



**Kevin McCauley**  
Editor-in-Chief

# O'Dwyer's Newsletter



**The Inside News of  
PR and Marketing  
Communications**

271 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016  
212/679-2471. Fax: 212/683-2750  
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May 20, 2019 Vol. 52 No. 20

## **DESALVA TAKES HELM AT H+K**

AnnaMaria DeSalva is returning to WPP's Hill+Knowlton Strategies unit as chairman/CEO on June 24, taking over for Jack Martin, who will remain an adviser until the end of the year.



**AnnaMaria  
DeSalva**

She left DuPont as chief communications officer in February after guiding communications through its \$130B mega-merger with Dow and establishing the corporate affairs capability of the combined entity.

Prior to the chemical giant posting, DeSalva was VP-corporate affairs at Pfizer and advisor to the Food and Drug Administration on risk communications. From 2006-2009, she

headed worldwide healthcare at H+K.

DeSalva currently serves as vice chairman of XPO Logistics, provider of transportation and supply chain solutions, and is a member of the board of governors at the Argonne National Laboratory, the science and engineering center of the Dept. of Energy.

As CEO of H&K, she will work in tandem with co-presidents Richard Miller and Lars Erik Grønntun.

WPP chief Mark Read said of DeSalva's appointment: "AnnaMaria is an exceptional communicator and leader whose experience spans the corporate management, governance and agency worlds."

## **METLIFE, MORGAN ALUM TO BRUNSWICK**

Jeanmarie McFadden, who was executive VP-chief communications officer at MetLife, has joined Brunswick Group.

At MetLife, McFadden was in charge of more than 150 staffers and guided overall PR strategy.

She joined MetLife from Morgan Stanley, where she was managing director and head of global corporate affairs. McFadden was responsible for financial communications, media relations, marketing, branding, advertising, philanthropy and internal PR.



**Jeanmarie  
McFadden**

Earlier she co-headed corporate communications for the Americas at Credit Suisse.

Nik Deogun, Brunswick's CEO of Americas, said McFadden's "experience overseeing communications efforts at leading financial institutions

provides a unique perspective and will enable her to advise clients on a range of critical issues."

## **USVI SEEKS PUBLIC TRANSIT AD PARTNER**

The government of the U.S. Virgin Islands is looking for an agency that can manage a territory-wide advertising and marketing program for the Islands' public transit system, VITRAN.

The agency hired would be responsible for managing the production, installation and maintenance of advertising display materials across designated VITRAN transit assets as well as selling advertising space and managing all sales revenue.



VITRAN is overseen by the Virgin Islands Department of Public Works. The agency hired would pay VIDPW 40 percent of the gross revenue generated through the advertising sold.

Terms of the contract run for three years, with the option to extend for an additional two-year period as a month-to-month basis for up to six months.

Proposals are due by 4:00 p.m. (AST) on Wednesday, May 29. Proposals should be mailed to:

Anthony D. Thomas; Commissioner Designee; Department of Property and Procurement; 8201 Subbase, 3rd Floor; St. Thomas, Virgin Islands 00802

Bidding parties should submit one original and five copies of their proposals. RFP number (018-T-2019(P)), bidder name, address, telephone and fax number must be written on the outside of the envelope/package.

**[View the RFP, along with ad inventory and specifications document, a sample service contract and amendment \(PDF\).](#)**

## **WPP MAY UNLOAD FINSBURY**

Roland Rudd, who founded Finsbury in 1994, is interested in buying the unit back from WPP, a deal that could fetch \$130M for the ad/PR conglomerate.

The *Financial Times* reports that Rudd, who sold Finsbury to WPP in 2001 but remains chairman of the financial PR/PA powerhouse, is working to line up financing for the transaction.

Since that effort is in its early stages, there is no guarantee that the former FT journalist will pull off a deal.

Rudd is one of "London's most-connected executives," according to the FT.

WPP CEO Mark Read, who took over the helm from Martin Sorrell last summer, has been in the process of re-tooling WPP as a "creative transformation company."

