

PRESTIGES

Embedded
In the Pay
of the CIA



A Confession
from
The Profession

Uda Uffatte

Foreword

LSD? Crack? Datura tea? Cocaine? Crystal meth? In light of the reporting being done by our mainstream media in Germany, the question we find ourselves asking more and more often these days is: What drugs are they on in the editorial offices? It seems like they've definitely lost their minds. What in the world are they mixing in their muesli every morning? Many journalists have evidently lost their grip on reality. While millions of Germans are worrying about how they can manage the rising prices of rent and food and electricity, some journalists are trying to cozy up to the elites, the very elites who are responsible for more and more of our suffering. And, while the EU can only delay its inevitable bankruptcy by printing money around the clock, our leading media are encouraging us to bring even more bankrupt countries and their crises into the EU – of course, to benefit the financial elite. Too much crack? Too much LSD? Or is it all that cocaine in the editorial offices? While German citizens are already fed up with the casualties being brought home from foreign wars, select media pundits are strapping on steel helmets and enthusiastically cheering on plans for even more American wars. Is this what happens when you take crystal meth?

At the same time here in Germany, our alpha journalists seem to be experiencing a total blackout. Somehow, they cannot or do not want to remember the inspiring words they used to glorify the Iraq War or our military deployment in Afghanistan. Or, how they first realized the financial crash was upon us and the euro was tanking until only after every German citizen was already suffering the consequences. When a commercial airliner exploded over Ukraine in 2014, they would have loved nothing more than to send German soldiers to fight Russia, even before anyone knew who was actually responsible for the crash. Preventing bloodshed by demanding more bloodshed – a killer idea. Alone in Iraq, the more than 100,000 civilians who died are a testament to this, because the German media – with very few exceptions – cheered on the war in a delusional frenzy. Who or what controls these psychopaths in Germany's leading media? Are they really on drugs? Or does this systematic insanity have completely different causes? Are there propaganda specialists operating behind the scenes? In the past, we would have likely dismissed this as a simple conspiracy theory, but we now know that journalists from prestigious media outlets are the main target of the "spin doctors" who want the power to determine our news. This is primarily how the US government and the Israelis operate. There are even handbooks on how to influence the mainstream media.¹ One thing is clear: If you work in the mainstream media, you should exercise extreme caution towards lobbying groups, also around American and Israeli ones. As we will see, some journalists are doing just the opposite. They obviously feel right at home in the web of influential American and Israeli organizations. They

or identifying people, organizations or companies is not for defamation or slander. Rather, this is necessary in the public interest, because the horrific damage resulting from what I describe in this book affects us all. The only way this damage can be prevented is by making it public. This is because, as opposed to corrupt politicians, corrupt journalists cannot be prosecuted if they manipulate or suppress the truth – even when they take bribes to do so. I wrote a few of the people listed here by name and asked them for a statement. In response, I received letters from lawyers, threats of lawsuits and hints of possible steps being taken in the direction of criminal prosecution. For these reasons, I didn't bother any of the large media companies with any more questions. I'm anxious to see what will happen. Markus Wiegand, editor-in-chief of the *Wirtschaftsjournalist*, said that on closer inspection, the German media elite is made of up of a "club of wimps."⁴¹ If you criticize them, they start screaming like a nest full of hungry chicks.

One thing is very important: before I unmask other journalists, I must admit to my own wrongdoing. I have written about how corrupt I was in my reporting and which networks had an influence over my reporting – always with my employer's blessing. After that, it'll get really exciting. My goal? I want to use the truth concentrated in the following chapters, which is proven with sources, paragraph for paragraph,⁴² not only to inform, but also to affect a change – together with the readers of this book and their friends. Will we be able to do it together? Usually, you never end up with exactly what you intended. In the late 80's, the East German opposition would have never believed you if you told them that the Berlin wall was going to fall and Germany would be reunited. They only wanted to relieve some of the problems within the system. Instead, they brought it down. In 1906, the American author Upton Sinclair wrote a muck-raking novel because he wanted to improve the working conditions in the Chicago slaughterhouses of the time. What resulted instead were sweeping laws for better food hygiene. Looking back, he said, "I aimed for the public's heart, and by accident I hit it in the stomach." With this in mind, I hope the following chapters will reach people's hearts. And, I hope that one day, this will help bring an end to the growing frustration so many people have with fake journalists and the media they work for.

"If you don't buy, you won't get lies." This was the slogan of Malaysian activists calling for a nationwide boycott of the newspapers. More and more Malaysians were unhappy with their reporting and wanted to teach the ruling elite a lesson. This widespread dissatisfaction is also present in Germany. Do we really have independent media? Or has it all just become pure fiction in the meantime? Who decides on what news we get to hear? Why is every minor facet of an American presidential election now more important than any local German news? If you're reading this, you can probably guess the answer: In democracy's shadows, information is molded by the invisible

shadowy groups, they got the response, “We’re dealing with secret things, and this means: We want to be the ones to understand politics. A viewer or listener, or reader doesn’t need to know that. They only have to understand what we say.”

The viewers and readers only have to understand what the journalists report? They shouldn’t even get to know who wants which news and what messages distributed at all? Regarding secret meetings, NDR cited a journalist as follows: “What we do there is an industry secret. The same thing goes for lobbying. A lobbyist never talks openly about who they talk to, which documents they receive, where they pass them on and what happens as a result. This is comparable.” A former editor at ZDF said: “The advantage is simply that we get to learn the truth and then – as bitter as it may be for some – we aren’t allowed to publish or broadcast it.”⁵ Really? The truth is reserved exclusively for journalists? And then they’re not allowed to publish it? What is really going on out there? If anyone still believes that the news is balanced, honest and reliable, this book is going to shatter those illusions for you.

Personally, the illusions I had about journalism and truthful reporting were shattered many decades ago. I can remember the exact day it happened: It was August 2, 1990, the day the Iraqi army marched into Kuwait. At the time, Saddam Hussein had always been shown in the best light by the German media. Suddenly, they needed a story to make the Iraqis look like the very definition of evil. This was done by the PR agency *Hill & Knowlton*. They specialize in lies. They made up a story about Iraqi soldiers going into Kuwaiti hospitals, tearing helpless babies out of their incubators and leaving them on the concrete floors to die, and then taking the incubators from Kuwait to Baghdad as war booty. This horror story was cooked up to justify the USA’s entry into the war to “free” Kuwait. *Amnesty International* helped spread the incubator lie.⁶ In December of 1990, AI published a report about the human rights violations in Kuwait where the incubator lie was depicted as the alleged reality.[2] On January 12, 1991, the US Congress voted in favor of the war against Iraq.

