

Peter Holland—written evidence (FOJ0078)

I am concerned with the ITN proposal for a 'kite-mark' for alleged 'quality' journalism. Much passes for journalism that is actually the personal opinion of the writer and other times someone else's opinion. Often it is clearly stated as such and other times it is not so clear. It is the duty of the writer to inform the reader which it is.

There is also the concern that journalists actually spread 'fake news' as factual, such as the Russian dossier on Trump. . How are they to know if the allegations are factual? The truth is they don't. But they could be spreading fake news knowingly or not.

Sources classed as 'close to' or 'informed sources' and such are currently classified as factual journalism and we are expected to trust that the writer is reporting factually. Should what is unsubstantiated statements from such sources be classed as fake news as the public don't know who is saying what or what evidence is given to support such statements? Are we expected to believe what is written by 'quality' journalism without questioning the veracity of it?

The journalism concerning the entertainment industry is full of half-truths and untruths which is a minefield for any regulatory body to negotiate.

This has all the hallmarks of a 'Big Brother' disseminating news which we are all asked to believe without question because it has a kite mark.

Fake news can only be countered by proving that what is written is an untruth. And whilst that is not easy, it is far better than having censorship and 'official' news.

I thank you for your time.

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