The UK-based Finsbury merged with New York-based Robinson Lerer & Montgomery in 2011. It also has partnered with Washington's Glover Park Group and Germany's Hering Schuppener shops.

## **KIVVIT WORKS ON WILLIAMS' NYC PIPELINE**

Tulsa's Williams Cos. uses Kivvit, which has close ties with New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, to win support for construction of a nearly 23-mile underwater pipeline to transport natural gas from New Jersey to New York.



Environmentalists hate the project, but utility National Grid claims the pipeline is needed to meet the growing energy demands of NYC and threatened a moratorium on gas hook-ups if the pipeline isn't built.

The New York State Dept. of Environmental Conservation rejected Williams' application on May 15.

A Williams spokesperson told the NYT that the DEC "raised a minor technical issue with our application" and promised to resubmit the application.

Kivvit's Rich Bamberger, who was Cuomo's communications director; Maggie Moran, advisor to the then Attorney General during his 2010 run for Governor; and Chuck Meara, advisor to a trio of New York City Council Speakers, represent Williams on its Northeast Supply Enhancement pipeline.

## **WEBER WOOS LUDLAM TO HEAD WEST**

Weber Shandwick has named Will Ludlam president of its western region, which includes offices in Seattle, Silicon Valley, San Francisco and Los Angeles. He takes over for Luca Penati, who left March 15 to pursue other opportunities.

With more than 25 years of corporate and technology experience, Ludlam is joining the Interpublic unit from Edelman, where was executive VP and leader of its Pacific Northwest group, Seattle and Portland.

Earlier, he was in charge of Hill+Knowlton's Seattle office following its acquisition of The Rocky Co. and partner/managing director of Porter Novelli.

Sara Gavin, president of WS North America, praised Ludlam's "leadership philosophy and vision for how best to deliver for clients and for our people."

He'll be based in Seattle.

## **RASKY REPS ANTI-LGBT+ AZERBAIJAN**

Rasky Partners has signed a six-month contract to provide PR services and support to Azerbaijan, which is under fire for harassment of its LGBT+ community.

Freedom House last month called on the Azerbaijani government to end the harassment and intimidation of former political prisoners and to halt a new wave of detentions of LGBT+ people.

The ILGA-Europe advocacy group on May 13 released its survey of 49 countries that rated Azerbaijan as the worst place to be gay based on legal gender recognition, equality, non-discrimination, family life and civil society space.

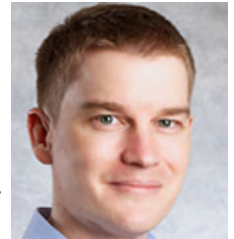
Rasky receives \$15K a/month through Oct. 28 for its work on behalf of Azerbaijan's US ambassador Elin Suleymanov.



**Elin Suleymanov**

## **NEWS OF FIRMS**

**APCO Worldwide** has opened an office in Manama, Bahrain, expanding its presence in the MENA region. The office is APCO's fourth in the Gulf Cooperation Council region, adding to the firm's established presence in Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Riyadh. Jolyon Kimble, an eight-year veteran of the firm, will lead the Bahrain office as general manager. Before coming to APCO, Kimble led communication and change management around the restructure of the corporate communication department at Kuwait National Petroleum Company and was previously editor of global government relations magazine *Public Affairs News*.



**Jolyon Kimble**

**Uproar PR** has been acquired by **Kanaris Group** from co-founders Mike Harris and Catriona Harris. Kanaris Group executive chairman Ermis Sfakiyanudis will take on the role of executive chairman at Uproar. Catriona Harris will remain with the company as CEO, continuing to focus on client strategy and team development. Mike Harris will remain president and COO, focusing on client acquisition and retention. Uproar PR finished 2018 with year-end revenue of \$4.4 million, up nearly 10 percent from the previous year.

**The Prosper Group** has officially launched **Everest Communications** and has appointed Zack Condry president of the firm. Condry previously worked for The Prosper Group from 2010-2014. A digital communications firm, Everest provides counsel and program execution support to companies across the corporate and financial sectors, with a specialization on hedge funds, technology firms, and sports and entertainment companies.

