

Fact or Fiction: Is the "Deep State" Real?

Fact or Fiction: Is the "Deep State" Real?

scribie

Audio Transcription, Perfected

<https://scribie.com/files/98a1488bfb1f4b94a53bf821c952b591563afe10>

Fact or Fiction: Is the "Deep State" Real?

00:01: Good afternoon, everyone. Welcome back to the Aspen Security Forum. It's really a great pleasure for me to introduce my friend David Rohde of The New Yorker, and Dina Temple-Raston, investigative correspondent for National Public Radio. I told David and Dina, we were talking just before this session that as a career diplomat, a career Foreign Service officer when I hear the term Deep State, and that's the title of our panel today. Fact or fiction is the Deep State real. When I hear that term, I think about some thuggish authoritarian regime. Turkey in its worst days, Egypt under the dictators like Mubarak, I don't think of the United States of America. And as we begin today, since David and Dina are both really respected members of the American press corps. I just wanna say how much we respect the press. The Aspen Security Forum would not work without journalists. Nearly all, not all, but nearly all of our sessions are chaired by journalists. And I think as a citizen, one of the saving graces of the United States is the First Amendment, the power of the press. I felt in government as a State Department spokesperson that the press was doing its job to challenge me, and challenge my colleagues and the administrations in which I worked.

01:22: When we talk about Deep State, we should never talk about the American press corps because the American press corps is just part and parcel of our democracy. Dina Temple-Raston is going to share this, as I said, she's an investigative reporter. Very experienced for National Public Radio. David Rohde is here to talk about his new book on the Deep State. I met David, a long time ago during the Bosnia War. I met him after a very tragic and unfortunate incident when he was kidnapped by the Bosnian Serbs by Karadžić and Milošević and held for 10 days. Mercifully released, he lived to tell the tale. He was also kidnapped as many of you know, by the Taliban in November 2008 and held for seven months. I don't know any other reporter who's been kidnapped twice, risked his life, to tell the story to the American people and what a career he's had. David won the Pulitzer Prize for his reporting on the Srebrenica massacre of July 1995. The worst war crimes in Europe since the Second World War.

02:30: He's won the George Polk award, a very distinguished award for foreign reporting, a longtime New York Times correspondent. Now with The New Yorker. I think this is gonna be a fascinating conversation to talk about the Deep State, and the last thing I'll say is I defended the press corps. I also wanna defend the men and women of the US foreign service. When I heard President Trump say, at a press conference, with a whole nation watching when he called the State Department, the Deep State. It was a disgraceful moment for the American presidency because these are men and women of the Foreign Service, who take an oath to the constitution to serve their country. There's a lot of risk involved. And I just wanted to pay tribute both to the Foreign Service and to the press, David and Dina, as I turn this over to you, thanks so much for being with us.

03:22: Thank you.

03:23: Thanks.

03:25: So, what I wanted to start with if I could, do I get in a big screen to sneak away, what do I do? I think I just go higher away.

03:32: Dina I'm in the way and make yourself...

[chuckle]

03:35: I'm happy to have you there, but... [laughter] Excellent. Okay. So, David, let me just start. I think that for most of us who have been following foreign policy for some time, this idea of this Deep State, as Nick Byrne said, as Ambassador Byrne said, was sort of something that we associated with authoritarian rulers. Isn't Deep State in the United States a thing? A real thing, or is it sort of a figment of some people's imagination?

04:07: My first answer to that will be that it is a very real thing to the American public. And the poll numbers show this and these polls are sort of a wake-up call to members of the national security establishment that are watching this and also to journalists, to mainstream journalists. I worked as Nick said, at the New York Times and the Christian Science Monitor and The New Yorker. The American public doesn't trust us, doesn't trust the government officials, doesn't trust the CIA and the FBI. And it doesn't trust journalists like us. I started writing this book 'cause there was a poll I found that came out in the spring of 2017. And 70% of Americans said they believe that groups of unelected officials and generals had too much power in Washington, that they were secretly influencing American government policy. So yeah, I never use the term Deep State. It really hasn't been used in the United States until the Trump presidency. But we have a problem. And it would be naive of us to blame all this on Donald Trump. We need to think about how government officials and how journalists are communicating with the American public and how we can rebuild and regain their trust.

05:16: So you said 70% of the people polled thought that there was some sort of Deep State, were you in part of that 70%? Or were you in the 30%?

