

The Epstein files and Norway's political elites

by Prof. Glenn Diesen,* Norway



Glenn Diesen.
(Picture ma)

(CH-S) Using his home country as an example, the author shows how Norwegian elites secured and continue to seek to secure power and high salaries under the guise of woke "humanitarian" networks. Criticism of this is considered treason.

Hopefully, objective and well-documented analyses will soon be published from other countries.

Why are Norwegian political elites so overrepresented in the Epstein files? Several news outlets around the world have reported on the shock to the small Scandinavian country, which consistently demonstrates high public trust in the government. How could this have happened?

The source of the problem is a de-nationalised political elite decoupling itself from the public. The Norwegian government has the explicit ambition of being an international humanitarian superpower by spending billions on aid. The small country's obsession with punching above its weight in international humanitarianism could be applauded. However, if one scratches the surface, it is not as benign as one would hope.

A small but wealthy country can easily give rise to an elite class with ambitions beyond national borders, and even fuel delusions that they can save the world. With enough resources, these elites form a permanent bureaucracy, develop international elite networks and in the process earn some money for themselves. Whereas monarchs of the past had a mandate from God, the new nobility claims a mandate from human-

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Oslo. In the Byørvika district on the Oslo Fjord, with the Munch Museum. (Pictures jpv)

itarianism and globalism. Immunity develops because when policies are defined by virtue, opposition is deemed heretical and illegitimate. Herein lies the problem of international humanitarianism: the assumed virtue limits criticism, transparency, and accountability.

Norway and "Davos Man"

Samuel Huntington coined the phrase "Davos Man" to describe a particular type of global elite associated with the *World Economic Forum* (WEF) meetings in Davos, Switzerland. According to Huntington, these cosmopolitan elites have "little need for national loyalty" and view national boundaries as a relic of the past. National governments primarily serve the purpose of launching international careers and supporting the elites' global work. It should therefore not be a surprise that the current President and CEO of the World Economic Forum in Davos is *Børge Brende*, the former foreign minister of Norway. In 2018, the convicted sex criminal *Jeffrey Epstein* emailed Brende, arguing that Davos could "really replace the UN," and Brende responded, "Exactly – we need a new global architecture". Such discussions about shifting power from the United Nations to elite networks are obviously not made openly in national parliaments.

Norway's rise as a peace nation and humanitarian power can be traced back to the Oslo Accords in 1993, but the process has since faced criticism for its failure to produce an independent

Palestinian state and for uneven implementation of its provisions. The secret talks that led to the accords were facilitated by Norwegian diplomats, including Terje Rød-Larsen and his wife Mona Juul. Recent disclosures from the Epstein files show that Epstein and Rød-Larsen had a long-standing personal relationship, and that documents from Epstein's testament reveal he intended to leave \$5 million to each of Rød-Larsen and Juul's two children – \$10 million in total.

Rød-Larsen also contributed to using the think tank International Peace Institute to traffic women at Epstein's request. Young, beautiful women without the proper skills to work for the think tank came for short internships and had their pictures sent to Epstein.¹ The Norwegian foreign minister, Ine Eriksen Søreide, was informed in 2019 about this suspicious development, yet no actions were taken. Ine Eriksen Søreide is, coincidentally, a close friend of Terje Rød-Larsen's wife, Mona Juul. Even after the Epstein scandal broke and these questionable decisions were exposed, Søreide was crowned leader of one of Norway's largest political parties. As the comedian George Carlin famously quipped: "It's a big club, and you ain't in it".

Aid as NGO's, Think Tanks & Elite Networks

The word "aid" can be misleading, as the billions of taxpayer money are not spent on feeding the poor. The money is channelled through "non-governmental organisations" (NGOs), think tanks, and other institutions, and then the same politicians receive prestigious positions, careers in international institutions, and kickbacks of some form from these institutions. Power and legitimacy are aligned, as everyone is eating out of the same feeding trough and celebrating themselves for making the world a better place.

Norwegian political elites thus naturally gravitated toward financing influence networks such as the Clinton Foundation and the Gates Foundation, using taxpayers' money to masquerade as global statesmen. Is humanitarianism or lucrative elite networks the principal objective? It was revealing that the Clinton Foundation peaked in 2016, when it appeared that Hillary Clinton would become president, and thereafter the funding experienced a 75 percent decline by 2020.² It should not have been a surprise that Norwegian political elites had a proclivity to gravitate toward the circle of influence peddlers such as Jeffrey Epstein.



Ålesund, port city on the west coast of Norway.

