

The security state says jump. The media asks 'how high?'

As the recent leaker shows, informing the public now
plays second fiddle
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The tacit alliance between operatives of the national security state and corporate media burst into view last week when the New York Times and the Washington Post did the FBI's job for it by **tracking down** the leaker of documents that detailed, among other things, the extent of American and allied involvement in the **Ukraine** war.

That Bellingcat, the shadowy, **government-funded** open-source intelligence group, played a role in helping to identify the twenty-one-year-old Air National

Guardsmen Jack Teixeira proves (once again) that many media outlets are now de facto agents of the national security state.

The idea that these open-source sleuths at Bellingcat, the Times and the Post are simply reporters acting in good faith is belied by their long history of, in the case of the Washington Post's Evan Hill, writing a **hatchet** job on an American combat veteran turned politician, and **Bellingcat's subterfuge** in the **service** of a cold war against Russia and a hot war **against** Syria.

The leaked documents show beyond the shadow of a doubt that the Biden administration, from the president on down, has been rather less than truthful about the war in Ukraine. Yet instead of taking the administration to task for, as some critics have charged, recklessly prolonging the war, the media has worked overtime to shift the focus from what revelations the documents contain to the identity of the leaker.

There was a time when journalists in this country treated official pronouncements with skepticism and saw their role as challenging entrenched interests. Today, as the Teixeira story shows, they work to protect those interests — as those interests align with their anonymous sources inside the national security apparatus.

To see how far in the wrong direction the media has traveled, imagine the case of Daniel Ellsberg and the Pentagon Papers. Only now, instead of the Times and the Post heroically running the Papers, they instead launch a campaign to out the subversive to the FBI.

With their reporting on Teixeira, the mask has fallen away. To the hacks at the Times and the Post, the crime isn't so much the leaking per se (after all, anonymous leakers from the intel community and federal law enforcement were the lifeblood of the now-discredited Russiagate story, which netted **both papers** Pulitzer Prizes) as it is what the Teixeira leaks revealed. That is, that the Biden administration has repeatedly misled the American public about the alleged progress that Ukraine (and, importantly, the US) are making in the war with Russia. And this in turn may erode support for the war effort in the US.

Still more, the way in which the Post and the Times handle leaked information is deeply informed by their partisan preferences — and has been for some time. When information leaks that embarrasses the liberal establishment, such as the Wikileaks dump in 2016, the media acts to sweep the contents of the leaks aside in favor of a laser-like focus on the publisher of the leaks — presumably Julian Assange.

Yet when leaked information casts former president Donald Trump in a bad light, the media assumes what had been its traditional role and protect the identity of the leaker. As such, we still know very little about the origins of the intelligence behind Trump's first impeachment trial. But we do know that when Senator Rand Paul **read aloud** the name of the so-called "whistleblower" during the impeachment trial, he was roundly condemned by the mainstream press.

Likewise, we still know precious little about the identity of the leaker of details regarding an Oval Office **meeting** between Trump and Russian foreign minister Sergei Lavrov, where it was alleged Trump shared "highly classified" intelligence with Lavrov. Still more, the only reason the public learned the identity of the NSA whistleblower Reality Winner was due to the **gross incompetence** of her media handlers at the Intercept. Winner, whose revelations did not disclose government wrongdoing, has been treated to whistleblower status because her leaks, you guessed it, cast doubt on the legitimacy of Trump's 2016 election.

With their handling of the Teixeira leaks, the Times and the Post have all but abandoned what had once been their primary mission to inform the public in favor of a new role as watchdogs for the government.

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