



Propaganda Acolytes:

54 Soros-Tied Figures Linked to Major Media

JOSEPH VAZQUEZ AND DANIEL SCHNEIDER

Executive Summary

The over \$32 billion that leftist billionaire George Soros poured into his organizations to spread his radical “open society” agenda on abortion, Marxist economics, anti-Americanism, defunding the police, environmental extremism and LGBT fanaticism around the globe has paid dividends.

In fact, his funding has helped him establish ties with some of the biggest name media personalities in the United States and abroad which help indoctrinate millions with his views on a day-to-day basis. MRC Business found at least 54 prominent media figures (e.g. reporters, anchors, columnists, editors, news executives and journalists) who are tied to Soros through their connections to organizations that he funds. These include personalities like *NBC Nightly News* anchor [Lester Holt](#) and *The Washington Post* executive editor [Sally Buzbee](#).

This is the final report in a three-part series that reveals the extent of Soros’ influence over the international media. MRC Business’ extensive research has uncovered 253 journalism and activist media groups across the world financed to the tune of \$131 million between 2016 and 2020 by Soros’ enormous network of philanthropic organizations, which allows him to leave an unparalleled footprint on global media. This network of media ties allows Soros to hold sizable influence over the stories that the media covers, how they cover those stories, and what stories they don’t cover. Soros [once told](#) *The New York Times* that he was working to “bend” the arc of history “in the right direction,” and he’s using his global media clout to do it.

The media influence and ties that Soros bought was enough to insulate him from being seriously investigated by most journalists. Whenever a conservative critic dared to raise any objections to Soros’ spending and major political footprint, the liberal media worked overtime to characterize those critics as anti-Semites, as Bongino Report Content Manager [Matt Palumbo](#) told MRC Business in an exclusive interview. But mostly what Soros buys is silence.

- **54 Soros-Tied Figures Linked to Major Media:** MRC found at least 54 media figures (e.g. anchors, columnists, editors, news executives and journalists) who are prominent individuals in news and activist media, in addition to some of the most powerful media conglomerates in the United States and abroad. These included figures like *NBC Nightly News* anchor [Lester Holt](#), CNN Chief International Anchor Christiane Amanpour, *The Washington Post* executive editor [Sally Buzbee](#), PolitiFact Editor-In-Chief [Angie Drobnic Holan](#) and Bloomberg News co-founder [Matthew Winkler](#).
- **Soros-Tied Media Figures Defend Him from His Critics:** Soros’ \$131 million in media spending has virtually insulated him from any serious investigations by journalists. If

anything, media figures tied to Soros tend to smear anyone who criticizes him as being anti-Semitic. CNN Chief International Anchor Christiane Amanpour harassed Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade [Péter Szijjártó](#) and accused his boss, Hungary Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, of “stoking anti-Semitism” because he opposes Soros’ radical open border agenda. *NBC Nightly News* anchor Lester Holt [exploited a violent attack](#) on Soros’ home to take a generalized swipe at his critics by painting Soros as a “target of conspiracy theories.”



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The overwhelming reality of leftist billionaire George Soros' global empire is one of influence – news media and top figures in politics, business and more.

MRC Business uncovered at least **54 major figures in journalism and activist media** who are connected to Soros-funded organizations. Those include big names like: NBC News anchor [Lester Holt](#), CNN Chief International Anchor [Christiane Amanpour](#) and *Washington Post* Executive Editor [Sally Buzbee](#). Holt and Amanpour even defended Soros from his critics on-air.

The others encompass reporters, anchors, columnists, editors, news executives and journalists linked to organizations like ABC, CBS, NPR, Bloomberg News, Reuters, *The New York Times* and a host of additional outlets.

At 92 years old, Soros has cemented himself as one of the most powerful influencers in global politics through his incredible influence in the media.

In the United States, Soros is known for his massive involvement backing liberal policies and politicians. Since the 2016 election, he has spent at least \$200 million backing political candidates, which includes \$29 million for local prosecutors and district attorneys. In 2022 alone, he committed \$128 million to midterm races, according to Open Secrets. *The New York Times* even conceded that Soros was the “largest donor” for the 2022 midterms.

Even that number was too low. According to CNBC, Soros' Open Society Policy Center “quietly” funneled another \$140 million into political causes in 2021. CNBC analyzed that the quiet funding brought Soros' overall political spending on campaigns and causes since January, 2020, to roughly \$500 million “at the least.” That's still just a drop in the bucket compared to the over [\\$32 billion he pumped](#) into his Open Society Foundations (OSF) since 1984 to shape politics to his liking on a global scale. His global media clout is massive as a result.

