

'Deep State' Veterans find New Homes in Mainstream Media

NBC News' hiring of former CIA Director John Brennan is the latest in a wave of intelligence community stalwarts being given jobs in the media, raising concerns over conflicts of interests, reports Caitlin Johnstone.

By Caitlin Johnstone

"Former CIA director John Brennan has become the latest member of the NBC News and MSNBC family, officially signing with the network as a contributor," chirps a recent article by The Wrap, as though that's a perfectly normal thing to have to write and not a ghastly symptom of an Orwellian dystopia. NBC reports that the former head of the depraved, lying, torturing, propagandizing, drug trafficking, coup-staging, warmongering Central Intelligence Agency "is now a senior national security and intelligence analyst."

Brennan, who played a key role in the construction of the establishment's Russia narrative that has been used to manufacture public consent for world-threatening new cold war escalations, is just the latest addition in an ongoing trend of trusted mainstream media outlets being packed to the gills with stalwarts from the U.S. intelligence community. Brennan joins CIA and DoD Chief of Staff Jeremy Bash on the NBC/MSNBC lineup, who is serving there as a national security analyst, as well as NBC intelligence/national security reporter and known CIA collaborator Ken Dilanian.

Former Director of National Intelligence, Russiagate architect, and known Russophobic racist James Clapper was welcomed to the CNN "family" last year by Chris "It's Illegal to Read WikiLeaks" Cuomo and now routinely appears as an expert analyst for the network. Last year CNN also hired a new national security analyst in Michael Hayden, who has served as CIA Director, NSA Director, Principal Deputy Director of National Intelligence, and an Air Force general.

Former CIA analyst and now paid CNN analyst Phil Mudd, who last year caused Cuomo's show to have to issue a retraction and apology for a completely baseless claim he made on national television asserting that WikiLeaks' Julian Assange is "a pedophile", is once again making headlines for suggesting that the FBI is entering into a showdown with the current administration over Trump's decision to declassify the controversial Nunes memo.

More and more of the outlets from which Americans get their information are being filled not just with garden variety establishment loyalists, but with

longstanding members of the U.S. intelligence community. These men got to their positions of power within these deeply sociopathic institutions based on their willingness to facilitate any depravity in order to advance the secret agendas of the U.S. power establishment, and now they're being paraded in front of mainstream Americans on cable news on a daily basis. The words of these "experts" are consistently taken and reported on by smaller news outlets in print and online media in a way that seeds their authoritative assertions throughout public consciousness.

The term "deep state" does not refer to a conspiracy theory but to a simple concept in political analysis which points to the undeniable reality that (A) plutocrats, (B) intelligence agencies, (C) defense agencies, and (D) the mainstream media hold large amounts of power in America despite their not being part of its elected government. You don't need to look far to see how these separate groups overlap and collaborate to advance their own agendas in various ways. Amazon's Jeff Bezos, for example, is deeply involved in all of the aforementioned groups: (A) as arguably the wealthiest person ever he is clearly a plutocrat, with a company that is trying to control the underlying infrastructure of the economy; (B) he is a CIA contractor; (C) he is part of a Pentagon advisory board; and (D) his purchase of the Washington Post in 2013 gave him total control over a major mainstream media outlet.

Bezos did not purchase the *Washington Post* because his avaricious brain predicted that newspapers were about to make a profitable resurgence; he purchased it for the same reason he has inserted himself so very deeply into America's unelected power infrastructure – he wants to ensure a solid foundation for the empire he is building. He needs a potent propaganda outlet to manufacture support for the power establishment that he is weaving his plutocratic tentacles through. This is precisely the same reason other mass media-controlling plutocrats are stocking their propaganda machines with intelligence community insiders.

Time and again you see connections between the plutocratic class which effectively owns America's elected government, the intelligence and defense agencies which operate behind thick veils of secrecy in the name of "national security" to advance agendas which have nothing to do with the wishes of the electorate, and the mass media machine which is used to manufacture the consent of the people to be governed by this exploitative power structure.