At a US Congressional hearing on October 10, 1990, a young girl by the name of “Nayirah” testified that she had seen with her own eyes how Saddam Hussein’s soldiers threw the babies on the cold cement floors of the hospital in Kuwait and steal the incubators. This heartbreaking testimony, about how evil Saddam Hussein and his henchmen supposedly were, was broadcast into every living room in America – and of course in Germany as well – and it produced the desired mobilization of public opinion in favor of the war. Later, it came out that the whole story was made up. The girl turned out to be the daughter of Saud bin Nasir Al-Sabah, the Kuwaiti ambassador in Washington. We also learned that she had received acting lessons from the *Hill & Knowlton* PR agency before delivering her tear-jerking testimony. The Kuwaiti government had paid the media and PR agencies a total of 12

I was also a member of the planning committee at the Konrad Adenauer Foundation – with its close connections to the CDU.

Looking back, I was a lobbyist. A lobbyist tries to, for example, influence public opinion through mainstream media in favor of special interest groups. I did that. Like for the German Foreign Intelligence Service. The FAZ expressly encouraged me to strengthen my contact with the Western intelligence services and was delighted when I signed my name to the pre-formulated reports, at least in outline, that I sometimes received from them. Like many of the reports I was fed by intelligence services, one of many examples I can remember well was the exposé, “European Companies Help Libya Build a Second Poison Gas Factory” from March 16, 1993. Needless to say, the report caused a stir around the world. However, I watched as two employees of the German Federal Intelligence Service (the German CIA, the *Bundesnachrichtendienst* or BND), drafted it in a meeting room of the FAZ offices at Hellerhofstrasse 2 in Frankfurt. In other words: They basically told me what to write, paragraph for paragraph, right there in the FAZ editorial offices and then the article was published. One of the duties of these two BND employees was writing reports for large-circulation German newspapers. According to employee accounts, the BND fed reports to many German newspapers at the time – with the knowledge of their publishing houses. The Federal Intelligence Service even had a little front company with an office directly above a shop on the Mainzer Landstrasse in Frankfurt, only two blocks away from the FAZ’s main office. In any case, they had classified materials there that came from the BND.

Once you became a “player” on the team that drafted such articles, this was followed by the next level of “cooperation”: You would be given stacks of secret documents that you could evaluate at your leisure. I remember we brought in a steel filing cabinet just for all the secret reports at the FAZ. (When I was visiting colleagues at a magazine in Hamburg, I saw that they’d done the same thing in their editorial offices).

Back then, I didn’t know how contemptuously intelligence agencies spoke about journalists. “You can get a journalist for less than a good whore, for a few hundred dollars a month.” These are the words of a CIA agent, as quoted by the *Washington Post* editor Philip Graham. The agent was referring to the willingness and the price journalists would accept to spread CIA propaganda reports in their articles. Of course, this was also with the approval of their employers, who knew about and encouraged all of this. In Germany, the Federal Intelligence Service was the extended arm of the CIA, basically a subsidiary. I was never offered money by the Federal Intelligence Service, but they never even had to. I, like many of my German colleagues, found it thrilling to be a freelance writer for an intelligence agency or to be allowed to work for them in any capacity at all.⁴⁰

whenever you think you've got "neutral" reporting by the media in front of you.

I remember when I got involved with the Federal Academy for Security Politics, with their close ties to intelligence agencies. This was encouraged by my employer. I also remember that in the late summer of 1993 I was given time off to accept a six-week invitation from the transatlantic lobbying organization, the *German Marshall Fund of the United States*. All of this surely affected my reporting. The German Marshall Fund sent me to New York, and I did a night shift with police officers in the Bronx. I wrote an article for the FAZ about this titled: "The toughest policemen in the world go through these doors." It was one of many positive articles I wrote about the USA – discreetly organized by the German Marshall Fund. It may be hard to believe, but I was actually given a loaded firearm in New York. There's even a photo of the New York City Police Department handing it to me. The reader didn't learn anything about what was going on behind the scenes, behind this favorable reporting in the FAZ. They also didn't find out about the discreet contacts I made during my stay in the US. These included a meeting with Reza Cyrus Pahlavi, the son of the Shah of Persia, who still hoped to regain the throne in Tehran with the help of the CIA. Reza Cyrus Pahlavi needed one thing above all else: attention in the media. Thus, as one of the world's many prestigious newspapers, the FAZ should support these plans through the media when the time was ripe, or so I found out when we met.

This German Marshall Fund is a propaganda organization of the USA, one of the great powers that occupied Germany after the war. It was founded by Guido Goldman, son of Nahum Goldman, the founder and president of the World Jewish Congress. According to their own information, the *Marshall Fund* exists to "develop leaders who are committed to transatlantic relationships." That may sound positive, but it really means the following: They want to recruit and train pro-American lobbyists.

You're having trouble picturing what that means? One example: On July 22, 1993, the then Governor of Oklahoma officially proclaimed me an honorary citizen of the State of Oklahoma. Governor David Walters signed the certificate of honorary citizenship, which was then framed and given to me at an official ceremony (Honorary Citizen of the State of Oklahoma). The German Marshall Fund surprised me with the ceremony, organizing it without my knowledge. The certificate, with the state's seal and Governor's signature on official parchment, is still hanging in my office today. It hangs as a reminder of the perfidious tricks that are used to entice mainstream media journalists. Needless to say, I wasn't awarded honorary citizenship in the US because my name is Udo Ulfkotte and I had a hobby of collecting inkwells at the time. I was given the honor because the transatlantic German Marshall Fund wanted to bring me so deep into the fold, that as an honorary

Personally, I preferred not to write about a lot of situations I experienced back then – even when I was directly involved. It probably wouldn't have come across very well with the readers if I would have told them in all honesty how I reported from Afghanistan. I was heavily armed with a fully-automatic Kalashnikov and wearing an ammo belt stuffed full of magazines. I still have the photos. A German reader, sitting in their peaceful world and sipping their morning coffee, wouldn't have understood that as a foreign "infidel" in a Afghani war zone in those days (long before the arrival of the first Western troops), we were fair game and the Mujahedin shot at us whenever they pleased. However, you could keep them at a safe distance with a few targeted bursts of rifle fire. At any rate, you definitely wouldn't have survived a day with the cotton balls in your luggage alone. When I was there, I even converted to Islam for the sake of appearances in the western Afghan city of Herat. This was officiated by a Mujahideen leader named Ismail Khan, and word of my conversion quickly spread among the other Mujahideen in the war zone. For those who hadn't gotten word of it and still shot at me for fun, I could keep them at a distance with the rifle.