This is the final report in a three-part series that reveals the extent of the influence that Soros wields over the international media to inundate world populations with his radical leftist ideas on abortion, Marxist economics, anti-Americanism, defunding the police, environmental extremism and LGBT fanaticism. It is easy to criticize Soros's politics. But he is a savvy investor – whether he's trying to make money or use it to push his agenda. [Soros once](#) told *The Times* that he was working to “bend” the arc of history “in the right direction.” He wasn't kidding.

Soros' foundation dollars fanned out to a web of nonprofits, many of which are connected to figures with high-profile roles in major media organizations. Holt and Amanpour are two of the most well-known in American media and both went out of their way to defend Soros from criticism.

[Amanpour](#), a prominent liberal anchor who focuses on international news, is listed as a [senior adviser](#) at the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), which received [\\$2,750,000](#) from Soros between 2018 and 2020 alone. She aggressively criticized Soros' critics as anti-Semites.

In an Oct. 4, 2018, [segment](#) on PBS' *Amanpour & Company*, which Amanpour also hosts, she harassed Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade [Péter Szijjártó](#) and accused his boss, Hungarian Prime Minister [Viktor Orbán](#), of being anti-Semitic for [enacting policies](#) to check Soros' influence in that country: "As you know, your prime minister has been accused of stoking anti-Semitism through the way he's dealing with George Soros and his praise of the World War II leader, Miklos Horthy. He was a Hitler ally."

She tried backing Szijjártó into a corner by teeing up an opportunity for him to issue a mea culpa to the world for daring to stand against Soros' agenda: "Do you regret them, the government's attacks and surge against George Soros, which looked very much like they were using traditional, what's it called, dog whistle anti-Semitic terminology?" Szijjártó retorted: "I reject that." He proceeded to emphasize that Hungary was opposed to the radical agenda that Soros is seeking for the world, which has nothing to do with his identity:

"[Soros] would like to see Europe in a post-national, post-Christian phase — you know, their borders don't count, their national identity is pushed backed, their migrants are being allowed at least 1 million a year. Our vision is totally different. He called my prime minister a maniac. He called our country a mafia-state. So my question is that, if he attacks us like that, with money, with media, with funding opposition, or at least NGOs, in the country, why shouldn't we have the right to react and say that, 'No, no, we have a totally different concept. And we want our concept to win and not yours, Mr. Soros?'"

Not everyone shares Amanpour's prejudiced view of Soros' Hungarian critics.

Former Israeli Prime Minister [Benjamin Netanyahu](#) [referred](#) to Orbán in July 2018, just months before Amanpour's criticism, as a "true friend of Israel." Jewish News Syndicate writer [Sean Savage](#) [noted](#) over a year later on Sept. 23, 2019, "The track record for the Hungarian government on fighting anti-Semitism paints a different picture." Savage wrote:

"Orbán has been involved in establishing a national Holocaust Memorial Day and recently pledged \$3.4 million to fight anti-Semitism in Europe, and is staunchly defended by some Hungarian Jewish leaders as not harboring anti-Semitism."

NBC's Holt tried a more subtle strategy for protecting Soros' reputation.

When a dangerous [individual planted a pipe bomb](#) at Soros' home, [Holt](#), another board member on the Soros-funded CPJ, exploited the story to tie Soros' critics to the attack during an Oct. 23, 2018, [segment](#):

“Tonight authorities in New York are investigating who put a bomb in the mailbox of a billionaire philanthropist – George Soros, who frequently donates to Democratic candidates and causes, and often the target of conspiracy theories, including in recent days about that migrant caravan.”



► **WATCH:** Defending Soros

Soros’ massive contributions to liberal and Democratic causes, then, aren’t a news story. They are just an excuse for attacks by his critics, according to the liberal media spin.

NBCUniversal News Group Chairman [Cesar Conde](#), who oversees NBC News, MSNBC and CNBC, is a [trustee](#) at the [Soros-funded](#) Aspen Institute, which got [\\$1,165,000](#) from Soros between 2016 and 2020. Conde is also an Aspen Institute “[Henry Crown Fellow](#).”

Soros also has connections in non-English media. NBCUniversal Telemundo Enterprises Chairman [Beau Ferrari](#) leads NBC’s push in “Spanish-language content.” Ferrari is also a “Henry Crown Fellow” at the Aspen Institute.

CBS has at least two major media influencers connected to Soros. For example, *60 Minutes* legal analyst [Andrew Cohen](#) holds a plum position at The Marshall Project, which is heavily funded by Soros to the tune of at least [\\$1,250,000](#) between 2016 and 2020.

ABC Senior Vice President for Editorial Quality [Kerry Smith](#) also sits on liberal [ProPublica’s Journalism Advisory Board](#). ProPublica received [\\$1,450,008](#) from Soros between 2016 and 2020.