America is ruled by an elite class which has slowly created a system where money increasingly translates directly into political power, and which is therefore motivated to maintain economic injustice in order to rule over the masses more completely. The greater the economic inequality, the greater their power. Nobody

would willingly consent to such an oppressive system where wealth inequality keeps growing as expensive bombs from expensive drones are showered upon strangers on the other side of the planet, so a robust propaganda machine is needed.

And that's where John Brennan's new job comes in. Expect a consistent fountain of lies to pour from his mouth on NBC, and expect them to all prop up this exploitative power establishment and advance its geopolitical agendas. And expect clear-eyed rebels everywhere to keep calling it all what it is.

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How the Establishment Imposes 'Truth'

A new "press freedom" paradigm has taken hold in the Western world, imposing establishment narratives as "truth" and dismissing contrarian analyses as "fake news," a break from the Enlightenment's "marketplace of ideas," says Gilbert Doctorow.

By Gilbert Doctorow

For the last quarter century or more, Western foreign policy has claimed to be guided by promotion of "democratic values," among which none shines brighter than freedom of speech and the related freedom of the press. European Union institutions have repeatedly been quick to denounce authoritarian regimes in the greater European area for arrests or murders of journalists and for the shutting down of media outlets that crossed some government red line.

In the past year, Recep Tayyip Erdogan's Turkey may have headed the list in Brussels for such offenses, especially since the crackdown that followed an attempted coup last summer. The E.U.'s supposed guardians of the free press also put Vladimir Putin's Russia on the short list of countries where journalism is said to be severely constrained.

However, against this backdrop of European moral posturing, there are troubling examples of how the E.U. itself deals with journalists who challenge the dominant groupthinks. The E.U. finds its own excuses to stifle dissent albeit through bloodless bureaucratic maneuvering.

For instance, in April 2016, I wrote about how a documentary challenging the Western narrative of the circumstances surrounding the death of Kremlin critic Sergei Magnitsky in 2009 was blocked from being shown at the European Parliament in Brussels, Belgium.

The last-minute shutting down of the documentary, "The Magnitsky Act: Behind the Scenes," was engineered by lawyers for William Browder, the influential chairman of the investment fund Hermitage Capital and an associate of Magnitsky.

Based in London, Browder has been an unrelenting crusader for imposing sanctions on Russian officials allegedly connected to Magnitsky's death in prison. Browder successfully pushed for the U.S. Congress to approve the 2012 Magnitsky Act and has lobbied the European Parliament to pass a similarly punitive measure.

Then, in April 2016, Browder pulled off a stunning show of force by arranging the cancellation of "The Magnitsky Act" documentary just minutes before invitees entered the auditorium at the European Parliament building for the showing.

Browder blocked the documentary, directed by Andrei Nekrasov, because it carefully examined the facts of the case and raised doubts about Browder's narrative that Magnitsky was an innocent victim of Russian repression. The E.U.'s powers-that-be, who had fully bought into Browder's Magnitsky storyline, did nothing to resist Browder's stifling of a dissenting view.

Which appears to be part of the West's new approach toward information, that only establishment-approved narratives can be presented to the public; that contrarian analyses that try to tell the other side of a story are dismissed as "fake news" that should rightly be suppressed. (When the Magnitsky documentary got a single showing at the Newseum in Washington, a Washington Post editorial misrepresented its contents and dismissed it as "Russian agitprop," which was easy to do because almost no one got to see what it said.)

Bureaucratic Runaround

I got my own taste of the E.U.'s bureaucratic resistance to dissent when I applied to the Media Accreditation Committee of the European Commission on March 2 seeking a press pass to act as the Brussels reporter of Consortiumnews.com.

This Committee issues accreditation for all the European Institutions, including the only one of interest to me, the European Parliament. The Committee is a law unto itself, a faceless bureaucratic entity that deals with applicants only via online applications and sends you back anonymous emails. The application process includes several steps that already raise red flags about the Commission's understanding of what it means to be from the "press" or a "journalist" deserving accreditation in the Twenty-first Century.