**Bastion Collective**, the largest privately-owned Australian communications group, has acquired digital marketing agency **Rare Branding** and **Digital Brand Group**, a web and mobile application development services company. The two companies, which are based in Irvine, CA, will serve as anchors for Bastion Rare, a newly formed US division of Bastion Collective.

**Hotwire** is merging with its Australia based sister agency, **Precinct**, which specializes in strategic marketing services, branding, design, stakeholder relations, events and internal communications services. Precinct managing director Jaime Nelson will join Hotwire as managing director, strategy and marketing services for Hotwire Australia. Nelson will lead the introduction of expanded services in Australia and work across Hotwire to expand its capabilities globally.



**Jaime Nelson**

**Mass Luminosity**, a Dallas-based research, technology and experiential company, has acquired Fort Worth, TX based **Wheelhouse Marketing and PR**. In addition to serving its current roster of clients, Wheelhouse will become the internal marketing arm of Mass Luminosity and its subsidiaries. Managing partners Julie and Kell Curtis will continue as president and executive vice president for Wheelhouse, respectively.

## **INOCULATING AGAINST BUBBLE-THINK**

It was a familiar refrain for many of us after November, 2016: “We’re living in a bubble! We don’t understand the people!” Since that time, we all see this same story repeated. Confirmation bias is more powerful than any one of us realizes. Social media just tells us what we want to hear. Our news media of choice caters to narrowly defined groups and views.

Likely, every agency has been challenging itself to get outside of this bubble. We’re beginning to realize that “big data,” for all its faults, also presents an opportunity to get outside our own perspectives. Few issues in health-care represent this problem of self-selecting information as clearly as the vaccine debate. For groups on both sides, the view is 100 percent clear: vaccines are either a miracle of modern medicine, or a harmful hoax. But even this level of understanding lacks the depth needed to solve the problem.

JPA has developed a tool we call Gretel, the only collection of health conversation data that cross-references advocacy, news and social media and online influencers. It allows us to see across a universe of voices to zero in on what’s really going on, and it’s often full of surprises.

When we dig into the data in Gretel on the vaccine conversation, here’s what we see: the medical establishment, with all its scientific wisdom, spouts data points, study results and clinical facts. They make their case with MDs and PhDs and rely on traditional medical organizations and media sources to carry their message.

On the other side, anti-vaxxers lay into the dangers of big pharma, the harm in our broken medical system, the problems with chemicals and putting bad things in our bodies. They make the case with moms and kids and regular folks who’ve allegedly been harmed by a medical hoax.

In between these camps exists a large, moveable middle of mainstream popular culture. Whose arguments do you think are more compelling to more of these people? They’re not enticed by data. They’re not motivated by scientists. They’re moved to action by emotional appeals that feed into an increasing sense that our system is broken, that they’re pawns in a game of industry profits.

The expertise fails to land. The scientists and so-called “elites” talk only to themselves, and the people on the side of what’s best for public health lose messaging ground again and again to the anti-vaccine movement.

It’s possible recent outbreaks will lead to a reset in the discussion. However, instead of focusing just on studies and data and scientific expertise, we should talk more about how our systems are designed to protect us, how small actions can save lives, and the fears parents have about losing their children to highly contagious diseases.

### **Conversation taking shape**

It’s obvious that different health issues require different communications approaches. We now, however, can literally see the shape of a conversation, to determine how best to reach specific audiences.



**Ken Deutsch (L) and Adam Pawluk**

get outside of this bubble. We’re beginning to realize that “big data,” for all its faults, also presents an opportunity to get outside our own perspectives.

Few issues in health-care represent this problem of self-selecting information as clearly as the vaccine de-

For example, the oncology conversation takes a very different shape from the highly-fragmented vaccine debate. In oncology, we see very little bubble-think, because people are highly motivated to share as much information as possible. We see this in the data, and we see this manifest itself across the oncology landscape.