There were other journalists who were totally against defending themselves with weapons, even though they were in an unstable area of an Islamic country, completely alone and without protection. The US journalist Daniel Pearl, for example, never understood why I never trusted any of the warring parties in ongoing civil wars. He always put his full trust in these people. Later, Muslims wound up cutting off his head while he was fully conscious, filming the act and posting it online.¹⁰⁰ The Swedish journalist Nils Horner never protected himself either. He was always unarmed and never even wanted an armed escort. He was shot to death in Kabul by followers of the Islamic ideology.¹⁰¹ The same thing happened to two French reporters in Mali.¹⁰² And the German photographer, Anja Niedringhaus, who hailed from the eastern part of Westphalia just like me, was simply shot dead like so many others in Afghanistan.¹⁰³ This is the daily reality in such countries, but our media preferred to show a different picture.

I personally learned to not trust anyone in a war zone back in 1987. During the Angolan civil war, I found myself in a camp that belonged to the pro-Western bush fighter Jonas Savimbi. A German journalist from the magazine *Quick* thought it would be fun to throw me one of the grenades that were lying around all over the camp. He was convinced that a camp full of bush fighters wouldn't just leave real, live grenades lying around, so he pulled out the pin before he tossed me the grenade. He was wrong. The grenade was live and it detonated within seconds. I had managed to catch it and throw it further away before I dove behind some sandbags. The *Quick* journalist happened to take a black-and-white photo at exactly that second, and I still have a copy of it today. It's a reminder to never to trust a stranger in a war zone.

Chapter 2. Our Lockstep Media: Synchronized, Obedient and No Questions Asked

Everyone named in this book denies having a clingy, sleazy closeness to elite organizations. Moreover, they deny being lobbyists. They also deny being “corrupted” by their proximity to the elite. And, they deny having lost their journalistic edge, working as they do in such close proximity to the aforementioned groups. They deny that this proximity has any influence on their reporting.

Thilo Sarrazin: The Character Assassination of a Folk Hero

The evil demon that possesses German journalists can be found quite easily if you take a look into our leading editorial offices. Let’s take the case of Thilo Sarrazin as an example. A long-time member of the SPD and former board member of the Deutsche Bundesbank, Sarrazin published *Deutschland schafft sich ab (Germany Abolishes Itself)* in 2010, which took a critical look at Germany’s post-war immigration policy. The book shot to #1 on the bestseller list and remained there for 21 weeks, selling over 1.5 million copies. According to serious polls, more than two-thirds (70 percent) of Germans essentially agree with Sarrazin.¹ Polling data also revealed that Thilo Sarrazin could be regarded as a kind of folk hero. In the German media, however, he is largely portrayed as exactly the opposite – the archetypical “villain.” And that, simply because he dared to write what the majority of Germans are already thinking. The *taz* called Sarrazin a “demagogue,”² and so did the *Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger*.³ Deutschlandradio branded him as a “right-wing populist.”⁴ Journalist Mely Kiyak went so far as to characterize Sarrazin, whose face is partially paralyzed on right side, as a “lispng, stuttering, twitching caricature of a human being.”⁵ So, a person who openly expresses what the majority thinks gets bullied in our oh-so-politically-correct media as a “lispng, stuttering, twitching caricature of a human being.” Seriously? A man with the polling numbers of a folk hero gets ridiculed across the board by our mass media. As I mentioned, you can find the evil demon responsible for this demonization in nearly every editorial office these days. When asked in all seriousness whether Thilo Sarrazin should even be discussed in the media at all, the weekly newspaper *Die Zeit* responded, “By doing so, aren’t we only spreading the thoughts that almost all journalists and politicians condemn these days? Yes, we’re doing Thilo Sarrazin (...) a favor in the process. (...) Thilo Sarrazin is on his way to becoming a folk hero...”⁶ Obviously, this can’t be allowed to happen – the opinions held by a majority of Germans also being articulated or represented in the media, God forbid!

Conference. Readers of *Die Zeit* had no idea that what Bittner was apparently praising as an “open concept paper,” was something that he himself had worked on, at least in part. All this was so absurd that the satirical TV program *Die Anstalt* (The Institution) decided to give their take on the issue. It was only after this piece that *Die Zeit* decided to publish the following notice under their online version of the article:

*Editor’s note: In this article from ZEIT no. 7/14, the authors mention a study project by the Institute for International and Security Affairs and the German Marshall Fund on the building blocks of a German security strategy. One of the authors of the article, Jochen Bittner, was a member of this project.*⁶

The above-mentioned *Anstalt* show, airing on April 29, 2014, also took a closer look into the propaganda the German media uses to praise Washington and denounce Moscow. One scene showed a chart with the names of five leading German journalists – Stefan Kornelius from the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, Josef Joffe and Jochen Bittner from *Die Zeit*, as well as Günther Nonnenmacher and Klaus-Dieter Frankenberger from the *Frankfurter Allgemeine*. They also included the names of twelve transatlantic think tanks – among them the *Aspen Institute*, the Trilateral Commission, the German Council on Foreign Relations and the Federal Academy for Security Policy – in which, as they explained, “military men, economic bosses and politicians discuss foreign policy strategies *in a discreet atmosphere.*”

Then they revealed all the lines showing the ties between these five journalists and the government-related think tanks. The resulting chart formed a dense network.⁷ “Thus, all these newspapers are basically something like the local editions of the NATO press office,” they said on the air. This triggered fierce protests from the media outlets mentioned. Media scientist Uwe Krüger later stated, “I take it that the pressure they felt after a television show like this with millions of viewers was pretty high. At any rate, a storm of controversy erupted under online articles, and apparently subscriptions were also cancelled.”