National interests disappear into the background as self-serving political elites derive their legitimacy from abstract global interests. American cables described the Norwegian Ministry of Defense State Secretary, Espen Barth Eide, with the following words: "his activities do not necessarily correspond to any Norwegian interests but do burnish his international reputation."³

In a podcast with Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson, former Chief of Staff to the US Secretary of State, I was told that they set up big white boards in the White House and listed the European leaders who should be elevated and suppressed. Colonel Wilkerson argued that Norway's Jens Stoltenberg was immediately identified as "our man" in Norway who would do our bidding – and he was later put in the position as Secretary General of NATO. The Norwegians interpreted this as Norway having a larger role in the international system, rather than the US having a larger role in Norway.

Armed with billions in aid money and little transparency, Norwegian elites are vulnerable to participating in pay-to-play schemes. The New York Times reported in 2014 on how "Foreign Powers Buy Influence at Think Tanks", in which it was noted that "American research groups, after receiving money from Norway, have advocated in Washington for enhancing Norway's role in NATO, promoted its plans to expand oil drilling in the Arctic, and pushed its climate change agenda".⁴

The Norwegian Centre for Conflict Resolution published a paper that recognized it was necessary to pay for access to powerful politicians and bureaucrats in the US: "Funding powerful think tanks are one way to gain such access, and some think tanks in Washington are openly conveying that they can service only those foreign governments that provide funding."⁵

Under the “aid” budget, the government can also advance policies outside the public’s scrutiny. While Norwegian political elites spoke of assisting democracy-building in Ukraine, they financed the Ukraine Crisis Media Centre, a “non-governmental organisation” that pressured Zelensky in 2019 to abandon his peace mandate, which 73% of Ukrainians had voted for.⁶

When journalists interview experts, they often interview government-financed “non-governmental organisations” that are closely aligned with government policies and consistently gung-ho on regime change around the world and war with Russia. When an academic like myself criticised the government’s war narrative, one of these government-financed “non-governmental organisations,” the Norwegian Helsinki Committee, wrote endless hit pieces in newspapers, started an online smearing campaign, attempted to cancel my invitations for public speaking, called and sent a letter to my university, and posted a picture of my house on social media as an act of intimidation. The government of a liberal democracy must act in a civilised manner, but the government’s “non-governmental organisations” can be ruthless and play by very different rules. Criticise the government’s “non-governmental organisations”, and you are accused of attacking “civil society”.

A Few Bad Apples or a Systemic Rot?

Over the next weeks and months, the problem will predictably be defined as a case of a few bad apples rather than systemic rot caused by the international humanitarian industrial complex. The government will rebuild trust by holding some individuals accountable for their transgressions, yet the elites will continue to empower themselves with “aid” money.

The political elites will forgive themselves and likely also celebrate themselves for the accountability. Thereafter, anyone continuing to voice concerns will be smeared as “anti-state actors” seeking to reduce trust in the government. Any criticism of the system will be compared to MAGA rhetoric of “draining the swamp”, which the political elites consider to be dangerous populism. By suggesting some could seek to reduce trust in the government at the behest of a foreign government, dissent becomes treasonous and criminal.

There are already efforts in the media to Russiagate the Epstein scandal by suggesting Epstein was a Russian agent, which conveniently transforms corrupt Norwegian political elites



Port of Bergen, on the south-west coast of Norway.

into victims. On the more humorous side, one Norwegian newspaper suggests that the Epstein files could have been planted as a conspiracy against Norway to reduce trust in government institutions and the political class.

By failing to address the root cause of the scandal, the rot will fester and predictably fuel divisions between the elites and the public. In 2004, Samuel Huntington predicted a growing division between the political elites and the American public. In “Dead Souls: The Denationalization of the American Elite”, Huntington argued that citizens tend to prioritise the preservation of traditional values, national identity, culture, and manufacturing jobs as the foundation for national unity. In contrast:

“For many elites, these concerns are secondary to participating in the global economy, supporting international trade and migration, strengthening international institutions, promoting American values abroad, and encouraging minority identities and cultures at home. The central distinction between the public and elites is not isolationism versus internationalism, but nationalism versus cosmopolitanism.”⁷

Source: <https://glennadiesen.substack.com/p/epstein-meets-the-davos-nation-norway>, 19 February 2026

¹ <https://www.nrk.no/norge/ine-eriksen-soreide-moter-pressen-etter-epstein-varsel-fra-2019-1.17761990>

² <https://www.rsbnetwork.com/news/donations-to-the-clinton-foundation-plunge-by-75-since-2016/>

³ https://www.wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08OSLO406_a.html

⁴ <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/07/us/politics/foreign-powers-buy-influence-at-think-tanks.html>

⁵ [bjorgaas_noref_support_us_think_tanks_mai_report_may_2012_final.pdf](https://bjorgaas.noref.support.us_think_tanks_mai_report_may_2012_final.pdf)

⁶ <https://uacrisis.org/en/71966-joint-appeal-of-civil-society-representatives>

⁷ <https://www.jstor.org/stable/42897520>