But we also can see distinctions that the professionals themselves may not even realize. It has been said that oncologists in many ways are closer to their patients and the patient experience than other types of specialists. Oncologists may group themselves by their specialties, but we see another difference between groups of oncologists known as medical oncologists and surgical oncologists.

Surgical oncologists—accustomed to dealing with patients in an operating room—are less connected to patient groups and influencers. Medical oncologists—face-to-face every day with patients—are highly engaged with these groups. Depending on the communications need, we must reach these two groups in very different ways.

By mapping the relationships between the top influencers on an issue and then grouping them based on what sources they pay attention to, we can generate an understanding of the conversation structure. As we see in these examples, different audiences connect in different ways around issues, with very real implications for how we design an effective communications program.

### **Social becomes measuring stick**

Social media is a powerful channel to reach audiences, but it also offers a new way to understand the media landscape and decide not just which outlet, but which media platforms work best to engage specific audiences.

In the old days, we could only measure readership of a media outlet. We didn’t have the trove of public data we do today, documenting what content drives which conversations among which audiences.

Our experience reaching emergency room physicians is a great example of unexpected insights hiding beneath the surface. We were surprised to find they were more likely to cite blogs than medical trade publications in sharing information with each other. For the rest of us, blogs peaked a few years ago, but with emergency room doctors they’re continuing to thrive.

Taking a closer look, we saw these physicians love to share stories about odd things that happen in the emergency room. If you want to reach an emergency room physician, you’ll hit a home run if you can tie your cause to an unusual patient case and get it covered in a blog.

It’s exciting to realize how much better we can understand our audiences thanks to big data and data visualization. As communicators, we have tools today that help fight confirmation bias. Tools that prevent social media from telling us just what we want to hear. Tools that let us take a broad look across a universe of conversation and cater to narrowly defined groups and views.

It takes constant effort, invention and re-invention as communicators, but we’re better than ever at understanding the world as it really is, and how to make a difference where it matters most.

*Ken Deutsch is Head of Analytics & Research and Adam Pawluk is Senior Vice President at JPA Health Communications.*

## **ED AUTHORITY ISSUES SCHOOL MKTG RFP**

The Capitol Region Education Council, the public educational authority that represents school districts in north central Connecticut (namely, the Hartford area and its surrounding towns) is seeking proposals from agencies with school marketing expertise that can assist in the development and implementation of marketing plans for



several CREC public magnet schools.

CREC needs an agency that can develop and implement marketing plans for two CREC magnet schools in an effort to increase the number of applicants applying to these schools as well as the racial and socioeconomic diversity of those applicants.

Scope of the work includes developing comprehensive marketing and recruitment plans for two magnet schools based on CREC's existing market research and data; creating effective messaging and branding efforts to promote school assets; designing recruitment and marketing strategies to attract applicants; producing marketing materials; developing media and advertising campaigns; monitoring the ongoing adaptation of marketing plans' effectiveness; and training school and district personnel on the messages' delivery and implementation.

The contract calls for work to begin July 1 and runs for a year, with the option of renewal for up to two years.

Deadline to submit proposals is 11:00 a.m. (EST), Wednesday, May 22.

Proposals should be mailed to:  
Capitol Region Education Council  
Attn: Purchasing Manager  
111 Charter Oak Ave.  
Hartford, CT 06106

All submitted bids should include one original and four copies of proposals, as well as an electronic copy on a USB stick. Mailed packages must be labeled with the following: RFP# 19-107 Marketing Services.

Questions should be forwarded to purchasing manager Kate Rotella, [krotella@crec.org](mailto:krotella@crec.org).

[Download the RFP \(PDF\).](#)

## **WEBER SHANDWICK'S BOX MOVES TO EVOKE**

Barbara Box, 15-year Weber Shandwick veteran and North American healthcare lead, has shifted to Evoke PR & Influence as executive VP-strategy & business development.



**Barbara Box**

She will oversee Evoke's New York office and report to Maryellen Royle, president of the Huntsworth health unit.

Royle said Box's "integrated healthcare marketing and communications experience, coupled with her enthusiasm for collaboration and staff development, makes her the perfect

match for this growth stage of our team."