In the *New York Times*, conflicts of interest like the one that appeared in *Die Zeit* are prohibited. In Germany it’s different. In Germany, this is called “quality journalism.” So, looking at the other German newspapers behaving in the same way toward the many US lobbying organizations, you could get the impression that they are in fact only something like the local editions of NATO’s central press office.

But, how did *Die Zeit* react to the *Die Anstalt*’s satire?

Josef Joffe, publisher-editor of DIE ZEIT, complained to the editor-in-chief at ZDF, Peter Frey, about the alleged misrepresentations in the satirical show. The “Anstalt’s” editorial staff had the pleasure of dealing with cease-and-desist letters sent by the liberal newspaper’s publisher

This Atlantik-Brücke that Diekmann is a member of, is also called a “secret lodge.”⁴⁸ And it is considered to be “close to the CIA.” In a report on this by Markus Kompa, he writes:

*Their proximity to the CIA is not even played down, seeing that the Atlantik-Brücke officially presents the Vernon Walters Award – in honor of a deputy CIA director who was involved in extremely dirty coup d'états like in Iran (1954), Brazil (1964) and Chile (1973), and who was involved in subverting trade unions in Italy in the 1960s. Eastern intelligence agencies consider Walters, the sworn communist-hater, to be the mastermind, bar none.*⁴⁹

The same report also discusses whether certain journalists' proximity to the Atlantik-Brücke could have an influence on their reporting. It goes on:

*Anyone who wonders why the Bild newspaper and Spiegel write so enthusiastically against Russia and reflexively identify any opinions differing from the US view as “anti-Americanism” will probably find their answer if they look into its membership list. Since it bestows honors on prominent journalists, is isn't surprising that there are hardly any critical reports on the Atlantik-Brücke in the press at all.*⁵⁰

Is it pure conspiracy theory if you believe that people like Kai Diekmann are caught up in a network of elites that influences their reporting? To find out, let's take a closer look at this elite network, where journalists, politicians and businessmen meet discreetly and the public is often denied access entirely. Will we find “corruption by association” here? Before we go any further, I can't omit the fact that I used to belong to parts of this network myself – and I was corrupted by it.

Bridge over the Atlantic

In 2014, Tina Hassel, director of the ARD studio in Washington D. C., was nominated to succeed Ulrich Deppendorf in mid-2015 and become the first woman editor-in-chief to head up the ARD studio in the US capital.⁵¹ To this, ARD's chairman said, “Tina Hassel has exactly the credentials that the director of the ARD studio in the American capital should have”⁵² He named many reasons for their decision, including her previous posts as a correspondent and her leadership qualifications. Other well-known journalists also spoke up and referred to Tina Hassel's qualifications. Interestingly enough: Nobody mentioned her connection to the Atlantik-Brücke, the Atlantic Bridge. Nevertheless, in the 2011/2012 Atlantik-Brücke Annual Report, she shows up in their official documentation at a meeting of the Rhine/Ruhr regional group and, in the 2010/2011 Annual Report, in the USA working group.⁵³

I've been able to chart journalists' contacts to the elites across the board. There were 64 journalists involved in 82 organizations where elites from politics and business were also active. Particularly striking were the networks of four foreign policy journalists: Stefan Kornelius, the head of the foreign policy desk at the Süddeutsche Zeitung, Klaus-Dieter Frankenberger, editor-in-chief of the foreign policy desk at the FAZ, Michael Stürmer, chief correspondent for Die Welt, and Josef Joffe, co-editor of Die Zeit. They were involved in foreign and security policy think tanks, associations with affinities to the US and NATO and confidential rounds tables, in some of which they always met the same people.¹¹⁴

Krüger confirmed statements that have been considered conspiracy theories up to this point, for example, he said:

Journalists obviously enjoy great personal benefits from all this: background information, orientation, exclusive contacts, high-ranking interview partners. However, I see only a limited benefit for readers and viewers. They don't get this knowledge given to them in the form of reports and accounts from inside these closed-door meetings. Instead, they only get the information and the perspectives that the elites want them to have. This is reflected in the comments and editorials that we believe are being written by critical and independent journalists. This can also be absolutely counterproductive when journalists are an integral part of a confidential, policy planning process and they are committed to keeping it secret. This is because the elites solve their problems in these confidential settings and form a consensus before the public discussion even begins. The journalist, though, is an advocate for the public.¹¹⁵

Krüger says that certain journalists and media have distanced themselves from their function as a control mechanism:

The closer they get to the decision-makers and the powerful, the further they move away from criticism and control. This proximity is usually bought with conformity. At this point, we have to discuss how great the distance between journalists and elites should be. Do we want our largest and most influential media to have a strong bias towards the elites, or do we want to have neutral observers, critics and controllers – who then might not always be able to serve up the hottest scandals and the latest insider information from within elite circles?¹¹⁶

In the interview, Krüger speaks of a “partisanship” among the journalists he examined. He also points out that the renowned *New York Times* has a paragraph in its code of ethics stating that journalists themselves are not allowed to get involved in organizations that carry out newsworthy activities or that have connections to business and politics. Krüger says: “You are not allowed to sit on advisory boards or boards of trustees. They are only

way when you first read it. This is just what happens when reporting is up for sale – it happens in the East and in the West. It's only become so "normal" and so widespread here that we hardly perceive it. We simply take it for granted.