05:25: This is a good journalist... [laughter] Interview so I deserve every tough question I get. Look, the book concludes that I don't like the term Deep State. I think it's political rhetoric. And I think it's a very effective tool that President Trump has used to discredit government officials, even members of his own administration, who contradict the President's narrative or political talking points. That said, there is a permanent government. I use the term institutional government that exists no matter who is the president, there's countless laws and procedures that are supposed to keep them all from being political. I agree with President Trump that unelected government officials should carry out the orders of elected presidents. If they are legal and ethical orders of government, officials have to carry them out. We can't have the will of the people being ignored after an election. But there is no Deep State and the way Donald Trump uses the term, it's an exaggeration that he uses to discredit rival sources of information, and he uses it for political gain.

06:33: Well, so what's the difference between something like the Deep State and Eisenhower's military-industrial complex?

06:40: So what's fascinating is that the government is feared on the Right and the Left, but they use very different terms. Liberals use the term you just mentioned, liberals talk about, "The Military-Industrial Complex." They fear a cabal of generals and big defense contracting firms that they feel

Fact or Fiction: Is the "Deep State" Real?

are driving the country into war after war after war. Conservatives, a better term, a term they often use, is, "The Administrative State," that would be this ever-growing government that's incessantly invading our personal lives and taking away our freedoms and the personal information we should control. But there's a funny thing right now... We can talk about more of this later. There's sort of an agreement on both sides, there is one thing that the Right and the Left agree on these days, and that's, "How do we control these agencies? How do we control the big private companies that are collecting our data in the digital age and kind of maintain privacy while also securing the country?"

07:41: Do you think there is agreement that these technology companies need to be controlled?

07:46: Yeah, we saw that recently. And this is one thing, since I finished the book, we just had this hearing last week with the big tech companies, four companies that are worth nearly five trillion dollars in value. Conservatives feel that they are censoring them, liberals feel that they're not doing enough to stop the widespread conspiracy theories that are online. And the second issue that makes this so important right now is the pandemic. We cannot get a consensus among Americans about how to counter the pandemic, how many people are dying. Conservatives think the government count is exaggerated and higher than it should be. Liberals think the government count is under what it should be. And if by some miracle, there is a vaccine, I think we're experiencing an enormous crisis of information right now. And part of it's online, part of it's the press not performing well, but if we can't agree on basic information and basic facts, people will refuse to take the vaccine. On both the Left and the Right, they won't believe government experts saying, "This vaccine can help you, not harm you."

08:56: I think what's very strange about being a journalist today, in this current environment, is that in the old days, you used to get two administration officials who were in the room to tell you what happened. Maybe they didn't talk to each other, maybe they were on opposite sides of the table. And this was enough for you to say, "Okay, I know what happened in the room, I can report it." But now these two administration officials may be completely honest, they may have leaked you just the way you like it as a reporter, and then the administration says it never happened. How do we deal with a problem like that? When we're talking about this information problem, this journalistic problem? I'm glad I'm not covering the White House right now, I don't know how I would do it.

09:36: And I tried and thought about this a lot working on the book. So I wanna repeat my core finding; there is no Deep State in the way Donald Trump uses the term. He is using that term for political gain, and he's spreading conspiracy theories about a Deep State that doesn't exist, again, for political advantage. So that is my finding. His claims about a Deep State, which started with just the CIA and the FBI. When Pentagon officials, when President Trump was questioning some war crime investigations that were being carried about against soldiers. President Trump called the Pentagon the Deep State, and now you have Dr. Tony Fauci and CDC officials being called members of the Deep State by the President's supporters. So it is important to call out falsehoods. I admire Glen Kessler's work in The Washington Post, work of the fact checker; the facts he looked at matched his findings, matched mine. So I think calling out false statements and exaggerations is key. I also think it's important though to not... There's plenty of columnists, and they can say mean things about the President or members of the House and the Senate, as reporters though, we shouldn't get into the name-calling and get trolled and exaggerate our findings. So if that makes any sense, declare false statements false, but don't spin and get caught up in the whole opinion cacophony that is just

dominating so much today in the news media.

11:10: Yeah. It seems to me, I wonder what you think about whether Bill Barr is somebody who you believe is a proponent of this idea of the Deep State. And in the book you talk a lot about the idea of the Deep State being very married to this idea of presidential power and what the executive's power should be. Can you talk a little bit about that?