Prior to Weber Shandwick, Box was executive VP & worldwide healthcare director at Golin.

Evoke has repped Lilly, Celgene, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Amgen and Merck.

## **PR SHOULD SMOKE BIG TOBACCO**

We were happy to see the [odwyerpr.com](http://odwyerpr.com) article that covered Finn Partners' commitment to reject tobacco clients and to join the Quit Big Tobacco campaign.

For us, this was a no-brainer. Others have not given this enough thought.

Finn Partners has not had tobacco industry clients since our inception. We refuse to be the voice and representatives of an industry that sustains itself by addicting people to products that diminish health and are associated directly with mortality.



**Peter Finn**

It's timely to reaffirm our commitment. Big Tobacco has undertaken a massive effort to rebuild its tattered reputation around "a smoke-free future." In truth, they still aggressively market cigarettes and target youth worldwide. Just this year Philip Morris launched a new high-nicotine, high-tar cigarette.

Under the guise of "fruity-flavors," e-cigarettes have sought to fill the Big Tobacco void. Yet, these products also lead to nicotine-associated addiction. Less harmful is still harmful. Let us not trade one risk for another.

Any PR firm with a conscience should consider Big Tobacco bad business. We're delighted to see that more firms are joining Quit Big Tobacco, and that as an industry we are moving from a few principled agencies to a powerful movement.

*Peter Finn is CEO of Finn Partners.*

## **JOELE FRANK, ICR PERK UP LUCKIN IPO**

Joele Frank, Wilkinson Brimmer Katcher and ICR Inc. handled the high-profile IPO of China's Luckin Coffee, which began trading on the NASDAQ with an initial market valuation of about \$4B.

The two-year-old company, which is opening 200 to 300 stores a month, aims to remove Starbucks from its perch as China's top coffee shop. Luckin has 2,370 stores in 28 cities, while Starbucks has more than 3,300 outlets.

Its outlets, which don't accept cash and lack seating, are geared to takeout and pick-up business

JFWBK's Ed Trissel, Leigh Parrish, Scott Bisang and Amy Feng represent Luckin, while ICR has Bill Zima and Fitzhugh Taylor on the account.

## **FTI WORKS FOR PFIZER ON DRUG PRICING**

FTI Consulting's government affairs unit is representing Pfizer on Capitol Hill on pharmaceutical drug pricing matters.

Pfizer is among drug companies caught up in a lawsuit filed by 44 states on May 10, alleging they conspired to hike up prices on generics by up to 1,000 percent.

Filed in federal district court in Connecticut, the suit covers more than 100 cancer drugs, antibiotics, blood thinners, contraceptives and antidepressants.

Pfizer denies that its Greenstone generic unit did anything wrong. Greenstone "has been a reliable and trusted supplier of affordable generic medicines for decades and intends to vigorously defend against these claims," it said in a statement.

## QUEEN ELIZABETH SEEKS SOCIAL MEDIA HELP

Britain's Queen Elizabeth is looking to hire a digital communications officer to "find new ways to maintain her image in the public eye and the world stage," according to a job listing put out by Buckingham Palace.

Describing the royal communications staff as a "fast paced and dynamic team," the job's challenge "is to manage and oversee the daily news flow on digital and social networking platforms, as well as play a key part in some of the digital projects."



The DOC will create content for social networking and digital platforms including the Palace's new website. The successful candidate will be up-to-speed on measurement/analytics and keep tabs on emerging technologies.

While the gig pays \$40K, the biggest reward may be high-profile reaction to the work, which is shared around the world, says the notice.

The Queen wants a "natural communicator with a genuine user focus" who possesses a "creative flair."

The 37.5 hour per-week gig comes with a benefits package, 33 days of annual leave and free lunch.

Applications are due May 26.

Apply [here](#).

## NRA SERVES UP PA DUTIES TO KENNEDY

The National Restaurant Assn. has hired Sean Kennedy, who led global government affairs for the Airlines for America trade group, as executive VP of PA.

