

Is the CIA editing your newspaper?

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Here is a [great overview](#) by Ed Jones of why corporate media are the arch-exponents of “fake news”. The media are overwhelmingly owned and controlled by billionaires and gargantuan corporations, who depend on the support of other corporations for ad revenue, and employ journalists from a narrow, privileged class whose careers depend on maintaining access to elite sources. It would be simply astounding in these circumstances if we had anything resembling a pluralistic media.

The data concerns UK outlets, but the same principles apply in the US.

One section makes especially disturbing reading. It is the little-discussed matter of the intelligence services’ deep penetration of most western, and in some cases non-western, media organisations. In short, US intelligence services – and to a lesser extent British ones – have for many decades fed information to sympathetic journalists in key positions inside the “free” media, working with them hand in glove. Additionally, the CIA has sought to put its own people into publications to shape directly editorial content and influence public opinion. In some cases, these people may have reached very senior positions.

Nick Davies, of the Guardian, dedicated a whole chapter of his book *Flat Earth News* to documenting these practices. Strangely, that chapter is rarely mentioned. Journalists who praise the book instead concentrate on his less revealing concept of “churnalism” – journalism compromised by constraints of time and resources.

Jones adds other sources who make much the same point:

Richard Keeble, professor of journalism at the University of Lincoln, ... has written on the history of the links between journalists and the intelligence services. ... He quotes Roy Greenslade, who has been a media specialist for both the Telegraph and the Guardian [and is a former editor of the Mirror newspaper], as saying: “Most tabloid newspapers – or even newspapers in general – are playthings of MI5 [Britain’s FBI].”

Keeble goes on to say:

“Bloch and Fitzgerald, in their examination of covert UK warfare, report the editor of ‘one of Britain’s most distinguished journals’ as believing that **more than half its foreign correspondents were on the MI6 payroll** [the British equivalent of the CIA – my emphasis]. And in 1991, Richard Norton-Taylor revealed in the Guardian that 500 prominent Britons paid by the CIA and the now defunct Bank of Commerce and Credit International, included 90 journalists.”

Keeble has given many more examples in his book chapter of the intelligence services infiltrating the media and changing the politics of the time, including around the miners strikes and Arthur Scargill in the 1980s and during the lead-up to the Iraq war in 2003. ...

David Leigh, former investigations editor of The Guardian, wrote about a series of instances in which the secret services manipulated prominent journalists. He claims reporters are routinely approached and manipulated by intelligence agents and identifies three ways – providing examples for each in his article – in which they do it:

- They attempt to recruit journalists to spy on other people or themselves attempt to go under journalistic “cover.”
- They allow intelligence officers to pose as journalists “to write tendentious articles under false names.”
- And “the most malicious form”: they plant intelligence agency propaganda stories on willing journalists who disguise their origin from readers.

Remember that those who should be exposing the intelligence services’ manipulation of the mainstream media are the very same mainstream media that are already compromised. In other words, this story of systematic “fake news” planted by our intelligence services is almost impossible for the media to tell because it would

expose a very uncomfortable reality: that they are not, as they claim, watchdogs on power, but rather the lapdogs of the powerful.

If all this still seems hard to believe, please watch this video of a senior German journalist admitting that he was recruited by the US intelligence services (h/t Antonio Nascimento). Udo Ulfkotte covered the Middle East for the Frankfurter Allgemeine for 12 years, and says he regularly acted as a conduit for CIA propaganda. He adds that many of his colleagues were doing the same, willingly promoting CIA disinformation.

[media criticism, security state](#)