

# **Reginald Dale**

Born 1940. Foreign correspondent.

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# 1. Obituary by Guy de Jonquières



*The following obituary was archived in 2021, with acknowledgement and thanks, from the Financial Times website. It was written by his Financial Times colleague Guy de Jonquières, and was published in September 2018.*

It is an irony of history that Reginald Dale, who made his name as the Financial Times' reporter covering Britain's negotiations to join the European Economic Community and its early years of membership, should have died at the age of 78 just months before the UK is due to leave the EU — a prospect he deplored.

More than any other subject he wrote about, Dale, who was known as "Reggie" to colleagues, made Europe his story and firmly cemented the FT's position as the "Bible" for everyone who needed to know what was really going on in Brussels.

David Hannay, a junior member of Britain's negotiating team in the early 1970s and later Britain's ambassador to the EEC and the UN, remembers him as "by a long way the best informed and most perceptive British journalist covering the accession negotiations".

Professionally, Dale embodied the journalistic qualities described by writer Nicholas Tomalin: "Ratlike cunning, a plausible manner and a little literary ability." But he possessed many more skills than those. A fine writer, a terrier-like reporter with a keen nose for a good story and an incisive analyst of the intricacies of European diplomacy, he was master of both the big picture and of the all-important fine technical details.

His Brussels contact network was unrivalled and he worked it hard, both in and out of office hours. His ability to match late into the night the prodigious intake of some notoriously hard-drinking British diplomats earned him countless scoops — he later renounced alcohol entirely — as

did his charm, talent as a raconteur and mischievous sense of humour. He was also capable of great kindness and personal loyalty, qualities that endeared him to many former colleagues.

A bon vivant, Dale was a generous host, no more so than at leisure in France, where he owned at various times a château near Paris and a house in Provence. Visitors to the former still remember being greeted on arrival and then pursued relentlessly by one of the other occupants, an Irish wolfhound of intimidating proportions.

In 1976, Dale returned to London as deputy foreign editor before being made the FT's US editor (Washington bureau chief) in 1981, a job he did for five years. A spell at Harvard followed, intended to prepare him for a posting to Moscow. However, he chose instead at the last minute to join the International Herald Tribune in Paris, since acquired and re-branded by the New York Times, as international economics correspondent and then economics editor.

In 2003 the IHT shuttled him back to Washington, where he spent a decade as global affairs columnist before founding a European affairs magazine. He then entered the world of Washington think-tanks, most recently as a senior fellow with the Atlantic Council, where he made good use of his expertise in media and Transatlantic relations.

Dale died after a brief struggle with cancer at his country house in rural Virginia, in the company of his family. He leaves a widow, Helle, two sons and a daughter.

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## 2. Obituary by David Wemer

*The following tribute to Reginald Dale was archived in 2021, with acknowledgement and thanks, from the website of the Atlantic Council. It was written by David Wemer, Assistant Director, Editorial, at the Atlantic Council, and was published in September 2018.*

Reginald Dale, a journalist, commentator, scholar, as well as senior fellow and director of the Transatlantic Media Network at the Atlantic Council, passed away on September 13, 2018. He was 78.

Dale spent the majority of his career as a journalist, working as an international economics, financial, and foreign affairs reporter and editor. He was a syndicated columnist for the International Herald Tribune and was the Brussels and Washington bureau chief for the Financial Times. He founded the magazine European Affairs in Washington and was a president of the European Journalists' Organization in Brussels.

At the Atlantic Council, Dale was the director of the Transatlantic Media Network, which gave annual fellowships for European journalists to come visit and work in the United States. The program, which began at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) before moving to the Atlantic Council in 2017, was Dale's "brainchild," according to Atlantic Council President and Chief Executive Officer Frederick Kempe. The program, Kempe said, brought "young European journalists to the States to increase their knowledge of America and Americans, to help build a stronger foundation for the transatlantic relationship through mutual understanding."

Dale was "prescient," Atlantic Council Executive Vice President Damon Wilson said, for sending these journalists on study tours to diverse places—fellows have visited forty-three states across the United States—to help them "gain a much better appreciation for the dynamics of the United States [and get] them outside the Beltway and off the two coasts."

"With the election of Donald Trump, this fellowship proved to be a critical tool in the Atlantic Council toolkit," Wilson said. "Thanks to the support of the Wallenberg Foundation, Reggie and the Council were able to help ensure better transatlantic understanding at a time of growing misunderstanding and tensions. The work these extraordinary journalists do each day will be a living legacy to Reggie's own life and work."