He will handle federal advocacy, organize grassroots lobbying campaigns and promote the economic impact of the \$860B restaurant/foodservice sector that employs 15M people. He also will forge litigation strategy for the Restaurant Law Center.

Prior to A4A, Kennedy was special assistant for legislative affairs in the Obama White House, chief of staff to former Missouri Senator Claire McCaskill and legislative director for ex-Democratic leader Congressman Dick Gephardt.

Upon joining the NRA, Kennedy will report to CEO Dawn Sweeney.

## LONGVIEW FLIES ONEX'S WESTJET TAKEOVER

Longview Communications & Public Affairs is guiding Onex Partners' \$3.5B acquisition of Calgary-based Westjet, a deal that marks the largest-ever private equity takeover of an airline.

The \$31 per-share offer represents a 67 percent premium over the May 10 closing price of Westjet's shares on the Toronto Stock Exchange.

It marks Onex's third bid for an airline, following its failed runs at Air Canada and Australia's Qantas Airways.

Westjet flies to more than 100 destinations in North America, Central America, the Caribbean and Europe. It has more than 14K employees.

Canada's Minister of Transport must approval the Onex deal. That is expected early next year.

Longview's Martin Cej represents Onex in the transaction.

## ON THE MOVE

**Marina Maher Communications** has appointed **Rema Vasan** as EVP, chief innovation officer. Vasan joins MMC from MSLGROUP, where she served as EVP and global lead on both the Procter & Gamble account and for MSL Fluency, the agency's influencer offering. She was previously director, global digital strategy for Pfizer Consumer Healthcare and SVP, global digital group account director at Publicis. In her initial remit, Vasan will oversee MMC's brand engagement group and lead the charge to create a practice centered on consumer tech. In addition, she will oversee and develop the agency's corporate brand practice.



**Rema Vasan**

**Endeavor Global Marketing** has brought on **Samantha Stark** as EVP of public relations. Stark comes to EGM from Ketchum, where she was part of the senior leadership team for the agency's technology practice. In her new post, Stark leads EGM's global PR group.

**rbb Communications** has named **Lauren Bernat** an equity partner in the firm. Bernat currently serves as vice president of account services for rbb's advertising division. She has worked with such brands as Brown & Brown Insurance, Inc., Celebrity Cruises, Jackson Health System, Macy's Florida, Royal Caribbean International, the Florida Keys and Key West, and University of Miami athletics.

**Hill+Knowlton Strategies** has promoted **Jack de Vries** to CEO of the Netherlands. De Vries has been with H+K since 2011, serving as a board director and leader of the public affairs practice of the agency's Dutch operations. Before coming to H+K, he ran his own communications business, and he has also been an associate partner at Boer & Croon Corporate Communication. From 2007 to 2010, he was state secretary of defense for the Netherlands.

**Edelman** has appointed **Christie Bishop** head of brand for Southern California. Bishop joins Edelman from Spark44, a joint venture marketing partner to Jaguar Land Rover, where she was executive strategy director and general manager of North America. She also hosts the Commercial Grade podcast, which offers a behind-the-scenes perspective on the production of creative campaigns.



**Christie Bishop**

**Ditto** has brought on crypto journalist **Leslie Ankney** as an associate vice president, based in the agency's San Francisco office. Ankney comes to Ditto from Forbes, where she was a contributor and analyst. Previously, she wrote for the crypto news site NullTX/The Merkle and founded UpScale International, a digital marketing firm for crypto projects. In her new position, Ankney will help crypto projects communicate more effectively and work to educate journalists so that they can better tell stories that get the tech right. Ditto has worked with projects that focus on such areas as blockchain solutions, crypto finance, and digital assets

## COMMENTARY

**FleishmanHillard is taking some lumps** for compiling a dossier of journalists, politicians and members of the scientific community who raised concerns in Europe about Monsanto's Roundup weed-killer, a long-time favorite punching bag of environmental activists and the anti-GMO crowd.

The Omnicom unit was just doing its job.