At other media giants like *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*, Soros’ money can be traced to people at or near the top. The executive editor of *The Post*, [Sally Buzbee](#), also [sits](#) on the Soros-funded CPJ board. *The New York Times* Co.’s Executive Vice President and General Counsel [Diane Brayton](#) and *Times* Vice President of Philanthropic Partnerships [Marcia Parker](#) hold prestigious positions at two powerful Soros-funded groups, the [Institute for Nonprofit News](#) (INN) and the CPJ. INN received at least [\\$1,533,334](#) from Soros between 2016 and 2020.

Soros also has ties to major business media. Bloomberg News co-founder and Editor-in-Chief Emeritus [Matthew Winkler](#) is a [board member](#) for the Soros-funded CPJ. Bloomberg News in particular [boasts](#) that it “produces roughly 5,000 stories a day” and is “read by more than 325,000 Terminal subscribers, who are among the most influential people in business and finance in the world.”

Soros [funds](#) National Public Radio directly, meaning that a Soros-funded organization also happens to simultaneously be a prominent news outlet. His direct funding into NPR gives him influence with NPR’s entire [legion](#) of at least 1,800 journalists and 400 reporters and editors in over 200 member stations across the country.

“No other news organization has the same on-the-ground reach as public radio,” NPR [boasts](#) on its website. “More than 95 percent of Americans live within range of a public radio signal. So we are positioned to deliver.” MRC Business counted 16 individuals within the NPR board of directors and corporate leadership collectively that either oversee NPR’s overall news operations or manage NPR’s individual member stations, such as Iowa Public Radio (Iowa), WSHU (Connecticut), St. Louis Public Radio (Missouri) and WYPR (Maryland). Because NPR is financed by Soros, all 16 of those individuals are thereby connected to his cash.

NPR President and CEO [John F. Lansing](#) also served 10 years as a visiting faculty member at the Poynter Institute for Media Studies, a powerful [Soros-funded](#) nonprofit considered the “[gold standard](#)” in the liberal media universe. NPR Public Editor [Kelly McBride](#) also [works](#) as Poynter’s senior vice president and chair of the Craig Newmark Center for Ethics and Leadership.

PolitiFact Editor-In-Chief [Angie Drobnic Holan](#) serves on the advisory board of Poynter’s Soros-funded International Fact-Checking Network, which works as a de facto Ministry of Truth on social media engineered to make sure opinions that oppose the left’s narrative on a variety of issues like abortion, “transgenderism,” COVID-19 and economics are silenced before they gain traction.

MRC Business Researcher Jeffrey Clark contributed to this report.

METHODOLOGY: MRC Business utilized data provided by the Open Society Foundations to tally all grants to journalism, media and organizations with journalism programs between 2016 and 2020. In addition to the OSF records, MRC Business used the Foundation Directory Online and Open Secrets databases to track other donations cited in this report. For our research into the OSF database, we tallied donations to all media groups listed under OSF’s “journalism” theme with a few exceptions where certain media outlets were categorized differently. MRC Business also researched the boards of directors, trustees and others for our tally showing individuals connected to Soros-funded groups who also hold prominent positions in legacy media outlets (The New York Times, The Washington Post, CNN, NBC News, Bloomberg News, etc).

The MRC is a research and education organization operating under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, and contributions are tax-deductible.



Lester Holt
*Anchor, NBC
Nightly News*

[Member of the Committee
to Protect Journalists
Board of Directors](#)



Christiane Amanpour
*Chief International Anchor,
CNN's Amanpour*

[Senior Adviser to
Committee to Protect
Journalists](#)



Margaret Brennan
*Moderator, CBS Face
the Nation*

[Council on Foreign
Relations Board Member](#)



Fareed Zakaria
*Host, CNN's Fareed
Zakaria GPS*

[Council on Foreign
Relations Board Member](#)



Sally Buzbee
*Executive Editor, The
Washington Post*
[Member of the Committee
to Protect Journalists
Board of Directors](#)



Top Ten Soros-Tied Media Figures



Cesar Conde
*Chairman, NBCUniversal
News Group*
[Aspen Institute Trustee](#)



John Lansing
President and CEO, NPR
[President and
CEO of NPR](#)



Angie Drobnic Holan
Editor-in-Chief, PolitiFact
[Serves on the Advisory
Board of the International
Fact-Checking Network](#)



Julie Pace
*Executive Editor,
Associated Press*
[Member of the Committee
to Protect Journalists
Board of Directors](#)



Alessandra Galloni
Editor-in-Chief, Reuters
[Member of the
Committee to Protect
Journalists Board of
Directors](#)