First, under the Committee's rules, a journalist must be a paid employee of the given media outlet. This condition generally cannot be satisfied by "stringers" or "freelancers," who are paid for each assignment or an individual story, a payment arrangement that has existed throughout the history of journalism but has become more common today, used by mainstream media outlets as well as alternative media, which generally pay little or nothing. I satisfied that requirement with a Paypal credit note from Consortiumnews.

The Commission also must have the media outlet on its approved list. Regarding Consortiumnews, an Internet-based investigative news magazine dating back to 1995 and operating in the Washington D.C. area, the Commission apparently wasn't sure what to do.

So, like bureaucratic institutions everywhere, the Committee played for time. It was only on June 6 that I received the review of my application. The finding was that 1) I needed to present more proof that my employer is paying me regularly, not just once, and 2) I needed to supply further articles showing that I am not merely published regularly, as was clear from my uploaded articles with the initial application, but that I am published precisely on the subject of activities at the European institutions.

I was assured that pending delivery of these proofs and completion of my request, I could ask for ad hoc accreditation "to the individual institutions for specific press events you would need to cover."

In fact, I had withheld from my application my most recent published essay on a panel discussion in the E.U. Parliament devoted to censuring Russia's alleged dissemination of "fake news." That discussion was run by a Polish MEP and former Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs from the determinedly anti-Russian party of the Kaczynskis. The title of my essay was "Europe is brain dead and on the drip." I had felt that this particular piece would not further the cause of my press pass.

Still, the insincerity of the E.U. press accreditation committee's response to my application is perfectly obvious. A journalist can write articles about the European Institutions when he or she has free run of the house via a press pass and can ascertain what is going on of interest. Without a press pass, you do not know what or whom is worth covering.

And in this connection, "specific press events" are among the least desirable things going on at the E.U. for purposes of a genuine practicing journalist. They are useful only for lazy journalists who will send along to their editor the press release and a few canned quotes obtained by showing up at a press briefing in time for the coffee and sandwiches.

In short, I will not be issued a press pass and the Committee will not bother to address the real reason for refusal: that Consortiumnews is not on the Committee's short list of acceptable media. Not to mince words, this is how the E.U. bureaucracy manages skeptical media and stifles dissenting voices.

NBC's New Star v. Putin

Meanwhile, the mainstream Western media continues to hammer home its propaganda narratives, especially regarding Russia. Another case study unfolded over the past week with NBC's new star reporter Megyn Kelly interviewing Russian President Vladimir Putin on June 2 on the sidelines of the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum.

This latest NBC crime against professional journalism becomes apparent when you compare the full version of the interview as it was broadcast on Russia's RT network and the edited version that NBC aired for its American audience. The most shocking discrepancy involved a segment in which Kelly aggressively questioned Putin about what she said was Americans' understanding of his government, namely one that murders journalists, suppresses political opposition, is rife with corruption, etc.

In the NBC version, Putin's answer has been cut to one empty introductory statement that "Russia is on its way to becoming a democracy" bracketed by an equally empty closing sentence. In the full, uncut version, Putin responds to Kelly's allegations point by point and then turns the question around, asking what right the U.S. and the West have to question Russia's record when they have been actively doing much worse than what Kelly charged. He asked where is Occupy Wall Street today, why U.S. and European police use billy clubs and tear gas to break up demonstrations, when Russian police do nothing of the sort, and so on.

Simply put, NBC intentionally made Putin sound like an empty authoritarian, when he is in fact a very sophisticated debater, which he demonstrated earlier in the day at an open panel discussion involving Kelly who became the event's laughingstock. Regarding the bowdlerized interview, NBC management bears the prime responsible for distorting the material and misleading its viewers.

Interviews by serious news organizations can be "hard talk," as the BBC program of the same name does weekly. The journalist in charge can directly and baldly challenge a political leader or other public personality and can dwell on an issue to arrive at exhaustive responses that then allow viewers to reach their own conclusions.