11:30: Yeah. I mean, as I said, President Trump uses the term, Deep State, for political advantage and to unfairly discredit others. Bill Barr, throughout his career for decades, has believed that the Presidency was weakened too much after Watergate. He wasn't alone. There was a group of conservatives, Dick Cheney and Don Rumsfeld, who worked with President Ford, felt it had gone too far. So did Ed Meese so did Antonin Scalia before and after he became a Supreme Court justice. So there's a school of thought that the War Powers Act, the Church reforms, we can talk about more of the creation of its Senate and House intelligence communities to control the CIA. The creation of Inspectors General, of independent counsels, people like Robert Muller.

12:14: There's a view that all of those things weaken the Presidency, and Barr, laid this out very articulately and clearly in a speech he gave to the Heritage Foundation last fall. He said that this country needs a strong Presidency to survive. He argued that if you look at American history, The Great Depression and World War II, some would argue right now with the pandemic, the branch that saves the country when it faces a crisis is the Presidency. It's the only branch that can act decisively and help save people in peril. And he believes that it's still weakened, that the Presidency is far weaker than it should be, that all these investigations of Trump are just preventing him from using his justified executive powers. And let me just say, many other scholars I spoke to think that's a very extreme interpretation; that Bill Barr is wrong, the Presidency regained the power it lost after 9/11, and Bill Barr is creating a dangerously high level of power right now for President Trump.

13:19: So we touched on this a little bit earlier about the effect that the Deep State is having on the pandemic as we see it now, and part of the sort of undercurrent that you haven't actually said explicitly here, but you talk a lot about in the book, has to do with the distrust of experts and how that is sort of part and parcel of this idea of being against the Deep State. Can you talk about how that has affected the pandemic and how we might be able to change the narrative before... If we actually have a break between the first wave and the second wave of the pandemic, how we might be able to change that narrative ahead of the second wave?

13:55: And none of this is in the book, but I'm working on this topic still, I'm trying to write about it. A former White House official told me that the President, like many Conservatives and Republicans, felt that the private sector could respond to the pandemic quickly and more effectively than government agencies, and that's very common. But beyond that, the President or Trump does distrust government experts. But President Trump doesn't really believe that... This is one interesting side I got from an aid. That there are non-partisan public servants. He doesn't believe that anyone is truly non-partisan. He thinks that government officials like one president more than another and work harder for some presidents more than others, that these bureaucrats like slow roll proposals they don't like.

14:44: And there's no question that government officials fight turf battles, they want their agency to

Fact or Fiction: Is the "Deep State" Real?

get more money, and get the top billing, and the best coverage, and if they leak to influence stories. Every president, to be fair to Trump, has come into office and said they didn't trust government bureaucrats. Ronalds Reagan felt the state department officials weren't implementing his efforts to get tough on communism. Barack Obama didn't trust the Pentagon. He felt that generals were leaking possible troop increase numbers for Afghanistan and boxing him into a troop increase that was larger than the one he wanted. But again, no President has accused career government officials, call them bureaucrats, a more pejorative term, of carrying out a coup against them. Donald Trump is the only President who has accused government officials of carrying out a coup, and I found no evidence whatsoever of that, and I had Trump administration's... Current Trump administration officials say to me, "You're right, there is no coup. The president that I serve is exaggerating."

15:52: Right. And so how do we change this narrative David? How do we make it, I don't wanna say more positive because that makes me sound Pollyannish, but how do we get it back to something closer to reality, I guess?

16:06: A, I think journalists and members of Congress have to respect the public suspicions that are out there. Don't dismiss all these online conspiracy theories, they're widely believed. I start the book talking about the Church Commission, which was created in the late '70s after Watergate, and then the Church Commission exposed this just rafts of abuses by the CIA around the world and inside by the FBI in the US itself. It was John Tower, Church was a Democrat, Frank Church from Idaho, John Tower, a Republican of Texas, and people can laugh at this, but it was a bipartisan investigation, it stuck to facts. Clearly, there's politics in all situations. We haven't had a sort of bipartisan investigation in years, but there have been successful investigations. The Iran-Contra investigation, the report was accepted by most Americans as factual. The 9/11 Commission dealt with a national crisis and proposed reforms, and those reforms were carried out.