France's *Le Monde* broke the story of the 2016 dossier put together ahead of a 2017 European Union vote on whether to approve the use of glyphosate (e.g., Roundup) for five years. The tally won. Good job, FH.



The sleuths at FH even had the audacity to put then-French environmental minister Ségolène Royal on the list.

With all due respect to *Le Monde*, gathering intelligence is part of the responsibilities of a PR firm.

A dossier of influencers provides the material required for a firm to cultivate supporters as informational allies in a PR campaign and identify those who need additional persuasion in order to win them over.

Understandably, a story about a PR firm compiling a secret dossier is a juicy media story. It smacks of the old "enemies list" compiled by Richard Nixon and his gang.

The FH/Monsanto episode highlights the demand to educate the press about what PR does.

For its part, FH noted in its statement: "Our work is in keeping with the professional standards and established practices of our industry."

Germany's Bayer, parent of Monsanto, is playing its part in the production by hiring an outside lawyer to get to the bottom of things and apologizing for something that will probably turn out to be totally legit. Whatever?

Its newly minted PA/sustainability chief, Matthias Berninger, is assessing the behavior of FH, which "for the time being" has been suspended.

It's a good thing pharmaceuticals and life sciences giant Bayer is still in the aspirin business because it really didn't need the FH headache at a time when things seem to be falling apart, due largely to the \$63B Monsanto deal that closed last year.

Bayer shares hit a seven-year low following a California court's decision ordering it to pay \$2B in damages to a pair of cancer patients who claimed their non-Hodgkin's lymphoma was due to exposure to Roundup. It promised to appeal the verdict.

The May 13 verdict is the third Roundup-related legal defeat for Bayer. There are more than 13,400 cases pending in the US. Lots of luck.

Bayer shareholders have had it. On April 26, they rebuked CEO Werner Bauman as he lost a "confidence vote" by a 55 percent to 45 percent margin at the annual general meeting. The acquisition of Monsanto and its in-

herited lawsuits triggered the vote.

Bauman promised to "do everything to win back the trust of shareholders as quickly and completely as possible." Analysts give Bauman a year to shape up or ship out at the next AGM.

The FH situation is just a tempest in the mighty storm that is rocking the German giant.

**Though it's a little rich to call Donald Trump a champion of the free press**, he got it right in declining to sign the "Christchurch Call" agreement that is intended to curtail online extremism.

The UK, France, Germany, Spain, Ireland, Norway, Sweden, Netherlands, European Commission, Senegal, Jordan, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, India, Indonesia and Japan signed the agreement on May 15, along with Facebook, Amazon, Twitter, Google and Microsoft.

The Call outlines a bunch of vague actions like enforcing existing laws on producing and distributing extremist content and supporting standards on reporting terror attacks. The measures must be "consistent with a free, open, and secure internet." The governments agreed to "encourage media outlets to apply ethical standards when depicting terrorist events online." Oh, oh. What are those ethical standards? What if a media outlet failed to reach those benchmarks? Does it get shut down?

For their part, social media companies pledged to work with each other and with governments to prevent a repeat of the March livestreaming of the March mosque attacks in Christchurch, New Zealand, that led to the murder of 51 people.

The goal of the Call, which is preventing global distribution of video of an ongoing terror attack, is admirable. The US, though, shouldn't get involved in regulating content. That would put Uncle Sam on the proverbial "slippery slope" to censorship.

After all, who would be the decider when it comes to determining what is objectionable material? The First Amendment applies to even the most hideous speech.

The White House cited constitutional issues for its refusal to sign the agreement.

"We continue to be proactive in our efforts to counter terrorist content online while also continuing to respect freedom of expression and freedom of the press," a White House spokesperson told the *Washington Post*. "Further, we maintain that the best tool to defeat terrorist speech is productive speech."

Team Trump promised to stand "with the international community in condemning terrorist and violent extremist content online." It just doesn't want to be the referee.

The president, who demeans reporters, dismisses critical articles as "fake news," and trashes the press as the "enemy of the people," called it right when he refused to sign The Call.