

Do we need neoliberals in charge of the BBC and Ofcom?

Published: March 13, 2026, 8:28 am

In 2013, Margaret Hodge, then a Labour MP, did in her role as chair of the Public Accounts Committee of the House of Commons challenge Google executives over that company's tax affairs. I know. I was there. I briefed her in the hour before she grilled the people in question.

She specifically questioned why the company claimed its UK sales took place in Ireland when evidence suggested its sales processes occurred within the UK.

Hodge used strong language to criticise Google's tax practices, accusing the company of "doing evil", a term that was a direct play on Google's then-corporate motto, "Don't be evil".

Under Hodge's leadership, the PAC published reports demanding greater transparency from multinational corporations and urging HMRC to be more aggressive in challenging artificial tax arrangements. The result was the worldwide adoption of country-by-country reporting for tax purposes, a system of accounting I had designed for this specific purpose

Now, circumstances have changed. Hodge, now a member of the House of Lords, seems to talk more about Zionist sentiment than anything else these days, despite which fact she [is in line to become head of Ofcom](#), which oversees TV, radio, video-on-demand network broadcasting, broadband, mobile and postal services in the UK. Few people seem less suited to head such an organisation than Hodge, in my opinion, given the very apparent biases that she has revealed in her work as an MP, where she unjustly vilified Jeremy Corbyn, attacked the left consistently, and has acted in a pro-Zionist fashion, which will inevitably alienate some. But now look at who is also forecast to become head of the BBC soon. [As the Guardian has reported](#): *Google's former Europe boss is closing in on becoming the BBC's next director general, the Guardian has been told.*

Sources said that [Matt Brittin](#), 57, was very advanced in the appointment process. Some insiders believe that, barring a last-minute development, he will succeed Tim Davie as the broadcaster's next director general.

Brittan is the man who appeared in front of Hodge in Parliament, representing Google. Not only does his past record on tax exclude him from consideration, in my opinion, but we also have to ask how it is that the stars have so aligned that, a decade or so on, these two appear to be destined to head major broadcasting organisations in the UK. What do they share in common? Their arch belief in neoliberalism. That is it. It used to be said that power corrupts. There is an undoubted element of truth in that. I do, however, think that neoliberalism corrupts absolutely. The ability of those who believe in it to fail to recognise what might probably be called the public interest is quite extraordinary. Neither of these appointments will serve that purpose, in my opinion. They do, however, serve the purpose of neoliberalism, which is to exclude all interests but those that promote financial capitalism and the interest of wealth above all others. No one can doubt the commitment of Hodge and Brittan to the cause of neoliberalism.