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April 26, 2024

Mr. John Lippman  
Acting Director  
Voice of America  
330 Independence Ave., S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20237

Re: VOA-run *Polygraph.info* spreading disinformation

Dear Acting Director Lippman:

Following my statements in Congress about American troops being hung out to dry in Niger, Voice of America (VOA)-run “fact checking” website *Polygraph.info* ran an article on April 3, 2024, still available online, entitled “Western media amplify Russian propaganda targeting US troops in Niger” (*available at* <https://www.polygraph.info/a/western-media-amplify-russian-propaganda-targeting-us-troops-in-niger-/7555340.html>).

The VOA has a clear “Journalistic Code,” a public statement of its alleged principles, which were clearly violated in this case, and I ask you to take down this demonstrably false “fact check” by *Polygraph.info*.

Replete with documented, firsthand reporting, I have issued a report on Niger (*available at* <https://gaetz.house.gov/media/press-releases/congressman-gaetz-releases-bombshell-report-state-departments-american-troop>). No VOA / *Polygraph.info* staff have reached out to my office to verify our sourcing or get the true facts about what is happening in Niger.

In fact, the sources you *do* cite in the piece, contrary to your Journalistic Code, clearly do not have firsthand knowledge of the facts on the ground, and worse, you don’t report any disagreement here. As outlined in my report, for example, there has been a lapse in talks with Niger for some time, not “continuing talks.” The misinformation of the Department of State that there are “continuing talks” was precisely the target of my questions asked of the Pentagon and my floor speech in Congress, and is proved correct by the April 20, 2024, announcement that the Biden administration *will actually* withdraw all 1,100 American personnel from the country.

At root, I find it amazing that the U.S. government is paying an entity to put out misinformation about U.S. policy and labeling that propaganda outfit as a “fact checking” organization. Do better. Please let me know by May 1, 2024, if you have taken down the offending misinformation and what steps you will take going forward to ensure this yellow journalism doesn’t occur again.

Sincerely,



Matt Gaetz  
Member of Congress