However, in the interview at hand and in the earlier panel discussion, Kelly repeated the same question about alleged Russian meddling in the U.S. election

even after she had received an exhaustive answer from Putin several times. Clearly she was reading from a script given to her by management and was not permitted to react to what took place in the interview exchange.

Given that Putin's answers then were shredded in the NBC cutting room, we may explain the objectives of NBC's executives as follows: to present themselves and their featured journalist to the American audience as being so respected by the Kremlin that the Russian president accorded an exclusive interview. Second, to show the American audience that they used the opportunity not to allow the Russian President to pitch his views to the U.S. home audience but instead to hit him with all the charges of wrongdoing that have been accumulating in the American political arena.

In other words, NBC got to show off Kelly's supposed boldness and the network's faux patriotism while sparing the American people from hearing Putin's full answers.

A Harvard Dissent

Although this emerging paradigm of righteously suppressing challenges to mainstream narratives appears to be the wave of the future – with the modern censorship possibly enforced via Internet algorithms – some voices are protesting this assault on the Enlightenment's trust in human reason to sort out false claims and advance factual truth.

At the May 25 commencement at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard President Drew Faust delivered an impassioned defense of free speech. She spoke about the institution and its obligations as generator and protector of "truth" and knowledge arrived at by free debate and challenge of ideas.

This is not to say that there was perfect clarity in her message. She left me and other attendees somewhat uncertain as to whose rights of free speech she was defending and against what sort of challenge. Given the political persuasion of students and faculty, namely the middle-of-the-road to progressive wings of the Democratic Party, one might think she had in mind such causes célèbres as the ongoing verbal attacks against Linda Sarsour, a Muslim (Palestinian) graduation speaker at CUNY.

Indeed, in her speech, Drew Faust pointed to the more vulnerable members of the student body, those from minorities, those from among first generation college students who might be intimidated by hurtful speech directed against them. But it is more likely that she drew up her speech having in mind the controversy on campus this spring over the rights of speakers disseminating hated ideas to appear on campus. That issue has come up repeatedly in the student newspaper *The*

Crimson, and it may be said to date from the scandal at UC Berkeley over the cancellation of controversial far-right speaker Milo Yiannopoulos.

However, I believe the main weight of her argument was directed elsewhere. Primarily, to the processes by which truth is determined. She was defending the appropriateness of sharp debate and airing of views that one may dislike intensely on campus:

“Universities must model a commitment to the notion that truth cannot simply be claimed, but must be established – established through reasoned argument, assessment, and even sometimes uncomfortable challenges that provide the foundation for truth.”

Though this idea rests at the heart of the Enlightenment, it has faded in recent years as various political and media forces prefer to simply dismiss contrary evidence and analysis by stigmatizing the messengers and – whenever possible – silencing the message. This approach is now common inside the major media which lumps together cases of fact-free conspiracy theories and consciously “fake news” with well-researched information and serious analyses that clash with conventional wisdom.

No Sharp Edges

From my experience as an organizer of public events over the past five years, I learned that the very word “debate” finds few defenders these days. Debate suggests conflict rather than consensus. The politically correct term for public discussions of even hot issues is “round tables.” No sharp corners allowed.

But Faust said: “Ensuring freedom of speech is not just about allowing speech. It is about actively creating a community where everyone can contribute and flourish, a community where argument is relisted, not feared. Freedom of speech is not just freedom from censorship; it is freedom to actively join the debate as a full participant. It is about creating a context in which genuine debate can happen.”

Besides the value of honest debate as a method for ascertaining truth, Faust also noted that suppression of diverse opinions can blind those doing the suppression to growing unrest among the broader public, an apparent reference to the surprising election of Donald Trump.