17:08: So we need some kind of commission like the Church Reform, journalists to work like I've talked about, sticking to the facts and not getting caught up in the partisan brawl. That generation, the post-Watergate generation, had lost credibility with the American public. They regained it. There was folks who... William Webster took over the FBI and revamped it, and wasn't anywhere near reverse manning, J. Edgar Hoover did. So it's possible, and I think that that's what needs to happen today, just back on the bipartisan issue, there's a funny alliance in the Senate. Rand Paul, the conservative libertarian, and Ron Wyden, the liberal Democrat from Oregon, both agree privacy is a huge issue. This came up in the tech hearing. It was just this last week, Republicans and Democrats actually agreed that we're way behind in legislating for the digital age. We need rules of the road for how we protect our privacy, how we secure the country, and there is a way for Democrats and Republicans to agree on this and move forward.

18:15: Well, there's a tiny glimmer of optimism. [chuckle] We're gonna be taking questions now from the audience and I just wanna remind the participants that you can raise your hand to ask a question even though we're virtual. Normally, I would call on you in the back of the room at Aspen, but I have this background so that we can feel that we're in Aspen, [chuckle] you're inside.

18:34: Nice with one ear though.

[chuckle]

18:37: Okay. So I guess, Vegan Jody, do you have a question for us?

18:44: Hi, Dina and David, I really enjoy or deeply appreciate your book. Great discussion. My question is, not everybody has the resources or intention or time to fact-check everything which comes across their feed, and social media is a huge platform for getting information. People get a lot of media information from Facebook, social media, and such. What's your recommendation regarding people, not just imbibing whatever comes on a social feed but fact-checking, or having critical thinking, before they ingest and make decisions, based upon things they see on social media.

19:34: Aside from listening to NPR, or reading The New Yorker.

19:37: Oh yes, actually I love NPR. Thank you, Dina, for bringing it up. I love...

[chuckle]

19:44: For the plug, Okay.

19:44: Here, now is the answer. No, Vegan this is a fantastic question. Let me just... You probably know this already, and many people might know this. But I think, Section 230, which gives Twitter, and Facebook, and Google, and all these online platforms, they have no legal liability for false statements and slanderous statements that are posted on Facebook and Twitter and all these online platforms. If Dina slanders someone in her story, if I slander someone in a story in The New Yorker, I can be sued for libel. Some argue, those laws are too loose. So I would make... Realize that, absolutely everything you're seeing online, has not been fact-checked at all. And then, this will sound hokey, but I mean it, if you are a conservative and you're seeing these crazy things in your Facebook feed and you're not reading them in the Wall Street Journal. I would use the Wall Street Journal's news pages as your guide. What you're seeing on Facebook is false. The Wall Street Journal is owned by Rupert Murdoch, he also owns Fox News. Clearly, their editorial page is deeply conservative, if it's not in the news pages of the Wall Street Journal, it is false.

20:56: And there's a value to journalism, again, we have a crisis of information right now, across the world, it is leading people to die during the pandemic, and could lead to more people to die. If you're a liberal, and it's not in the pages, the news pages of the New York Times, and you're seeing it online. Whatever you're reading, that conspiracy theory, that crazy claim about Trump, it is probably false. The New York Times would print it, if it... And if they're not printing it, it's not... They haven't been able to verify it. And I'd say in a silly like, I'm not saying trust the mainstream media, but we spend enormous amounts of time, vetting stories, making sure we have multiple sources, and I know the President has intentionally tried to discredit us, but... And we've made mistakes, we make mistakes all the time, but lawyers read every story that appears in The New Yorker, and I think... I don't have an answer, but some forms of that danger of being sued, has to be shifted over. So there is some form of vetting going on, by Twitter and Facebook. Again, these companies are worth nearly five trillion dollars now. I love the web, though we shouldn't try to restrain it too much, but there has to be some sort of system to force them to the service they're providing, they're providing information to the American public, it shouldn't just be completely

unvetted information online.

22:20: And I should just say, Section 230, is Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act, which basically tells internet companies that they're just a platform and don't have editorial content, therefore they're essentially made immune from the kind of libel suits that you or I, or our organizations might be open to. So our next question is for Drew Dornstatler. Go ahead, Drew.

[pause]

23:02: Did I butcher your name so much, that you don't know who you are? Drew Dornstatur?

23:08: It's the dramatic NPR pause.

23:11: It is. This is the one thing we were worried about.

23:13: No, not at all Dina and David, thank you both. You didn't butcher my name. I'm honored to speak with you.

[chuckle]

23:22: Our names are butchered all the time, too, and oddly pronounced, so.

23:26: No, thanks for your patience. I've got this question, for employees of those departments in the executive branch, that receive this sort of negative attention, do you think those employees, do you think the departments have a responsibility to dispel these beliefs? If so, how? If not, what do you think the consequences are? Thank you.

