

The Pandora Papers: Same Old Nonsense in a New Box

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The MSM is trying to trick people into thinking they're still journalists, by telling us things we already know.

by [Kit Knightly](#), [OffGuardian](#)

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The Pandora Papers are out! Following the riveting Panama Papers in 2016, and the astounding Paradise Papers of 2017, the latest entry in the trilogy of financial “leaks” is finally here, and I couldn’t be more excited.

The “Leaks”

So let’s get right down to it...what do the “leaks” say? Well, according to The Guardian...

The files reveal how wealthy individuals can shield their income and their assets from taxation and scrutiny by hiding them in offshore jurisdictions, more commonly known as “tax havens”.

Mind. Blown.

Rich people don’t pay tax! WHAT?!

It’s groundbreaking stuff. But that’s the kind of world-changing exposés you get when you read the work of the [International Consortium of Investigative Journalists](#) (ICIJ).

The Source

Just as with the Panama Papers in 2016 and the Paradise Papers of 2017, the ICIJ are here to tell you that off-shore accounts exist, and that rich people use them.

The big “revelations” include politicians from Ecuador, the Ivory Coast, Pakistan, Azerbaijan, Ukraine and Kenya. The King of Jordan, the Prime Ministers of the UAE and the Czech Republic. Hardly a Who’s Who of hard hitters and political A-listers, instead – just as with the previous “leaks” – a collection of disposable lizard tails.

The biggest name mentioned is Tony Blair, who already has an unsalvageable public image, and is only accused of legally avoiding £300,000 in stamp duty. Or roughly 30p per Iraqi he murdered.

The papers don’t even allege any actual *crimes* took place, and they don’t name-and-shame any noteworthy politicians at all (largely because America has domestic tax havens), but still...they are apparently a huge deal.

Now a *real* investigative journalist might, at this point, ask “*well who leaked these papers?*” and “*what did they stand to gain?*”, but that’s not the ICIJ’s bag, they’re just here unquestioningly publish documents sent to them by intelligence agencies and billionaires, and call them “leaks”.

You see, despite the name, the “International Consortium of Investigative Journalists” are not really journalists. In fact, they’re a “special project” of the creepily-named [Centre for Public Integrity](#), a non-profit funded by various foundations and billionaires (including George Soros).

Putin? Again? Really?

In a startlingly old-fashioned move, the press is pitching the angle that this “leak” reveals Vladimir Putin’s “secret wealth”, despite admitting that:

The Russian president Vladimir Putin does not appear in the files by name.

This exactly mirrors the Panama Papers, where Putin's picture was everywhere despite the admitted fact "*the president's name does not appear in any of the records.*" At the time I wrote that Guardian had [collapsed into self-parody](#).

The whole thing was darkly funny at the time, it is decidedly stale now. Like an actor who's played the same role for years and has started phoning it in.

Speaking of the Guardian...our [old friend Luke Harding](#) had [2000 words about Putin's wealth](#) in that paper over the weekend. He alleges an illicit affair, hidden billions and a secret Monaco flat...all based on literally nothing. He cites no evidence that the woman in question ever MET Putin except – quite seriously – that they *might* have been on the same aeroplane.

Still, though, the need to make stuff up in order to publish it [has never stopped Luke before](#). And he's writing "from Monaco" so he at least managed to wrangle a tax-deductible holiday out of it. Good job Luke.

And he's probably already halfway through [a new book](#) called something like "*Red Money: The secret lives and loves of Vladimir Putin*". If he hurries he might get it done before Christmas, (especially if he [plagiarizes other people's work again](#)).

Conclusion

In short, the Pandora Papers are a non-story.

"*Rich people avoid taxes and lie about it*" is **not** breaking news, and when the newspapers like the Guardian and [Washington Post](#) report it as if it *is*...well, it's because it must serve some other purpose.

Possibly just a distraction, sound and fury signifying nothing. Possibly some as-yet-unrevealed plans for “financial reform” or “stricter regulations”.

Maybe a simple pantomime, trying to pretend that the world is still the same as it was pre-Covid. That we’re still good, and Russia is still bad, and that there really are different sides and they’re not all joined together behind the scenes.

Maybe just an exercise in pretending mainstream news does any kind of journalism at all. A little bit of lipstick up on a very ugly pig.

The world is corrupt, no kidding. But it’s far more corrupt than the Paradise Papers show, or that the ICIJ would ever actually admit.

I wrote a long and detailed response to this nonsense back in 2016, which you can read [here](#). It’s nearly five years old now, but if the ICIJ can recycle old material then so can I.

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