Faust continued: “Silencing ideas or basking in intellectual orthodoxy independent of facts and evidence impedes our access to new and better ideas, and it inhibits a full and considered rejection of bad ones. From at least the time of Galileo, we can see how repressing seemingly heretical ideas has blinded societies and nations to the enhanced knowledge and understanding on which

progress depend.

“Far more recently, we can see here at Harvard how our inattentiveness to the power and appeal of conservative voices left much of our community astonished – blindsided by the outcome of last fall’s election. We must work to ensure that universities do not become bubbles isolated from the concerns and discourse of the society that surrounds them.”

Of course, the inconvenient truth is that Harvard University has long been a “bubble,” especially in the area of policy research that most interests me and may be vital in avoiding a nuclear catastrophe: Russian studies.

Over the past few years of growing confrontation between the U.S. and Russia, amid vilification of the Russian President and the Russian people and now encompassing the hysteria over “Russia-gate,” colleagues with long-standing and widely acknowledged expertise in Russian affairs including Ambassador Jack Matlock and Professor Stephen Cohen have been repeatedly denied any possibility of participating in “round tables” dedicated to relations with Russia that might be organized at Harvard’s Kennedy Center or the Davis Center.

These policy centers have become pulpits to stridently expound orthodoxy per the Washington consensus. Thus, the flaccid argumentation and complacency of U.S. foreign policy are aided and abetted by this premier university, which, along with Columbia, created the very discipline of Russian studies in 1949. So, by wallowing in this consensus-driven groupthink, Harvard contributes to dangerously biased policies that could lead to World War III. In that case, truth – or as Harvard might say, Veritas – would not be the only casualty.

No doubt there are other faculties at Harvard which also are desperately in need of renewal following President Drew Faust’s call for debate and free speech. Nonetheless, Dr. Faust’s celebration of open debate and free speech represented a welcome tonic to the close-mindedness of today’s Russia-bashing.

Her speech is all the more noteworthy as it marks one of the first steps by liberals and Democratic Party stalwarts to acknowledge that those whom Hillary Clinton condemned as “deplorables” must be heard and reasoned with if U.S. democracy is to become great again.

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Syrian Rebels Caught in 'False-Flag' Kidnapping

Exclusive: In August 2013, when the U.S. government almost went to war in Syria over a Sarin attack, suspicions that it was a rebel "false-flag" were ridiculed. But new disclosures about a rebel role in kidnapping NBC's Richard Engel several months earlier show the rebels knew such propaganda tricks, says Robert Parry.

By Robert Parry

In December 2012, Syria's U.S.-backed "moderate" rebels pulled off a false-flag kidnapping and "rescue" of NBC's chief foreign correspondent Richard Engel and his crew, getting the crime blamed on a militia tied to Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, a propaganda scam that NBC played along with despite having evidence of the truth.

On Wednesday, Engel, who had blamed an Assad-linked Shiite militia in reports both for NBC and Vanity Fair, acknowledged that a new examination of the case persuaded him that "the group that kidnapped us was Sunni, not Shia." He added that the kidnapers "put on an elaborate ruse to convince us they were Shiite shabiha militiamen."

According to [an account](#) published by the New York Times on Thursday in its "Business Day" section NBC executives had evidence from the beginning that the actual kidnapers were part of "a Sunni criminal element affiliated with the Free Syrian Army, the loose alliance of rebels opposed to Mr. Assad."

The Free Syrian Army has been the principal rebel force supported by the U.S. government which, in April 2013, several months after Engel's high-profile ordeal, earmarked \$123 million in aid to the group to carry out its war against Assad's government.

The other significance of the Syrian rebels' successful false-flag kidnapping/rescue of Engel is that it may have encouraged them to sponsor other events that would be blamed on the Syrian government and excite the U.S. government and media to intervene militarily against Assad.

On Aug. 21, 2013, a mysterious Sarin gas attack outside Damascus killed several hundred people, causing U.S. officials, journalists and human rights activists to immediately leap to the conclusion that Assad was responsible and that he had crossed President Barack Obama's "red line" against the use of chemical weapons and thus deserved U.S. military retaliation.