In this department, the *Süddeutsche* has even provided us with a very special treat: In June of 2014, they published an article on "Putin's Trolls," about alleged Russian propaganda in the German media. It reads: "Hundreds of paid manipulators try to influence opinion in social networks and comment areas worldwide, including at *Süddeutsche.de*, on behalf of the Kremlin."¹⁵⁷ Reading the article, you get the impression that most comments being posted on German mainstream media websites are from Russian loyalists and propaganda agents controlled by Moscow. If there are any undesirable comments under an article, then it must have been the work of Moscow's fifth column. Uh – say that again? The long arm of the NATO press office is writing under the guise of German journalists. They also spread biased, pro-American articles in the *Süddeutsche*.¹⁵⁸ The latter has been scientifically proven in studies out of Munich and Leipzig. And Moscow's fifth column then counters in the comment sections below the articles? No, because in their bizarre analysis of this matter, which hasn't been scientifically proven, the *Süddeutsche* primarily refers to anonymous sources if anything. Accompanying said article, the *Süddeutsche* featured a large propaganda photo of a "Reporters Without Borders" billboard in which Russian President Putin is depicted "flicking off" the viewer. We can assume that this is suggesting to the *Süddeutsche*'s impartial readers that Putin doesn't give a damn about press freedom. They also failed to mention who finances these "Reporters Without Borders" and thus who they work for: In the past, for example, they have been financed by the US State Department and the US billionaire George Soros.¹⁵⁹ Reporters Without Borders' mission, according to the newspaper *Junge Welt*, is primarily spreading pro-American disinformation.¹⁶⁰ None of this was shared by the *Süddeutsche*. This reminded me of the "classic propaganda techniques" already covered in this chapter. As an average citizen reading this, you get the feeling that they're treating you like a child – or they're just trolling you.

Before we forget: According to the information from whistleblower Edward Snowden, British intelligence can manipulate content on the Internet at will. Therefore, this isn't being done by hackers, it's being done by a state, a European "democracy." They even change the results of internet polls. We used to think that this was the stuff of conspiracy theory. Today it's our reality. Their programs can not only change votes and traffic numbers on the net, but it can also censor videos. The journalist Glenn Greenwald describes these programs as "some of the most amazing methods of propaganda and deception on the Internet."¹⁶¹ Now, British intelligence is a close partner of US intelligence and whatever the British are able to do in this field,¹⁶² the Americans have been able to do for a long time. Not only are they able to do

Excluding the press and thus the public from these Trilateral meetings is usually justified with the explanation that Commission members can only exchange their insights and ideas freely and openly under these conditions. This is just like in the Mafia. Thus, reliable information on the speeches and conversations taking place at their meetings generally doesn't reach the outside world. As a logical consequence, however, this secrecy also leads to a host of speculation, which must be met with a corresponding degree of skepticism. Smilja Avramov, for example, the international law expert from Belgrade mentioned earlier, says this about the Trilateral Commission:

*For the Trilateral Commission, global governance, by the way, means governance without governments, world domination without (elected) governments. This is how you manage the worldwide destruction of government functions and create, via so-called non-governmental organizations, the instruments for bypassing existing governments to control the destinies of nations.*¹⁷⁰

After all this, you could conclude: The current crises are not happening by accident, they are deliberate. Moreover, they are also being induced by arcane organizations like the Trilateral Commission and are meant to serve the goals of the New World Order, a dictatorship of the elites.

An indication of the importance of their meetings is further demonstrated by the locations where their conferences are held: After all, the Trilateral Commission's 1977 annual meeting in Germany was held directly in the Chancellor's Office. The West German Chancellor at the time, Helmut Schmidt, had extra chairs brought in so that the powerful figures present could all have a seat at his table.¹⁷¹ Since then, not much has changed. The 2013 annual meeting of the Trilateral Commission took place in Berlin. Just like in Bonn in 1977, the founder David Rockefeller took the place of honor.¹⁷²

At its 2010 meeting in Brussels, the Trilateral Commission decided that EU citizens should hand over more of their decision-making power to the EU functionaries in Brussels. As the Reuters news agency later made it palatable for us, this dismantling of national state sovereignty should lead to "economic union."¹⁷³ More authority to make decisions was to be ceded to Brussels. Were the citizens, the tax-payers, the voters in agreement with this? How could they be, when they aren't even informed about the decisions being made behind closed doors? When they don't even know what the organizations, meeting in secret like at the Trilateral conference, are agreeing to behind their backs?

Lobbypedia, a project of *LobbyControl*, calls the Trilateral Commission a "lobbying organization of the economic elite."¹⁷⁴ Always happy to attend: FAZ foreign policy chief Klaus-Dieter Frankenberger.¹⁷⁵ This journalist was already attracting attention while I was at the FAZ by wearing a suit with

American cowboy boots and smoking fat cigars. He is obviously proud of being a member of a lobbying organization for the financial elite that is surrounded in mystery. In his official résumé for the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* he writes: “Since the beginning of 2001: Responsible for foreign policy. Member of the Trilateral Commission.”¹⁷⁶

So, the FAZ journalist Frankenberger is sitting there, together in an organization with billionaire David Rockefeller, Bilderberger Mario Monti and Jean-Claude Trichet, former President of the European Central Bank, alongside Deutsche Bank CEO Jürgen Fitschen and former US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, former US Secretary of Defense John Deutch, next to former US Secretary of State John Negroponte and Henry Kissinger.¹⁷⁷ Is this the right place for a journalist who, according to his earlier understanding of a properly functioning media, should have a control function above all else?

How can someone be in a lobbying organization for the economic elite and the US billionaire David Rockefeller, which comes across as rather conspiratorial to say the least, and still be considered a leading German journalist? What’s more, this journalist then even writes about it, say, on the occasion of the organization’s 2013 annual meeting in Berlin.¹⁷⁸ In the secondary headline it says, “There is no lighthouse – or maybe so?” And the piece begins with the words, “40 years ago, David Rockefeller called the Trilateral Commission into being.” Does the reader even suspect that what we have here is an association member writing about his own association?

From my perspective, when I look into the FAZ archives, it seems like Frankenberger has written many articles on the Trilateral Commission and David Rockefeller that are reminiscent of the flattering reports you would expect to see coming from the court of a feudal lord. In April 2003, for example, Frankenberger began a column (“America’s New Playmate”) with the words, “Thirty years ago, David Rockefeller had a good idea: Wasn’t it high time to create a forum...” In March 2013, Frankenberger began his FAZ article “World in Unrest” with the words, “40 years ago, David Rockefeller called the Trilateral Commission into being. It was the answer to the New York banker Mäzen’s ...” The good billionaire Rockefeller with the good ideas, the good Trilateral Commission? Do you remember what I wrote at the very beginning of this book about another billionaire and Frankenberger’s (and my!) noble court reporting in the FAZ: the other billionaire’s name was Sultan Qabus and he sponsored dream-like, luxury trips for Frankenberger and me, which we both raved about among our colleagues for a long time afterward. We willingly let ourselves be “bribed” for the noble court reporting we submitted to the FAZ. Frankenberger has obviously maintained his intimate proximity to the elite. How close can journalists get to the financial and political power elites? How much involvement are journalists allowed to have in lobbying organizations?

works in Sofia for the *European Council on Foreign Relations* (ECFR), a European research institute with offices in Sofia, Berlin and London.”

