH) "Disinformation Dozen" report,<sup>1</sup> published March 24, 2021. The CCDH was a tiny, never-before-heard-of U.K.-based group, the funding of which remains largely hidden to this day. Its board members, however, have unambiguous ties to the military-intelligence-industrial complex, which is telling in and of itself.

AntiVaxWatch.org sponsored the report, and this group is even more opaque than the CCDH. It's no more than a simple news aggregator. It's not incorporated or registered in any way, and it lists no employees and no funding sources.

Any respectable reporter or politician would see this as an immediate red flag, yet none has questioned how or why a news aggregator could be considered a respectable source. Much of its "news" is sourced from the CCDH, so it's basically a closed circle.

## **CCDH – An 'Astroturf Front' Funded by Dark Money**

My IT team was eventually able to trace the AntiVaxWatch website back to its creator, Brandon Hill, by scouring its XML page.<sup>2</sup> Hill is the cofounder of a media company and self-proclaimed "intelligence agency" called Be the Change Revolutions,<sup>3</sup> along with Amanda Hite, which in turn is connected to Eric Kessler of Arabella Advisors, a large, well-known dark money network that supports progressive causes with untraceable funds.<sup>4</sup>

Incidentally, Kessler also has "direct access to Biden cabinet officials and plays an important role in shaping this administration's agenda," according to Americans for Public Trust (APT) executive director Caitlin Sutherland.<sup>5</sup>

Considering Anti-Vax Watch has no official funding sources, from where did it get the funds to sponsor the CCDH's "Disinformation Dozen" report? Did the money come through Arabella, which is also linked to the CCDH's board chairman, Simon Clark, who also happens to have an "in" with the global news agency Reuters? (Clark served as the first director of web services for Reuters.)

As for the CCDH, in addition to Arabella funding (via The Hopewell Fund), a July 2023 exposé<sup>6</sup> by Sayer Ji, founder of GreenMedInfo.com, also links the CCDH to at least eight additional dark money sources, several of which have overt liberal/progressive leanings.<sup>7</sup>

*"It appears that CCDH may be an astroturf front operation for both NGOs [nongovernmental organizations] and the U.K. government to directly interfere with and target the constitutional rights of U.S. citizens,"* Ji told The Defender.<sup>8</sup>

## **Disinformation Dozen Report Cited Tens of Thousands of Times**

Facebook later called out "The Disinformation Dozen" report as a fabrication that had no basis in reality, but not before it had been cited tens of thousands of times — by mainstream media, members of Congress, state attorneys general,<sup>9</sup> public health officials, the White House and even the president himself.

According to this fabricated report, 12 "anti-vaxxers," starting with yours truly, were "responsible for almost two-thirds of anti-vaccine content circulating on social media platforms," and were therefore "responsible for a tidal wave of disinformation." The answer, according to the CCDH, was to censor and deplatform us, everywhere. And, censored and deplatformed we were.

The Twitter Files now prove the U.S. government used the "Disinformation Dozen" report as justification for pressuring social media company and tech platforms to silence everyone on that list.<sup>10</sup>

That included Robert F. Kennedy Jr., who testified<sup>11</sup> before the Select Subcommittee on the Weaponization of the Federal Government, July 20, 2023. Ironically, House Democrats did everything they could to oust Kennedy and prevent him from testifying about the censorship he experienced. It was quite the circus.

Thankfully, in the end, their bafflingly irrational efforts failed. As noted by House Speaker Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., "The hearing that we have this week is about censorship. I don't think censoring somebody is actually the answer here."

Kennedy cited his inclusion on the CCDH's list as part of a "new form of censorship, which is called 'targeted propaganda,' where people apply pejoratives like 'anti-vax' ... to silence me." He also said he's being censored "through smears, through misinterpretations of what I've said, through lies, through association." Indeed, everyone on that list, and many others as well, have by now experienced that.

Kennedy also pointed out that a brand-new category of censorable information was created specifically to target people on the CCDH's list, namely "malinformation." Kennedy defined malinformation as information that is factually true, "but is inconvenient to the government that they don't want people to hear."

On many occasions, social media companies censored Kennedy for "malinformation" at the behest of the White House and other federal agencies, even though they recognized that the information was true, simply because it "challenged official orthodoxies."

Indeed, according to special assistant attorney general for Louisiana, D. John Sauer, an attorney for the plaintiffs in the Missouri v. Biden case, "Federal officials are most eager, most focused, on silencing truthful speech," and if "left unchecked, federal censorship will reach virtually any disputed social and political question over which federal officials want to impose their power."<sup>12</sup>

## **Facebook Called Out 'Faulty Narrative' in Report**

Clearly, the targeting of Kennedy, me, and many others originated with the "Disinformation Dozen" list. Without that, attackers would have been "flying blind," not knowing whom to target.

