

# Spinning the McCanns

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Off to [CNN](#) to talk with the excellent Portuguese London correspondent Rita Jordao about the McCann coverage. Everyone hopes that communications between the family and the media will improve now that the redoubtable ex-BBC, ex-FCO man [Clarence Mitchell](#) is handling their public relations. Rita points out that the Portuguese press has been just as scurrilous as the UK tabloids ever were. “Some of these so-called police sources named in the Portuguese press could have just been cleaners in police stations” she says. But the British media are as prone to using un-named ‘sources’ to give rumours enough solidity to fill front pages. Take today’s [Mirror](#) or [Sun](#) which quote anonymous ‘sources’ who say the parents are prepared to take a lie detector test. It’s another fact-free line but if Clarence peddled it, why doesn’t he go on the record? Even Downing Street spin-doctors are now quotable and citable.

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