Thus, the billionaire George Soros’ ECFR is being sold to the average reader as a scientific “research institute.” Not a word on George Soros and the demonstrations that he sparked in his own interest by means of the ECFR. Thus Bechev, who not only works for the ECFR, as Riesbeck claims, but even heads the office in Sofia,¹⁸³ has “sometimes even taken to the streets himself,” and this only “out of his mere interest as a social scientist.” Yet, how noble are the motives of the demonstrators in Sofia? “We are interested in real democracy,” the piece tells us. As with the protests in the Arab world, it paints a picture of young, well-educated and allegedly, totally Western-oriented demonstrators. Furthermore, it calls for European intervention on behalf of the demonstrators. All of this sounds like an orchestrated press campaign.

Out there in the real world, whole countries are being transformed by “revolutions” or demonstrations, just how the U.S. and some of the super-rich need it to achieve their goals. This is the same thing that happened during the “revolutions” that took place in the Eastern bloc states, as well as the “revolutions” in North Africa. It was always about raw materials or the geopolitical interests of NATO and the world’s superpower, the USA. Of course, these efforts need financiers – and financiers are easy to find when these “revolutions” also serve moneyed interests – first and foremost, the billionaires of the Rockefeller and Soros families. As George Soros himself said, “My foundations contributed to the regime changes in Slovakia (1998), Croatia (1999) and Yugoslavia (2000) and mobilized civil populations to oust Vladimir Meciar, Franjo Tudman and Slobodan Milosevic from their offices.” As a rule, these Soros-financed foundations were there, all throughout the recent past, whenever foreign governments were being overthrown with the help of demonstrations and uprisings. The intellectual seeds of these events are germinated in transatlantic think tanks. And alpha journalists in the mainstream media have always accompanied these upheavals and military interventions, from Afghanistan to Egypt, Syria, Iraq and the Ukraine. Certainly, none of these events have ever served the interests of the general population in the affected countries, but they have always served Washington’s strategic interests and the economic interests of a few billionaires.¹⁸⁴

In Memory of FAZ Chief Schirmacher: Tank Driver in the Civil Service

How do you actually become an alpha journalist? As an alpha journalist, you can do just about anything you want to do in the German-speaking world – you only have to be bold enough to lie through your teeth.

regurgitate the wishy-washy talking points coming out of political or corporate marketing departments. If you can convincingly pass these off on the public as “news,” you’re in business. We are about to meet many more examples of corrupt journalists.

Two out of three journalists in German-speaking countries can be bought – and they consider this to be completely normal. From the 45,000 full-time journalists and a further 40,000 freelance journalists in Germany, around 73,000 regularly take advantage of press discounts. In plain language: They’re personally capitalizing on these advantages. Another verifiable figure: 74 percent of all German journalists can be bought willingly.¹³ On the homepage of a major German portal for journalists, visitors are greeted with the words: “Press discounts of up to 50 percent included: The largest press discount database on the Internet helps journalists save money: Over 1700 press discounts from airline tickets, fitness equipment, coffee machines and teddy bears to personal lubricants ensure market transparency. Together with 10,000 tips from industry insiders, Germany’s largest press discount database offers the best tips on everything affecting the press.”¹⁴

Journalists are also active and assertive when they’re demanding discounts from companies. Dominik Stawski wrote his dissertation on it and he comes to some astonishing conclusions.¹⁵ He said, “I was stunned by what the companies had to say. Some of their press representatives said that journalists put them under a lot of pressure to get a discount. This goes as far as to threatening companies with negative reviews.”¹⁶

The European Union, for example, pays journalists for positive reporting on Brussels. So far, German journalists alone have secretly received almost one million euros for this.¹⁷ In order to get the money, they even sign a formal obligation stating, among other things, “I affirm that I will not damage, directly or indirectly, the image of the European Union, its policies and its institutions.” In plain language: Critical reporting is unwelcome. So, the journalists toe the line with their reporting – for a fee, of course. We live in a giant theatre. The play presently on stage is called “democracy.” As we can see, the so-called “freedom of the press” in this play is only a well-acted illusion.

It’s not just about getting paid either. Every week, I receive e-mails from PR agencies that offer to discreetly and inconspicuously network journalists with PR departments. That’s not illegal, but I don’t think it’s morally appropriate. I never answer them, so you shouldn’t be able to find me in one of these databases through any fault of my own. Why don’t I do it? Because my readers wouldn’t know which PR agency is “supporting” my reporting from behind the scenes. Just so you can get an idea of these offers, I will quote a typical e-mail. This is one I received in July of 2014:

Subject: Request for inclusion in the Cision Journalists Database

1988. They sent me as a pro-Iraqi reporter to the battlefields on the Iraq-Iran border in July of 1988, where Iranians had just been gassed with German-manufactured chemical weapons. What I want to say here is: It didn't matter if it was for luxury trips in 5-star hotels or to battlefields where poison gas was still lingering in the air, if the invitation was all-inclusive, my bosses had no qualms about accepting the offer. Just so that this is perfectly clear to the reader, that actual invitations were extended to media outlets to send journalists to report on a poison gas attack on the battlefield: This wasn't a place where you could just rent a car at the airport and go see the battlefield as a tourist. This was a war zone. These were very well-organized invitations.

Media professionals are apparently a particularly greedy segment of the general population. The financial benefits seem to be an integral part of their way of thinking. A Daimler-Chrysler employee reported: "If we give a journalist a car to test for a month, we wind up getting complaints that he can't keep driving it for another half a year."²² Freeloading journalists can't seem to get enough.