23:49: A big focus on my book, was the FBI, actually, and I think, the quick answer is they do have a responsibility, and it's really important, because we need... I believe there can be non-partisan public service. I believe there can be non-partisan journalism, and I believe I... Somebody should... I may regret this, but someone should sue me, if they feel I've slandered them, or been on... And it meets that legal standard. It's a good check that keeps me in balance. So I spent a lot of time around FBI agents. One of the main characters in the book is an FBI agent, named Tom O'Connor. He was a cop in Western Massachusetts, he joined the FBI just before 9/11, he was actually sent to Kenya to investigate the bombings there, he embodies public service to me. He investigates the bombings also, at the USS Cole, he responds to Pentagon on 9/11. He and his FBI colleagues collect 3,000 bags of human remains from the Pentagon, so that those families will know what happened to their love ones. He serves in Iraq and he investigates the Blackwater Shooting, in Baghdad, that killed Iraqi civilians, and in the last part of his career, he investigated racially motivated white supremacists in the US.

25:02: So Tom O'Connor is a character in the book, he recently retired, he was the head of the FBI agents association there. The closest thing they have to a union. And what scared me, is that, when I would talk to these FBI agents and other career officials, was a sort growing cynicism, and they weren't sort of mad, just at President Trump. They were more and more disgusted with our entire

political system, and very alienated from it. And so, I think, if these departments don't stand up for employees, they're gonna have less people wanting to get engaged in public service. And so, Tom O'Connor recently retired, and I said to Tom, "Well, what are you gonna do now? Would you ever consider running for office and cleaning up this mess in Congress?" And Tom said, "No. I wanna do something that has meaning to it." And that's a terrible, terrible sign of the state of our democracy, if that's how he feels, after decades of service to the public. So, it's important to protect government servants, it's important to police them, the Hatch Act, all these things that are designed to prevent them from being political. But we have to defend them, we need them, we need Tony Faucis. Experts who served the public for decades, and can help us, when we face crises that we just don't expect.

26:23: We've got, I think just time for one more question, and my old friend Brian Fixx, apparently is raising his hand. Brian?

[pause]

26:47: Can you hear me now?

26:49: Yes.

26:50: Wonderful. Good to see you both. And Dina, all my best. The question is, are, with social media now using tweets so often, are tweets presidential papers? Must they be preserved? Can they be deleted? And what liability does any public official have after he's out office for his tweets?

27:13: I'm no legal expert, but as a journalist, I would say yes. If anything, I want more records retained and more transparency. One of the disturbing trends in the Trump administration has been less transparency, defying congressional subpoenas. And I would urge intelligence officials, current and former, and law enforcement officials, current and former that are watching this, to be more transparent. You saw how when Edward Snowden leaked what was going on, all of those surveillance programs that Snowden talked about had been approved by the FISA Court, had been approved by federal judges, but that showed you how deeply distrustful the American public is. So I'd urge you, I'm bias as a journalist, current and former intelligence and law enforcement officials and government officials to preserve records, to make more records public. Secrecy and blanket secrecy just undermines public trust in you and in all, in our democracy. So, yes, preserve those tweets. They're very important public statements and future generations need to see them.

28:17: So we've got a written question from Todd Rosenblum, and I'll just read it in my best radio voice. "You said, career officials must follow the direction of the President, which implies civil servants are not governed by rules, laws, and policy, that they do not require them to execute lawful direction by political appointees. Do you have any evidence of this?"

28:41: I might have misspoke earlier. I guess what I was saying is that there was some talk when President Trump took office that government officials in the EPA shouldn't sort of carry out his policies, or in DHS. And so I might not even be misunderstanding. Many characters in the book are, and they talked about the policies and procedures you're talking about. The Ethics in Government

Fact or Fiction: Is the "Deep State" Real?

Act, the creation of the senior executive service. So, all of those rules should be followed, I think they are mostly followed. And again, President Trump is exaggerating the idea of these rogue government servants, but I think at the same time, if a official feels they can't serve a president personally, it's better for them to resign than to... I'm not even saying this is happening, but it's better for an official to resign than to block, or slow roll, or sabotage a policy that they don't like personally. And now we have to...

29:37: And, and...

29:37: Go ahead. Go ahead, Dina.