Within days, this political-media hysteria brought the United States to the verge of a sustained bombing campaign against the Syrian military before contrary evidence began emerging suggesting that extremist elements of the Syrian rebel force may have deployed the Sarin as a false-flag event. Obama pulled back at the last moment, infuriating America's influential neoconservatives who had long put "regime change" in Syria near the top of their to-do list.

In retrospect, the aborted U.S. bombing campaign, if carried out, might well have so devastated the Syrian military that the gates of Damascus would have fallen open to the two most powerful rebel armies, Al-Qaeda's Nusra Front and the hyper-brutal Islamic State, meaning that the black flag of Islamic terrorism might have been raised over one of the Mideast's most important capitals.

Dangers of Bad Journalism

The revelations about Engel's staged kidnapping/rescue also illuminate the dangers of biased mainstream U.S. journalism in which the big news organizations take sides in a conflict overseas and shed even the pretense of professional objectivity.

In the case of Syria, the major U.S. media put on blinders for many months to pretend that Assad was opposed by "moderate" rebels until it became impossible to deny that the dominant rebel forces were Al-Qaeda's Nusra Front and the Islamic State. In late September 2013, many of the U.S.-backed, supposedly "moderate" rebels realigned themselves with Al-Qaeda's affiliate.

In the case of Ukraine, U.S. journalists have put on their blinders again so as not to notice that the U.S.-backed coup regime in Kiev has relied on neo-Nazis and other right-wing extremists to wage an "anti-terrorist operation" against ethnic Russians in the east who have resisted the overthrow of their elected President Viktor Yanukovich. When it comes to Ukraine, the more than 5,000 deaths mostly ethnic Russians in the east are all blamed on Russian President Vladimir Putin. [See Consortiumnews.com's "Seeing No Neo-Nazi Militias in Ukraine."]

These biased storylines with the "U.S. side" wearing white hats and the other side wearing black hats are not only bad journalism but invite atrocities because the "U.S. side" knows that the U.S. mainstream media will reflexively blame any horrors on the black-hatted "bad guys."

In the case of Engel's staged kidnapping/rescue, the New York Times belatedly reexamined the case not in the context of a disinformation campaign designed to excite war against Syria's Assad but as a follow-up to disclosures that NBC's

longtime anchor Brian Williams had exaggerated the danger he was in while covering the Iraq War in 2003 explaining the story's placement in the business section where such media articles often go.

The most serious journalistic offense by NBC in this case appeared to be that it was aware of the behind-the-scenes reality that individuals associated with the U.S.-backed rebels were likely responsible but still let Engel go on the air to point the finger of blame in Assad's direction.

The Times reported that the kidnapping "group, known as the North Idlib Falcons Brigade, was led by two men, Azzo Qassab and Shukri Ajouj, who had a history of smuggling and other crimes. NBC executives were informed of Mr. Ajouj and Mr. Qassab's possible involvement during and after Mr. Engel's captivity, according to current and former NBC employees and others who helped search for Mr. Engel, including political activists and security professionals.

"Still, the network moved quickly to put Mr. Engel on the air with an account blaming Shiite captors and did not present the other possible version of events. NBC's own assessment during the kidnapping had focused on Mr. Qassab and Mr. Ajouj, according to a half-dozen people involved in the recovery effort.

"NBC had received GPS data from the team's emergency beacon that showed it had been held early in the abduction at a chicken farm widely known by local residents and other rebels to be controlled by the Sunni criminal group.

"NBC had sent an Arab envoy into Syria to drive past the farm, according to three people involved in the efforts to locate Mr. Engel, and engaged in outreach to local commanders for help in obtaining the team's release. These three people declined to be identified, citing safety considerations.

"Ali Bakran, a rebel commander who assisted in the search, said in an interview that when he confronted Mr. Qassab and Mr. Ajouj with the GPS map, 'Azzo and Shukri both acknowledged having the NBC reporters.' Several rebels and others with detailed knowledge of the episode said that the safe release of NBC's team was staged after consultation with rebel leaders when it became clear that holding them might imperil the rebel efforts to court Western support.