"As an automotive journalist, you would have to be really stupid to ever buy a car," remarked Franz Danner's lawyer in a study by *Transparency Deutschland*.²³ Danner was a former marketing manager at Mazda. When it comes to working with journalists, Danner's work provides a deep insight into the lobbying work done by a car company. In automobile journalism, it is standard practice to order one new test car after another. Danner sometimes handed journalists the keys to a test car and let them use it until the next model came in. The gala presentations of new car models were often only a "facade for luxurious trips to enticing locations," the study says. For example, when he organized test drives in Vienna, the journalists he invited also received tickets to attend the spectacular Vienna Opera Ball and a custom-tailored evening tailcoat. In 2013, Danner stood before the 6th Criminal Chamber in the Cologne District Court after being charged with criminal breach of trust. He was accused with not only having bribed many journalists, but also to cheating Mazda out of a total of 41 million euros.²⁴ In his trial, he frankly stated what it looks like when a car manufacturer is dealing with journalists. "Media landscaping" is what it's called. How he influenced the media was reported in the *Berliner Zeitung*.²⁵ "It was my job," Danner said, "to ensure that written and broadcast reports about the cars were as positive as possible." In detail, this means:²⁶

To make automotive journalists "pleasantly agreeable," Danner says there is a relatively simple formula. The PR expert listed the following: "Super destination, super hotel, super service, super gifts." A German car manufacturer, for example, once invited journalists to Sardinia for the presentation of a new car. They then had a private jet for 40 people waiting at the airport to fly them to their destination: an exclusive hotel

on Sardinia's Costa Smeralda, (Europe's most expensive resort area). Other companies would go to Cape Town and combine the presentation of a new model with a trip through the desert to Namibia. "The more attractive the location, the better the press," said Danner.

According to Danner, Mazda is said to have organized about ten such events for automotive journalists. As to the accommodations, the ex-PR man described them rather drastically:

*"Every automotive journalist was free to drink the minibar dry, order champagne at the hotel bar until sunrise, and take advantage of all the services a five-star hotel has to offer at our expense."*²⁷

The annual budget for Mazda's PR department at their European headquarters in Leverkusen was between 15 and 16 million euros. The expenses earmarked for influencing journalists were subject to a simple cost-benefit analysis:

*"We had a very simple calculation: The average journalist taking part in one of our events costs us three to five thousand euros. All they had to do was give us a return of at least 15,000 euros on our investment. They never let us down."*²⁸

Danner's people in the Mazda PR department even measured whether this business goal had been achieved: How long a column about a car was in a newspaper, how many seconds a vehicle was shown on television, how much coverage it got on the Internet.

*"If you consider what an advertisement in a newspaper or even television commercials cost, the journalists' automotive reports were almost cheap in comparison, despite the average event costing around two million euros."*²⁹

An additional positive effect of influencing reporting like this was that journalistic articles come across as much more credible than simply paid advertising – although in reality, it's the same thing.

The Mazda Group did not want to comment on the details and, according to its own statement, assumed that Danner had implemented all these actions "in compliance with our code of conduct." What's also telling is how little coverage the Danner trial received, given the journalistic practices that were exposed throughout it. Danner also said during the trial:

*"There was a well-developed culture of looking the other way." He continued, "Everybody knew it was my job to keep the journalists happy by whatever means necessary. And you wouldn't want to know the exact details of these means."*³⁰

For many years now, top German lawyers have been pointing out that there is no threat of punishment for corruption among members of the media

in Germany. Professor Dr. Ulrich Sommer, a well-known lawyer specializing in criminal corruption, admonishes us, “We must ask ourselves if we finally want to change the fact that journalists can act like they’re beyond the law.” Michael Loer is the senior public prosecutor in the Frankfurt public prosecutor’s office (he heads the anti-corruption department for the financial crimes division). Loer warns us of a legal situation that is still far from satisfactory, “We cannot guarantee credibility through legislation, rather, this must be the focus of professional ethics. If this were the case, more corrupt practices would certainly come to light.”³¹

Coming from the USA, there is a new trend that is now attracting more attention in Germany: Buy yourself a journalist. On the www.spot.us³² website, users (mostly corporations) can suggest topics to journalists and openly pay for reporting. This is called “community funded reporting.” Yes, in all seriousness, the business model is: Buy yourself a journalist.

Also in Germany, the boundary between PR and journalism is becoming increasingly blurry. In a research paper on marketing, it was said that this increasingly results in a “win-win situation”:

*Product PR and journalism always find themselves in a win-win situation if both sides have an interest in publicity. Finally, that cooperation is not always initiated from the product PR side can be demonstrated by using the “car” example again, where daily tabloid media like to compete to be the first outlet to publish so-called “production mule photos.” If we speak of this situation as a “secret” win-win situation, this can be taken in two ways. The first meaning being the reciprocal contacts, the personal relationships, which take place behind closed doors and thus in “secret places.” The second aspect of this secret win-win situation is related to the debate surrounding journalism. This is because journalists are essentially taking on the role of marketing agents in publicizing a product. If this wasn’t kept secret, it could create the impression that journalists are being partisan and that isn’t readily compatible with our classic expectations of a journalist’s role in society.*³³

Journalists are thus increasingly becoming “marketing agents.” Is the average citizen aware of this?

Now, to use an old German adage, one crow doesn’t peck another’s eye out. Among journalists, we’re expected to stick together, and even if we fight, we shouldn’t compromise each other’s chances of career survival. This is why this book will quickly become the object of the entire industry’s hatred. Just like a doctor who is forbidden from talking about malpractice within the medical establishment and will become an outcast among colleagues when they violate this unwritten rule, a journalist is expected to see no evil when it comes to corrupt reporting. We are supposed to leave all the filthy evidence behind the closed doors of our so-called “elites.” German

practice throughout Germany's mainstream media. Even alpha journalists have to stay strictly on course – or otherwise they'll get the ax.

People are beginning to recognize the constant deception by the “leading media” in all areas. This is because, behind it all, there is a (fraudulent) system, the likes of a shell game. Our mainstream media are pulling the wool over our eyes so the financial elite can rake in lots of money. That's at least the realization I've come to a thousand times over and it's one you can prove with countless, concrete examples of manipulative reporting.