29:37: And that's not new to the Trump administration, right? We know that a lot of what happened with James Comey, and John Ashcroft, and Director Mueller in that hospital room what was threatened was that they would resign. And these threats of resignation actually sometimes do stop policies that maybe aren't wise from going forward.

30:01: Yes. We need all parts, we need bureaucrats and officials that are carrying out policies and then elected officials with fresh mandates every two to four to six years.

[chuckle]

30:13: Okay, I think Nick Burns is back. Did you wanna have some final comments Nick?

30:17: I wanted to actually ask two reporters a question. We're supposed to end at 3:15, but let's take a couple of more minutes. We can do that. I am gonna date myself by saying that when I came of age as a teenager, or a college student, the press was widely respected. Woodward and Bernstein uncovered the Watergate scandal. Walter Cronkite and Huntley and Brinkley, I'm really dating myself, were very much respected figures.

30:46: Just kidding.

[laughter]

30:47: And that's no longer the case. Part of it is the explosion of information, it's hard... There were a very few outlets for information back then. Part of it is, this attack on the press by politicians. Mainly from the right, not just from the right. And so how do you carry on Dina, David, in a climate like this? And are you just reconfirmed in your career choice and the mission you have to tell the truth as you see it or does it affect the way you work?

31:19: Do you wanna go first, David? How about we'll give you the last word. And I'll just say that... So I teach Media Law at Temple Law School with my husband. And what's really stunning to me as we talk about media law and we talk about Section 230 and things like that, is how little today's... So they're a little bit older, 'cause they're law students. Today's students understand about what we do in terms of journalism. We go through the process, my husband takes the sort of legal aspect of it, and I take the practitioner aspect of the first amendment. And they didn't know what we

Fact or Fiction: Is the "Deep State" Real?

did as a living. They thought we just wrote what we wanted to write, and they had no idea that there was an editorial process or that you have an editor that you have to say, "Yes, it's an unnamed source, but this is who it is, and this is how they know it, and I confirmed it with this person, and this is why they don't wanna use their name, particularly in the current administration." So I think there's a little bit of a lack of understanding of what we do for a living, which has allowed forces that are against us to paint us as just pundits spouting off.

32:25: And I think that, that needs to change. I think people need to understand a little bit better what we do for a living, as what you mentioned, David. I think that's one of the things. This is a great time to be an investigative journalist, to be frank. There are stories everywhere, there are just not enough hours in the day to do them. And that's not 'cause we're gunning for anyone, it's because our job is to shed light on things that are not being done the way they're supposed to. And there are a reasonable amount of things like that that are going on right now that are just not opinion, but just absolutely true. The facts show it.

33:02: Thank you, Dina. And David, as we asked for your comment. I think Dina's right, a lot of people don't understand the difference between the opinion page and the news pages. I read, most days, the New York Times, The Washington Post, and The Wall Street Journal. And frankly, when you read the news stories, if you were blindfold just listening to these reporters, you wouldn't know who was reporting for the journal or the poster times. Obviously, the editorial pages are significantly different, but I'm not sure that's understood by a lot of people. David, how would you answer that question?

33:34: I think there's been a failure in journalism of explaining that more clearly, and there's been an explosion in pundits. And I'm not against pundits. So, there was a collapse in our business model, and so the answer was to tilt right or tilt left and to shout loudly. And we found that false statements and conspiracy theories travel farther and faster online and on air than balanced reporting. And I think we're finding our footing, we're succeeding, as frankly as organizations, The New York Times and The Journal, and even The New Yorker now. So it's I think it's to be a reporter or be a pundit and not to mix the two. And it's too easy on social media to kinda sound off and say something quickly. And I tried very hard in this book to be fair, and I still try to be hard, fair to President Trump. I mean I think when he says it falsely... His fake news and his claims that we're making things up are false, I think people are seeing that as time goes by. They're seeing it in terms of the impact of the pandemic. And I love being a journalist, I have no second thoughts about it. It's a calling and an honor, and I'm just lucky to be included today and to be part of this profession.

34:58: Well, David, all best with your book. I'm gonna read it, I hope everyone watching this is gonna read it. And Dina all best to you and thank you both for enlightening us today. It's been a real pleasure to have you on the Aspen Security Forum.

Fact or Fiction: Is the "Deep State" Real?

Thank You for choosing Scribie.com

Cross-check this transcript against the audio quickly and efficiently using our online Integrated Editor. Please visit the following link and click the Check & Download button to start.

<https://scribie.com/files/98a1488bfb1f4b94a53bf821c952b591563afe10>