Andrew Marshall, the Atlantic Council's Vice President of Communications, noted "Reggie had written for some of the best newspapers in the world, and he remained a journalist at heart, writing regularly for the Atlantic Council's blog." His background allowed him to connect with the journalists who came through the program, to understand

their questions, and provide answers which they could relate to. “He believed strongly in the mission of bringing European journalists to America and sending them around the country, because he knew what an impact that had—helping inform their journalism and improve their understanding of the United States,” he added.

Throughout his life, Dale was a committed transatlanticist, who sought to improve understanding between allies on both sides of the Atlantic.

“His work meant a lot to many Swedish journalists,” said Anna Wieslander, the Director of the Atlantic Council’s Northern Europe Office based in Stockholm. Through Dale’s programs, Wieslander explained, Swedish journalists “were able to learn about and report from America in a way that otherwise would not have been possible. In these times of an increasing drift across the Atlantic, that work was more important than ever.”

Dale was “a passionate advocate for transatlantic understanding, top quality journalism, and renewed efforts to maintain the strongest possible links between the United States and the United Kingdom,” recalled Sir Peter Westmacott, an Atlantic Council distinguished ambassadorial fellow and former British ambassador to the United States, adding “he will be sorely missed.”

Since 2008, the Transatlantic Media Network has had a broad impact, awarding fellowships to sixty journalists from nineteen European countries.

Dale “believed strongly that the journalists who came through this program would act as force-multipliers, amplifying to their constituents back home a less biased and more accurate view of America and Americans based on their personal experience in the United States,” said Denise Forsthuber, assistant director of the Council’s Future Europe Initiative. Forsthuber, who has worked closely with Dale on the Transatlantic Media Network since 2014, first at CSIS then at the Council, added Dale “touched the lives of countless journalists across the US and Europe and his work will continue to impact people for generations.”

Caroline Wernecke, former program manager for the Transatlantic Media Network at CSIS, said Dale was “much more than a boss—he was also mentor and a friend,” with a great passion for “foster[ing] better inter-understanding between Americans and Europeans.” Wernecke added that Dale “knew more about the history of the world than anyone I’d ever met” and believed “that in general we should all be constantly opening ourselves to new ideas, places, and people.”

Leo Mirani, news editor for *The Economist* and a 2018 Transatlantic Media Fellow, said Dale’s program “had a profound effect on me and who I am as a person, and no doubt it did the same for dozens of other men and women.

I think perhaps this is his great legacy: building links and greater understanding between Europeans and Americans, improving journalism, and changing the lives of so many people. It is no small thing.”

We mourn the loss of a colleague, mentor, and friend who has forever changed many lives.

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### 3. Transatlantic Media Network

The following description of the activities of the Transatlantic Media Network, of which Reginald Dale was director, were archived in 2021, with acknowledgement and thanks, from the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

The Transatlantic Media Network promotes excellence in journalism through the development of an expanding network of media representatives from both sides of the Atlantic for the exchange of journalistic resources and mutual professional support.

The transatlantic relationship is changing more rapidly and more profoundly than at any time since World War II, with huge consequences for how the world will be run in the twenty-first century. A continuing challenge facing the media is to supply the high-quality coverage of political, economic, security, social, and cultural developments on both sides of the Atlantic needed to map a constructive future for U.S.-European relations and to promote wider awareness and understanding of transatlantic issues.

To provide a resource and support network for journalists covering transatlantic affairs, the Center for Strategic and International Studies established a Transatlantic Media Network (TMN) with close ties to European and American media organizations and institutions. A principal goal is to create a network of journalists, media groups, journalism schools, and policymakers in Europe and the United States to stimulate interest in the transatlantic relationship, the international consequences of European integration, and changing U.S. world views.

The TMN aims to help editors and reporters keep abreast of events and ideas on either side of the Atlantic by organizing numerous activities, including conferences, visiting fellowships, working groups, studies, an Internet forum, journalistic exchanges, and other communicational activities such as the publication of handbooks for foreign correspondents. The TMN is led by Reginald Dale, a former senior editor, foreign correspondent, and columnist for London's Financial Times and the International Herald Tribune, with long experience of covering transatlantic affairs, now a senior fellow at CSIS.

