



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

economist of the global management firm McKinsey & Company.

The International Consortium of Investigative Journalists obtained a leak in April 2013, revealing how widespread the buy-in was to these tax havens. The findings were damning: Government officials in Canada, Russia and other countries have embraced offshore accounts, the world's top banks (including Deutsche Bank) have worked to maintain them and the tax havens are used in Ponzi schemes.

Moving money offshore has implications that ripped through the world economy. Part of Greece's economic collapse was due to these tax havens, ICIJ reporter Gerard Ryle told Gladstone on her radio show. "It's because people don't want to pay taxes," he said. "You avoid taxes by going offshore and playing by different rules."

U.S. Sen. Carl Levin, D-Michigan, introduced legislation to combat the practice, SB 1533, The Stop Tax Haven Abuse Act, but so far the bill has had little play in the media.

Researcher James Henry said the hidden wealth was a "huge black hole" in the world economy that has never been measured, which could generate income tax revenues between \$190 billion to \$280 billion a year.

3. TRANS-PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP

Take 600 corporate advisors, mix in officials from 11 international governments, let it bake for about two years and out pops international partnerships that threaten to cripple progressive movements worldwide.

The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) is a trade agreement, but leaked texts show it may allow foreign investors to use "investor-state" tribunals to extract extravagant extra damages for "expected future profits," according to the Public Citizen's Global Trade Watch.

The trade watch group investigated the TPP and is the main advocate in opposition of its policies. The AFL-CIO, Sierra Club and other organizations have also had growing concerns about the level of access granted to corporations in these agreements.

With extra powers granted to foreign firms, the possibility that companies would continue moving offshore could grow. But even with the risks of outsized corporate influence, the U.S. has a strong interest in the TPP in order to maintain trade agreements with Asia.

The balancing act between corporate and public interests is at stake, but until the U.S. releases more documents from negotiations, the American people will remain in the dark.

4. OBAMA'S WAR ON WHISTLEBLOWERS

President Obama has invoked the Espionage Act of 1917 more than every other president combined. Seven times, Obama has pursued leakers with the act, against Thomas Drake, Shamai Leibowitz, Bradley Manning, Stephen Kim, Jeffrey Sterling, John Kiriakou and most recently, Edward Snowden. All had ties to the State Department, FBI, CIA or NSA, and all of them leaked to journalists.

"Neither party is raising hell over this. This is the sort of story that sort of slips through the cracks," McChesney said. And when the politicians don't raise a fuss, neither does the media.

ProPublica covered the issue, constructing timelines and mapping out the various arrests and indictments. But where Project Censored points out the lack of coverage is in Obama's hypocrisy — only a year before, he signed The Whistleblower Protection Act.

Later on, he said he wouldn't follow every letter of the law in the bill he had only just signed.

"Certain provisions in the act threaten to interfere with my constitutional duty to supervise the executive branch," Obama said. "As my administration previously informed the Congress, I will interpret those sections consistent with my authority."

5. HATE GROUPS AND ANTIGOVERNMENT GROUPS ON RISE ACROSS US

Hate groups in the U.S. are on the rise, according to a report by the Southern Poverty Law Center. There are 1,007 known hate groups operating across the country, it wrote, including neo-Nazis, Ku Klux Klan, white nationalists, neo-Confederates, racist skinheads, black separatists, border vigilantes and others.

Since 2000, those groups have grown by over half, and there was a "powerful resurgence" of patriot groups, the likes of which were involved in the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995. Worst of all, the huge growth in armed militias seems to have conspicuous timing with Obama's election.

"The number of Patriot groups, including armed militias, has grown 813 percent since Obama was elected — from 149 in 2008 to 1,360 in 2012," the SPLC reported.

Though traditionally those groups were race motivated, the report noted that now they are gunning for government.

There was a smattering of news coverage when the SPLC released its report, but not much since.

6. BILLIONAIRES' RISING WEALTH INTENSIFIES POVERTY AND INEQUALITY

The world's billionaires added \$241 billion to their collective net worth in 2012. That's an economic recovery, right?

That gain, coupled with the world's richest peoples' new total worth of \$1.9 trillion (more than the GDP of Canada), wasn't reported by some kooky socialist group, but by *Bloomberg News*. But few journalists are asking the important question: Why?

Project Censored points to journalist George Monbiot, who highlights a reduction of taxes and tax enforcement, the privatization of public assets and the weakening of labor unions.

His conclusions are backed up by the United Nations' Trade and Development Report from 2012, which noted how the trend hurts everyone: "Recent empirical and analytical work reviewed here mostly shows a negative correlation between inequality and growth."

7. MERCHANT OF DEATH AND NUCLEAR WEAPONS

The report highlighted by Project Censored on the threat of nuclear war is an example not of censorship, strictly, but a desire for media reform.

Project Censored highlighted a study from the Physicians for Social Responsibility that said one billion people could starve in the decade after a nuclear detonation. Corn production in the U.S. would decline by an average of 10 percent for an entire decade and food prices would make food inaccessible to hundreds of millions of the world's poorest.

This is not journalism in the classic sense, Gladstone said. In traditional journalism, as it's played out since the early 20th century, news requires an element of something new in order to garner reporting — not a looming threat or danger.

So in this case, what Project Censored identified was the need for a new kind of journalism, what it calls "solutions journalism."

"Solutions journalism," Sarah van Gelder wrote in the foreword to *Censored 2014*, "must investigate not only the individual innovations, but also the larger pattern of change — the emerging ethics, institutions and ways of life that are coming into existence."

8. BANK INTERESTS INFLATE GLOBAL PRICES BY 35 TO 40 PERCENT

Does 35 percent of everything bought in the United States go to interest? Professor Margrit Kennedy of the University of Hanover thinks so, and she says it's a major funnel of money from the 99 percent to the rich.

In her 2012 book, *Occupy Money*, Kennedy wrote that tradespeople, suppliers, wholesalers and retailers along the chain of production rely on credit. Her figures were initially drawn from the German economy, but Ellen Brown of the Web of Debt and Global Research said she found similar patterns in the U.S.

This "hidden interest" has sapped the growth of other industries, she said, lining the pockets of the financial sector.

So if interest is stagnating so many industries, why would journalists avoid the topic?

Few economists have echoed her views, and few experts emerged to back up her assertions. Notably, she's a professor in an architectural school, with no formal credentials in economics.