"Abu Hassan, a local medic who is close to the rebel movement, and who was involved in seeking the team's release, said that when the kidnapers realized that all the other rebels in the area were working to get the captives out, they decided to create a ruse to free them and blame the kidnapping on the Assad regime. 'It was there that the play was completed,' he said, speaking of the section of road Mr. Engel and the team were freed on.

"Thaer al-Sheib, another local man connected with the rebel movement who sought

the NBC team, said that on the day of the release ‘we heard some random shots for less than a minute coming from the direction of the farm.’ He said that Abu Ayman, the rebel commander credited with freeing the team, is related by marriage to Mr. Ajouj, and that he staged the rescue.”

The Sarin Mystery

While it’s impossible to determine whether the successful scam about Engel’s kidnapping/rescue influenced the thinking of other Syrian rebels to sponsor a false-flag attack using Sarin, some of the same propaganda factors applied with the U.S. news media jumping to conclusions about Assad’s responsibility for the Sarin deaths and then ridiculing any doubters.

Yet, like the Engel kidnapping affair, there were immediate reasons to doubt the “group think” on the Sarin attack, especially since Assad had just invited United Nations inspectors to Syria to investigate what he claimed was an earlier use of chemical weapons by the rebels. As the inspectors were unpacking their bags in Damascus, the Sarin attack occurred in a Damascus suburb, a provocation that quickly forced the inspectors to address the new incident instead.

The inspectors were under extraordinary U.S. pressure to implicate Assad – especially after Secretary of State John Kerry described a massive Sarin attack using multiple rockets that he said could only have come from a Syrian military base. But the inspectors only found one crudely made Sarin-laden rocket and when rocket experts examined it, they estimated that it could only travel a couple of kilometers, meaning it was likely fired from rebel-controlled territory. [See Consortiumnews.com’s [“The Collapsing Syria-Sarin Case.”](#)]

Even as the evidence implicating the Syrian government evaporated, the mainstream U.S. news media and many wannabe important bloggers continued to defend the earlier “group think” on the Sarin attack and reject the possibility that the sainted rebels had done it. But the false-flag Engel kidnapping/rescue shows that such propaganda stunts were in the rebels’ bag of tricks.

Investigative reporter Robert Parry broke many of the Iran-Contra stories for The Associated Press and Newsweek in the 1980s. You can buy his latest book, *America’s Stolen Narrative*, either in [print here](#) or as an e-book (from [Amazon](#) and [barnesandnoble.com](#)). You also can order Robert Parry’s trilogy on the Bush Family and its connections to various right-wing operatives for only \$34. The trilogy includes *America’s Stolen Narrative*. For details on this offer, [click here](#).

NBC's Brian Williams: Prosecuted by Presstitutes

The hypocrisy of American journalism knows no bounds, punishing individual journalists for personal failings but giving a pass on major abuses like pimping for the Iraq War. Thus, NBC's Brian Williams was suspended for a personal falsehood not for failing to challenge government lies, notes Gerald Celente.

By Gerald Celente

NBC's Brian Williams has come under vicious attack by fellow journalists, competing networks, editorial writers and media pundits for exaggerating the dangers he faced as an embedded reporter with the U.S. military in the first days of the Iraq War.

Apologizing for twisting the facts, Williams said it was a "bungled attempt by me to thank one special veteran, and by extension, our brave military men and women, veterans everywhere, those who served while I did not."

Although he did not serve in the military, Williams has served as a loyal foot soldier who dutifully carried out orders to sell the Iraq War and all the wars on terror before and since. And while the All-American Nightly News anchor now has become a target for his two-faced deceptions, Williams merely shared the primetime stage with a host of fellow presstitutes who peddled, and continue to peddle, Washington's warmongering propaganda.