With specific targets, however, the government, illegally working with Big Tech behind the scenes, was able to devise a widely publicized censorship campaign, the real intention of which (I believe) was to scare everyone else into toeing the official line, lest they, too, be canceled, defamed, deplatformed, de-licensed or worse.

In an August 18, 2021, Facebook report,<sup>13</sup> Monika Bickert, vice president of Facebook content policy, set the record straight, stating that the 12 individuals identified by the

CCDH were, in fact, responsible for just 0.05% of all views of vaccine-related content on Facebook — a far cry from the 73% claimed by the CCDH. According to Bickert:

*"The report<sup>14</sup> upon which the faulty narrative is based analyzed only a narrow set of 483 pieces of content over six weeks from only 30 groups, some of which are as small as 2,500 users. They are in no way representative of the hundreds of millions of posts that people have shared about COVID-19 vaccines in the past months on Facebook.*

*Further, there is no explanation for how the organization behind the report identified the content they describe as 'anti-vax' or how they chose the 30 groups they included in their analysis. There is no justification for their claim that their data constitute a 'representative sample' of the content shared across our apps."*

## **CCDH Meets Definition of 'Hateful Extremists'**

Ironically, while the CCDH claims to "counter hate" online, and its founder and CEO Imran Ahmed sits on the Steering Committee of the U.K. Commission on Countering Extremism, the CCDH itself meets the Commission's definition of hateful extremists.<sup>15</sup> In the 2019 Commission document, "Challenging Hateful Extremism," the term is defined as:<sup>16</sup>

*"Behaviors that can incite and amplify hate, or engage in persistent hatred, or equivocate about and make the moral case for violence; And that draw on hateful, hostile or supremacist beliefs directed at an out-group who are perceived as a threat to the wellbeing, survival or success of an in-group; And that cause, or are likely to cause, harm to individuals, communities or wider society."*

In addition, in the forward of the report, lead commissioner Sara Khan notes that "Hateful extremists seek to restrict individual liberties and curtail the fundamental freedoms that define our country."

All these definitions and clarifications of what hateful extremism is fit the CCDH to a T. Ahmed manufactured data to create a false narrative that 12 individuals pose a threat to the well-being and survival of the whole world, and then used that narrative to incite hate against us and curtail our freedom of speech.

**“ Who is funding this organization? They spread disinformation and push censorship, while claiming the opposite. Truly evil. ~ Elon Musk ”**

Since then, the harassment against us — fueled by the false narrative created by the CCDH — has progressed to [cyberattacks](#) and [debanking](#), which have further curtailed our fundamental freedoms in ways that would have been unthinkable in the past.

## **Elon Musk Sues CCDH**

July 31, 2023, Twitter, now renamed X Corp, filed a lawsuit against the CCDH,<sup>17</sup> arguing the CCDH is "actively working to prevent free expression" and spreading "troubling and baseless claims that appear calculated to harm Twitter generally, and its digital advertising business specifically."

The baseless claims Musk is referring to refers to a June 1, 2023, CCHD report<sup>18</sup> about Twitter Blue, which claims Twitter failed to censor 99% of hate posted by Twitter Blue-subscribed accounts. According to Musk, the CCDH's claims are "false, misleading, or both, and they are not supported by anything that could credibly be called research."<sup>19</sup>

In a July 18, 2023, Twitter/X post, Musk reposted Facebook's dismissal of "The Disinformation Dozen" report, stating, "Who is funding this organization? They spread disinformation and push censorship, while claiming the opposite. Truly evil." Two weeks later, the same day he filed his lawsuit against the CCDH, he tweeted out, "Let's pull the mask off this organization and see who is really behind it."<sup>20</sup>

According to Musk, the CCDH engaged "in a series of unlawful acts designed to improperly gain access to protected X Corp. data" for the purpose of creating a "scare campaign" to drive advertisers away from his platform. The Defender reports:<sup>21</sup>

*"Filed in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California, the lawsuit accused CCDH of 'masquerading' as a research agency and using improperly obtained login credentials to access company data.*

*According to the complaint, CCDH used the data to 'cherry-pick from the hundreds of millions of posts made each day on X and falsely claim it had statistical support showing the platform is overwhelmed with harmful content.' X Corp. estimated it lost at least tens of millions of dollars in advertising revenue and other costs as a direct result of CCDH's actions."*

Commenting on the lawsuit, Sayer Ji, founder of Greenmedinfo.com, told The Defender:<sup>22</sup>

*"Mainstream media outlets are reporting on Musk's move in a negative light, which is to be expected, given how they've worked in lock-step collusion with CCDH during previous campaigns, either attacking or defending on their behalf, without fail ...*

*This lawsuit stands to put CCDH, their colluders in the U.S. media and government, as well as their dark money funders overseas, on notice that the laws of this land, and the U.S. Constitution which vivifies them, will not be trampled upon so disgracefully without a good fight."*

