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Dear Editor,

I would like to express my disappointment concerning the article published, last Friday, by your correspondent in Rome Angela Giuffrida (link: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/feb/14/five-stars-luigi-di-maio-calls-on-italians-to-protest-against-his-government>).

The headline and some extracts in the article denote lack of accuracy and objectivity that bring the reader to an inexact and, I would say, fake interpretation of the reality. The author has completely overlooked the real reason of the event in Rome because 5 Star has not organized an act against the Government. The event was organized against the so called “vitalizi”, the pension for life provided by law to the Italian politicians. The Senate led by the Forza Italia’s President Casellati, and not the Government, wants to reestablish this privilege that our political force had cut off in the past. We intended to protect this key legislation defending all the good measures that, thanks the Government, we have achieved in Italy.

Moreover, your author reports an opinion of Mr Iacoboni who has been convicted in Italy for defamation against the Five Star Movement. (link to the verdict: <https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/ilblogdellestelle/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/28152903/doc.-5-sentenza-del-Tribunale-di-Cremona.pdf>). I wonder why a respected newspaper like The Guardian, of which I am an avid reader, could use unverified information and controversial sources that undermine his credibility. Besides, could the editor explain where and when Ms Giuffrida heard this sentence written in the article: “He said the government is conspiring to abolish the universal basic income”?

For all those reasons, we ask The Guardian for a swift retraction of the article telling the truth and displaying impartiality.

The European Parliament has addressed several times his concern over the rise of fake news in the world of media. I share this worry because I believe in a neutral and unbiased press that might defend the citizens’ rights. I cannot believe that one of the most important European newspapers could disseminate this kind of (mis)information. I truly hope that this article could not become an example of fake news and disinformation, that’s why I ask for a retraction.

Best regards

Ignazio Corrao
Member of the European Parliament