

By Jeffrey Bradford, our North America correspondent

The UK media has been angsty about the role of peers as consultants recently and the possibility that people might actually be able to exercise an opportunity to speak with, inform and possibly lobby the odd legislator.

The Wall Street Journal yesterday published the results of the latest data on lobbying spend submitted to Congress by the biggest US contractors. The league table for 2008 reads;

Northrop Grumman (NYSE:NOC) \$20.6m (\$10.9m in 2007)

Boeing (NYSE:BA) \$16.6m (\$10.6m in 2007)

Lockheed Martin (NYSE:LMT) \$15.4m (\$10m in 2007)

General Dynamics (NYSE:GD) \$8.5m (\$7m in 2007)

Raytheon (NYSE:RTN) \$6.0m (\$6.5m in 2007)

BAE Systems (London:BA) \$4.2m (\$1.0m in 2007)

* For all the vilification of BAE Systems lobbying efforts in the UK it seems quite apparent that they are having to play 'catch-up' in the North American market.

* Northrop Grumman & Boeing efforts are probably increased due to the intense dogfight over the aerial tanker program in 2008.

* Lockheed Martin is probably focused on the F-22 production line and ensuring Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) - the single largest new procurement program in the US defense budget can make it through a change of Administration unscathed...