In his book, *What Happened: Inside the Bush White House and Washington's Culture of Deception*, former White House Press Secretary Scott McClellan said President George W. Bush was not "open and forthright on Iraq," and that Bush used "propaganda" to sell the war.

From Vice President Dick Cheney's pre-war pitch that "Saddam Hussein now has weapons of mass destruction," and is "amassing them to use against us," to Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's assertion that "We know where they are," the White House told the lies and Williams and the rest of the mainstream media swore to them.

"There was such a significant march to war, and people who questioned it very early on, and really as the war progressed, were considered unpatriotic," said former *Today Show* host Katie Couric.

Complaining of "strong-arm tactics," and "a lot of pressure from the Bush White House," Couric also said, "There was a sense, a pressure from the corporations

who own where we work, and from government itself, to really squash any kind of dissent.”

Bowing to “pressure,” from those who not only “own where we work,” but own who they are, doing her part to glamorize the murderous violence when the war broke out, Couric cheered, “I just want you to know I think Navy SEALs rock.”

When Jessica Yellin was an MSNBC correspondent, pieces critical of the war were toned down or kept in check by higher-ups. “The press corps was under enormous pressure from corporate executives, frankly, to make sure this was a war that was presented in a way that was consistent with the patriotic fervor in the nation. The higher the President’s ratings, the more pressure I had from news executives to put on positive stories about the president,” Yellin said.

“I was in Kuwait for the buildup of the war,” said NBC’s Williams, who helped sell “Operation Iraqi Freedom” back then, “and yes, we heard from the Pentagon on my cell phone the minute they heard us report something that they didn’t like.”

“The tone of that time was quite extraordinary,” added Williams, who continually brags about the military and never stopped spreading pro-war propaganda.

These are the facts; those are just some the quotes. American media is a corporate house of whores. Prostitutes lacking dignity, courage and self-respect they are traitors of the Fourth Estate; double agents, they pretend to serve as protectors of freedom of speech and liberty while they get in bed with Big Brother and do his dirty work.

When McClellan’s book was released in 2008, the media slithered away from their role in selling a war based on lies that has since resulted in the slaughter of over 1 million, the destruction of an entire nation and the destabilization of the region, fertilizing the breeding ground for terror, hate and revenge now called ISIS.

Focusing on why McClellan would write an unflattering book about his former boss, the press ignored McClellan’s serious accusations: President Bush used “propaganda,” “half-truths,” and “outright lies” “that almost guaranteed that the use of force would become the only feasible option,” and that “the media would serve as complicit enablers.”

True to form, in his comments about the book, Howard Kurtz, former host of *Reliable Sources*, a TV show of self-exalted media elites who tell viewers what to believe, weaseled away from the critical points of how the Iraq War was launched on “outright lies,” who was responsible for telling them, and the criminal implications.

“The media love turncoats, if only to chronicle the teeth-gnashing among the defector’s old pals,” said Kurtz, with nary a mea culpa for the media’s complicity as cheerleaders to war.

Weighing in on the Williams scandal, Kurtz, now a Fox News media analyst, further proved that the bottom line with presstitutes is the bottom line. “NBC,” said Kurtz, “almost has to stand behind Brian Williams because he is the face of the news division. He is the top-rated anchor. He is a bankable star. He’s almost too big to fail.”

Indeed, “the face of a news division” whose lying face perfectly reflects what NBC and the rest of the mainstream media have become: shills, sellouts, and media whores who put out for government lies, fold under pressure, and follow the orders of their corporate Johns. Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria, Yemen, Ukraine ISIS, Al Qaeda, lone-wolf terrorists to terror cells Washington keeps pumping out the propaganda, the presstitutes keep on selling it, and the public buys it.

Brian Williams, “a bankable star too big to fail” who, like “bankable” Wall Street criminals that are too big to fail and too big to jail, are perfect symbols of what America has degenerated to.

Crime pays for the highly paid.

Gerald Celente is the editor and publisher of *Trends Journal*, in publication since 1980, where this article originally appeared.