Let's just take a quick look at the 2014 European elections. In the German-speaking world at the time, established politicians were afraid that the new political parties could become a future danger to them on the European level. There's no question about that. So, what do you resort to when you're in a situation like this? What else? Propaganda. And who spreads the propaganda? Who else? The mainstream media. While every citizen knows that the EU is in dire financial straits and that ailing, bankrupt, EU states were only being kept alive on life support with constant infusions of cash, EU-friendly politicians were still feverishly building Potemkin villages with the help of the mainstream media, right up to the elections.

For example, Greece, – sorry, please don't laugh yet – whose government has been long since bankrupt, was given a quick makeover and it became a bastion of financial security overnight. On April 10, 2014, *ZEIT online* headlined: “Investors are fighting with each other over Greek bonds.”⁵ On the same day, *Die Welt* claimed: “After the state bankruptcy, Greece is returning to the capital market – and can hardly meet the demand for bonds.”⁶ In those heady days, the *FAZ* spoke of Athens' “comeback” on the financial market.⁷ These are all examples of economic headlines from about six weeks before the European elections. Needless to say, it was all a gigantic bluff, a big stage show that was easy to see through. Why? What was going on behind the scenes?

The German Chancellor Angela Merkel needed positive news. To these ends, she arranged a trip to Athens and encouraged the Greeks to issue a government bond with a whopping 4.75 percent interest rate. This was at a time when Germans were only getting a measly 0.1 percent interest on their own savings. Thus Greece, which had a debt exceeding 300 billion euros, managed to quickly raise a whole 3 billion euros on the capital market. Not even a drop in their Aegean Sea of debt, but the mainstream media in Germany was ecstatic. This corrupt farce, portraying the Greek state as allegedly healthy right before the EU elections, was sure to take the wind out of the Eurosceptics' sails. Angela Merkel was enthusiastically celebrated by the German media even before she even left Athens. All of it was a staged act – easy to see though from the beginning, all the way to its predictable end.

Therefore, my recommendation would be: To reject all those who seek to manipulate and disinform us, be it on television, in the newspaper or on the radio. Turn it off and starting immediately, don't spend another cent on it. The more people who do this, the greater the pressure will be. Above all: Write to the newspaper publishers, editorial offices and media houses and tell them why you are not going to spend another cent on articles published in the "leading media" that are written by lobbyists aiming to disinform us. Cancel your subscriptions and ask your friends, relatives and acquaintances to do the same. In this way, you will quickly become a part of a rapidly growing, new movement that is simply pulling the plug on this unethical propaganda.

Instead, what we can do is keep ourselves informed free of charge on the Internet, through many of the freely accessible, alternative news portals.⁷¹ The new leading medium is undoubtedly the Internet. Just as renting video cassettes and then DVDs went extinct with the advent of digital media and online stores, these antiquated, mainstream media outlets will also become a thing of the past. And, as much as they try to scare us, this definitely won't lead to the collapse of our culture. On the contrary, there is something very positive about this development.

The elites who are bent on manipulating us these days have lost touch with reality, and their ability to perceive injustice is near zero. Everyone reading this book has the ultimate power over the journalism I have described here. All we have to do is stop giving our money and our attention to these "leading media." When enough of us stop buying the products offered by these media houses, when we no longer click on their Internet articles and we switch off their television or radio programs – at some point, these journalists will have to start producing something of value for their fellow citizens, or they're going to be out of a job. It's that simple. If you take a close look, you'll see that this process actually began a long time ago: Every day, journalists are being laid off somewhere, not only in the German-speaking world, because customers no longer want their style of reporting.

In July of 2014, the German Bundestag held a hearing on the future of German "quality journalism."⁷² The professional experts who testified at this hearing made it clear to all the participants that "quality journalists," the kind I have been describing throughout this book, are up against the wall financially. Heading into the future, it is entirely possible that only alternative forms of journalism will be able to survive. This includes, for example, "personal brands" or "citizen journalists," independent journalists who market themselves as individual brands. Consumers will only pay for information they receive directly from journalists they can trust. Alpha journalists influenced by foreign interests, as I have described abundantly in this book, are a model that is being phased-out, a relic of days gone by. More and more enlightened people will realize that alpha journalists simply cannot

The Book that was Never Released— and still got 24 five-stars on Amazon!

This is it. "Journalists for Hire" is finally here.

Do you also get the feeling that the media sometimes tries to manipulate or lie to you? You have plenty of company! And you are right - the facts are in now. A world-class media insider has finally blown the whistle on what really goes on inside the media. Author Udo Ulfkotte was a respected journalist for 17 years with Germany's newspaper of record, the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. He begins this explosive exposé by first owning up to his own career, where he had to sell out to keep the job. He then reveals the deceptive tricks and secret power networks within the media. How perks are used to bribe journalists and opinion makers to twist their reporting. How the tone of corruption is set from the top. How the long arm of the NATO press office recruits the media to get Europeans to support more foreign wars.

Yes, the elites who own the media certainly feel it's their right to think for us, and to mold public opinion to their agendas.

Freedom of the Press has turned into Freedom to Censor the News. Our nation depends on the media to understand our world, just as we all depend on our eyes and ears. The media are our senses. A nation cannot be rightly guided when it is fed propaganda, misinformation, fantasies, and lies, any more than a sleepwalker can.

Fair and honest reporting is a duty of the press. In an interview, Ulfkotte tells of his first assignment, during the Iran-Iraq war. The assembled press corps drove out into the desert with cans of gasoline, to set alight some long-dead tanks for a photo op. Innocent sensationalism perhaps? A million people died in Iraq, Libya and Syria because the press didn't just report the news, didn't just lie about the news, but they invented, staged and sold the events that served as pretexts for wars.

There is no free speech protection for setting fire to a crowded theater.

After nearly a year as a Top 10 non-fiction bestseller in Germany, this book has already been translated into nine languages, and is becoming required reading in university journalism departments world-wide.

Author of a dozen books, Udo Ulfkotte died unfortunately at the young age of 56 in 2017, from causes that are not entirely clear. He was a whistleblower against corruption, loss of cultural identity, militarism, immigration.

Udo had the courage, decency, energy and humor to defy so many taboos of our time. He was martyred for speaking the truth and following his conscience to do what is right.

PROGRESSIVE

