Life in Shanghai sucks, okay?!: The West's push to block good news



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Editor's note:

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bet you never knew, before this week, that life in China is so miserable. This week, The New York Times and an Australian think tank released their coordinated reports on foreign "influencers" and the supposed threat they pose.

Their verdict: Any positive news from China must necessarily be fake, funded by the Communist Party of China, and therefore should be labeled as "misinformation."

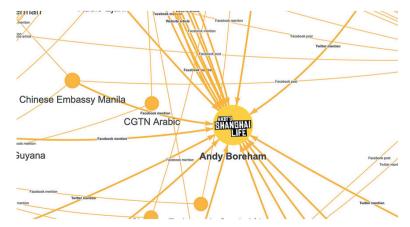
The New York Times released a story titled "How Beijing Influences the Influencers," which was created and strategically released in coordination with a report by the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI), a think tank that is largely funded by the arms industry (no, seriously). Their report is called "Borrowing Mouths to Speak on Xinjiang."

Both reports posit foreign influencers in China posting positive and happy content online as agents of the state who need to be stopped at all costs. Their crimes, according to The New York Times: painting "cheery portraits of life as foreigners in China."

They go on: "Most of the YouTubers have lived in China for years and say their aim is to counter the West's increasingly negative perceptions of the country." Evil stuff.

The ASPI report mainly focused on foreign influencers who have created content on Xinjiang. I happened to be included in their list because of some videos I made in Xinjiang exploring the ancient city of Kashgar and Urumqi, the regional capital.

They argued that content like



A screenshot from the ASPI diagram shows Andy's links in their supposed "propaganda" network.



Western media and think tanks want to label positive content from foreign influencers in China as misinformation. — Hellorf

mine aims to "reframe international narratives by displaying a wholly positive image of life in Xinjiang." But here's the thing: Neither Xinjiang nor any other part of China deserves to be framed in an overwhelmingly negative light just because the West says so, regardless of all the hideous accusations they make about mass murder, genocide or whatever else. And just for the record, as someone who has visited Xinjiang, works for Chinese state media and has read all the reports under the sun, I wholeheartedly believe there is no systemic mass murder or genocide going on in Xinjiang. If I came across anything to make me believe otherwise I wouldn't be here doing what I do.

The New York Times particularly took aim at videos like mine that portrayed Xinjiang without couching the entire content in politics, mass murder and genocide. They attacked videos from a YouTube travel channel called The China Traveler because the videos were fun and colorful, and not covered in blood and filmed using the infamous "BBC gray" filter. In the videos, the host "raves about the cuisine and interviews

locals about how their lives have improved." Great, sounds just like any other travel video on You-Tube. Oh, but they go on: "Topics like reeducation camps do not come up."

Wow. Let me repackage what they are expecting of China travel vlogs and put the same requirements on US content, just to show you the level of ludicrous we're dealing with here.

Most average people would concede that the US total messed up their response to COVID-19. Already around 800,000 people have died because of the pandemic. That's nearly 1 million people — a tragedy in anyone's eyes. Using ASPI's logic, no YouTube travel vlogs about the US should be posted without first detailing the 800,000 who have died unnecessarily from COVID-19.

Chicago is, in many people's estimations, a dangerous and lawless place. Innocent people are gunned down on the streets there every single week. Does that mean US travel vloggers visiting the city and profiling its amazing nightlife, art scene, food and people are spreading propaganda and "attempting to change the narrative" if they don't also talk about

the hideous crime rate there? Of course not!

So why do they expect the same from China content?

Basically what The New York Times, ASPI and other Western organs are suggesting with their reports is that any positive news or content coming from China is fake and that it is propaganda. They want content like mine — which simply showed two beautiful cities in Xinjiang in order to entice other foreigners to go and see the place with their own eyes — to be labeled as "misinformation" and flagged by Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and the like.

"Platforms could explore the introduction of specific policies about misleading information," the Aussie think tank suggests. "Such policies could include enforcement measures against violations similar to those that Twitter has implemented for sharing false or misleading information about COVID-19."

If you don't find that attempt by the West to monopolize the "truth" about China, from outside China, to be absolutely terrifying, then you clearly haven't read "1984."