Activities:

- Conferences, meetings, and working groups on media issues, for American, European, and other interested journalists in both Europe and the United States.
- Visiting fellowships for European journalists in the United States

- A growing support network of journalists with an interest in transatlantic affairs and foreign correspondents in Europe and the United States
  - Comparative studies of media coverage on either side of the Atlantic
  - Development of information and guidance for foreign correspondents covering the United States and American journalists in Europe.
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## 4. Deutsche Welle Interview

*The following was archived in 2021, with acknowledgement and thanks, from the Deutsche Welle website at [www.dw.com](http://www.dw.com). It is an example of Reginald Dale's commentary on European affairs.*

### **Spy scandal: 'An awful lot of this is a show'**

Washington is doing diplomatic damage control after revelations the NSA spied on three French presidents. But Reginald Dale, formerly of the International Herald Tribune, tells DW that the outrage is mostly for show.



*Chirac Sarkozy Hollande.*

*DW: Paris has summoned the US ambassador over allegations that Washington eavesdropped on the conversations of three French presidents. In 2013, Der Spiegel claimed that German Chancellor Angela Merkel's cell had been tapped. How have the reactions of France and Germany differed?*

If you wanted to distinguish between the French and German reactions to this sort of thing, I would say the French reaction is basically cynical and hypocritical, whereas the Germans tend to be neurotic and distressed. It's a totally different cultural reaction to these allegations or revelations.

*What makes you say the French response is cynical and hypocritical?*

The French response is cynical in the sense that they know their country does a lot of spying, in fact they would want it to. They think it should. They understand in the world we live in today, the Americans spy on them. That's the way the world is and they don't find it particularly reprehensible.

On the hypocritical side, the French are well known as the leaders in industrial espionage in Europe, particularly against the United States. There

are lots of instances of the French obtaining information, secrets from the American defense and aerospace industries in particular.

In the 1990s, the French were supposed to have bugged the seatbacks in business class on Air France in the hope of picking up a confidential chitchat among American businessmen. That was of course denied, but it became a widespread - almost a joke.



*Obama with Hollande and Merkel.*

*Why do you say the German response is neurotic?*

On the German side there is a deep neurosis for historical reasons because of the traumas resulting from the activities of the Gestapo and then the Stasi in eastern Germany. That's always said to have bred a neurotic fear of any sort of snooping, particularly on individuals, which is why there was such a reaction when one of Chancellor Merkel's cell phones was apparently bugged.

I think the Germans, unlike the French, feel a sense of betrayal about this. They spent all these years after World War Two rehabilitating themselves to become a model nation on the world stage, and they wanted approval from everyone, and they wanted particularly the friendship of the United States.

They believed they had won that approval and friendship, and then when they find they're being spied on – the sense of betrayal like a stab in the back.

*What do the German and French responses to US surveillance of their leaders say about the two countries' relationships with Washington?*

The French are obviously also a proud nation. They do feel they have to show some sort of outrage. But they're also realistic about these sorts of

things. They have a long history of espionage and have always had very good intelligence services. I don't think these sort of things surprise them much. That's life – “C'est la vie.”

The French have never minded stepping on American toes. They've been doing it ever since World War Two and that's part of the game. French culture is very oriented toward show rather than actual substance, one might say, whereas German culture is more substantial and less flamboyant.

It would be true that the Germans would be more concerned about a public fight with the United States about this, or anything really, than the French would. Not least because the Germans have attached so much importance toward rebuilding their relationship with Washington over so many years.

The French like to cultivate the image of an independent nation and not be dependent on Washington or anyone else.

*How do you expect this to play in French public opinion?*

The French are very cynical about life in general, they wouldn't be particularly surprised. I don't think you'll have a huge outcry other than from people who think that this is a good chance to make a fuss about the Americans. I don't think deep down anyone is going to feel particularly outraged. They probably believed that it was happening anyways before these revelations came along.

*President Obama reportedly promised to stop US surveillance of French leaders. Should the public take this promise seriously?*

The wording I saw was exactly the same wording that they produced after the Angela Merkel cell phone allegations. Obviously Hollande has to demand some sort of apology in public, and Obama feels that he has to show some contrition and reassure France that they can trust the United States, and that the United States trusts France and that they're great, close allies and will continue to be in the future. An awful lot of this is a show.

*Reginald Dale spent most of his career as a foreign correspondent, commentator and senior editor for the Financial Times and the International Herald Tribune. He has been based in Brussels, London, Paris and Washington.*

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