## **Jim Jordan Launches Investigation Into CCDH**

August 3, 2023, House Judiciary Chairman Jim Jordan, R-Ohio, also opened an investigation into the CCDH. The group has been ordered to hand over over records to the Judiciary Committee detailing its interactions with the U.S. government and the executive branch by August 17, 2023.<sup>23</sup> As reported by the Washington Examiner:<sup>24</sup>

*"We know from the Facebook Files that the Center for Countering Digital Hate was working with the White House to censor speech,' a senior GOP congressional aide with knowledge of the inquiry said. 'But how far did it go? Republicans want to find out, and of course subpoenas are on the table if we don't get answers.'*

*Jordan's letter<sup>25</sup> [to the CCDH] ... is the latest escalation of the GOP's efforts to investigate how the federal government has, in some cases, coordinated with the private sector to flag certain speech, including speech related to COVID-19, as 'disinformation' or 'misinformation' ...*

*'We are interested in understanding the interactions between the Center for Countering Digital Hate (CCDH) and the federal government in particular, as well as between CCDH and social media companies,' Jordan wrote in his letter to the center's CEO Imran Ahmed ...*

*In his letter, Jordan asked the center for communications dating back to January 2015 between itself and employees, contractors, or representatives with the executive branch or social media companies 'referring or relating to the moderation, deletion, suppression, restriction, demonetization, or reduced circulation of content' as well as 'the accuracy or truth of content' and 'the attribution of content to the source or participant in a foreign malign or state-sponsored influence operation.'*

*The chairman also requested a list of employees, contractors, or agents for the center who 'have communicated' with tech companies or the government on content moderation – and details on contracts or grants received from the U.S. government on this practice."*

## **What's the Real Purpose Behind the CCDH?**

In addition to targeting "anti-vaxxers," the CCDH has expanded its areas of advocacy to also include "climate change misinformation." We can probably expect a "top 10 climate



change misinformation superspreader" list any day now to silence people who object to the shutting down of farms, the restriction of travel and the banning of gas stoves in the name of climate change.

At the end of the day, it seems the CCDH was created as a propaganda weapon for an information war, which we're in right now.

When the "Disinformation Dozen" report was published, the CCDH was literally a one-man operation, although he did have a board of directors that oversaw his work. Since then, the CCHD has added several team members, including a head of policy and partnerships (Sarah Eagan), a head of research (Callum Hood), a head of campaigns and communications (Tom Lavelle), and a COO (Jemma Levene).

Before, the board members were all listed on the CCDH website, but that list has now been removed, and a search of UK.gov company filings<sup>26</sup> reveals the CCDH's board has undergone quite a few changes over the past couple of years.

That said, in 2021, when "The Disinformation Dozen" report was published, the board members who oversaw and approved that work could be linked to a long list of Deep State strongholds and Great Reset pushers, including:

The Trilateral Commission, the Atlantic Council, the European Council of Foreign Relations, Save the Children Fund (funded by the Gates Foundation and a partner of Gates' GAVI Vaccine Alliance), the British Parliament, the CIA, Reuters and Event 201 (the pandemic exercise held in October 2019 that foreshadowed and "played out" the draconian countermeasures implemented when COVID-19 appeared months later).

Considering the unprecedented and undeserved influence of the CCDH, we really need to get to the bottom of who's directing and funding this organization. Time will tell whether Elon Musk's lawsuit can bring some clarity to what's really behind this organization, whose sole mission appears to be the elimination of free speech, without which democracy cannot exist.

## Sources and References

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- <sup>1</sup> Counterhate.com The Disinformation Dozen March 24, 2021
- <sup>2</sup> Search for “Brandon Hill” through this XML page to find the metadata creator
- <sup>3</sup> TBCrevolutions.com
- <sup>4</sup> The Atlantic November 2, 2021
- <sup>5</sup> Fox News May 16, 2023
- <sup>6</sup> Greenmedinfo.com July 24, 2023
- <sup>7, 8</sup> The Defender July 27, 2023
- <sup>9</sup> AG Letter to Tech CEOs March 24, 2021 (PDF)
- <sup>10</sup> The Defender July 18, 2023
- <sup>11, 12</sup> The Defender July 20, 2023
- <sup>13</sup> Facebook August 18, 2021
- <sup>14</sup> CCDH, The Disinformation Dozen
- <sup>15</sup> Greenmed Info March 25, 2021
- <sup>16</sup> Challenging Hateful Extremism 2019
- <sup>17</sup> New York Times July 31, 2023 (Archived)
- <sup>18</sup> Counterhate.com June 1, 2023
- <sup>19, 20</sup> AOL.com August 1, 2023
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- <sup>23</sup> Greenmedinfo.com August 3, 2023
- <sup>24</sup> Washington Examiner August 3, 2023
- <sup>25</sup> Jim Jordan’s letter to Imran Ahmed CEO of CCDH August 3, 2023
- <sup>26</sup> Gov.UK Companies House Advanced Search