

Israeli-ISIS Oil Interests: No Brake and No Disclosure on Media Owners' Interests

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The Times today carries an article on ISIS' oil interests, Syria and Turkey. Nowhere does it inform its readers that the owner of the newspaper, Rupert Murdoch, has a vested interest in this subject through his role and shares in [Genie Energy](#), an Israeli company granted oil rights in Syria by the Israeli government. Dick Cheney and Lord Rothschild are also shareholders.

No, they really are. This is not a conspiracy theory. It is a conspiracy.

That Israel should grant oil rights within Syria is of course a striking example of contempt for international law, but then that is the basis on which Israel normally operates. Of course Genie's share value will be substantially boosted by the installation of a neo-con puppet regime in Damascus which can be bought to underwrite the oil concession granted by Israel. Contempt for international law has been the single most important defining characteristic of neo-conservatism, and the need to uphold international law the recurring theme of this blog. I never thought the UK government would make the withdrawal of its support for the concept of international law explicit, as Cameron has done by [removing the obligation](#) to comply with international law from the Ministerial Code. That is truly, truly disgraceful.

But to return to Murdoch's oil interests in Syria, it seems to me a fundamental flaw that when Fox News, Sky News, the Times, the Sun and Murdoch's numerous other media outlets bang the drum for Western military action in Syria, there is no requirement for the consumer of this propaganda to be told that the outlet is pushing a policy in line with the financial interests of its owner. Even for those actively seeking information, there is no register of the interests of media proprietors.

It is a wonderful irony that there is [a register](#) of the interests of the board members of the Independent Press Standards Organisation, but no register of the interests of media proprietors!

This is not an accident. The Leveson Inquiry did receive evidence and [questioned a witness](#) – Dr Rowan Cruft of the University of Stirling – who suggested that a proprietor's financial interest in a story should be revealed. Robert Jay, QC to the counsel asked:

Robert Jay

This is on your page 8, our page 00885. You say:
"First of all, the code could do more to require proprietors, editors and

journalist to declare their financial and also their political interests and to declare these to readers as well as editors.”
I don't think the code does anything to require proprietors, editors and journalist to do that.

Dr Rowan Cruft
That's right.

Robert Jay QC goes on first to suggest any duty to declare financial interests should only apply to specifically financial journalists. He then moves quickly on to discuss the implications of declaring political interests of proprietors. Robert Jay QC is a clever man and he managed to avoid any discussion of the financial interests of proprietors whatsoever. Shortly after the Inquiry concluded, he was promoted by the Government to be a High Court Judge.

The Leveson Inquiry totally ignored the real rot in Britain's media – the massive concentration of media ownership and its subservience to other corporate interests. The revised [Code of Conduct](#) which was its result does not contain any reference to proprietors' interests even in the very limited context of writing about stocks and shares. A financial journalist has a duty to declare any interest which he or his family have in a company he writes about, but no duty to declare any interest of his proprietor – the person who is paying him to write.

If you think this is an accident, you are extremely naïve. It is just a tiny glimpse into one aspect of the UK's extraordinarily dense web of elite corruption,

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