

Laughter for All (Financial) Times

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Introduction

In these times, when the United States pursues an unprecedented military build-up, promotes coups and trade wars, breaks weapons agreements, organizes the illegal seizure of overseas financial accounts, building barriers and walls along the southern border, Washington can count on the mass media to provide a variety of propaganda messages, ranging from the predictable ‘yellow ’ to the sophisticated ‘serious press’ .

While the political class dismisses the sensational press, they are avid readers of the ‘prize winning’ propaganda newspapers and their columnists

Among the perceptive readers who follow the serious press one can hear periodical outburst of laughter or observe cynical smiles.

The ‘serious’ newspapers which draw the greatest attention include the Financial Times, the New York Times, the Washington Post and the Wall Street Journal. Though they vary in the style and quality of their writers, they all follow the same political line, especially on issues pertaining to US imperial power.

For our purposes – and because I have been a long-time subscriber of the Financial Times (FT)---, this essay will concentrate on its journalists and their articles.

Armchair Militarists and “Western Values”

Gideon Rachman is a senior columnist for the FT who travels around the world and has a unique ability to preach ‘western values’ . . . selectively. Commentating on contemporary US and EU politics, Rachman attributes to them ‘western values’-- representative democracy, individual freedom and the rule of law.... overlooking two decades of imperial invasions, several hundred US bases around the world and countless violations of international law.

According to Rachman’s notion of ‘western values’ there is a historical legacy a long tradition of constitutional government, - overlooking the conquest of five continents.

Moreover, while Rachman has consistently condemned Syria for human rights violations, he systematically avoids Israel’s weekly murder and wounding of hundreds of unarmed Palestinian protestors. Most knowledgeable writers wink and grin as they read his selective labeling of western values.

John Paul ‘Ratface’ Rathbone is one of FT leading contributors on Latin America who specializes in celebrating murderous regimes and promoting US policies which overthrow freely elected democracies. During the first decade of the 21st century, “Ratface” (as some of his loyal readers refer to him), wrote eulogies about Colombia’s murderous President Alvaro Uribe (2002 – 2010) as he slaughtered hundreds of thousands of insurgents and activists.

While Uribe's death squads rain amok driving millions of peasants from their villages, Ratface frolicked in downtown night clubs and high-end bordellos enjoyed by oligarchs and tourists.

Consistent with the Ratface's version of Colombia's death squad democracy he condemned 'the populist' popularly elected democracies of Brazil and Venezuela.

Having distant ties to Cuba, Rathbone reminisces about the good times in pre-revolutionary Havana, its stately mansions and the fun city, as he ignores the common police practice of pulling fingernails of political dissidents.

Rathbone evokes occasional cynical smiles from columnists who are embarrassed by his toadying to Washington's intelligence operatives.

Columnist Philip Stephens in the perennial bleeding-heart liberal who sheds tears for all of his pro-western martyrs, except those Downing Street designates as pro-Russian terrorists. Stephens wears his 'liberal democratic' credentials on his backside – from which he emits his gaseous defense of UK imperial wars in Syria, Libya and Iraq.

Stephen's uncovers 'undemocratic values' in Putin's poisonous operations even in provincial English villages.

Russian journalists are not excited by Philip's journalistic ejaculations. He is the occasional butt of after work banter and laughter.

The Dean of the Times economic reportage is Martin "Marty" Wolf, who is well-known throughout the craft as the thoughtful advocate of welfare plutocracy. Martin advocates

equality, justice . . . free markets for everybody but only the rich can meet his criteria.

Marty finds and condemns populists of every hue. He engages in serious debate with leftists and rightists. But Marty like Gideon has yet to condemn Israel's settler 'populists' who practice ethnic cleansing.

Despite his statistical tables, Marty never links his facts with the western imperial pillage of Africa, Asia and Latin America. His concerns and moral indignation is very selective and flourishes when he finds colonized people who call into question his western values.

Marty's hostility to China is more than a broken financial love affair (that never was). It is part of the FT propaganda war to downgrade Beijing's economic advances in the world economy. In the January 14, 2019 issue the entire editorial board went on a rampage, ranting about China's technological theft, its 'slow down' and pending crises . . . always reaching gloomy conclusions.

The FT expert observers note 'big facts' --- that China is declining . . . all of one tenth of one percent over the previous year. Most China observers chuckle over the FT's China 'crises' and wonder how the EU is 'robust' when it touches two percent and the US a shade higher?

China's so-called economic crises is, in the eyes of the FT, a product of its bloated state sector even as it promotes science and high-tech growth---- but they are part of a total war.

Jamil Anderlini tags China as a 'colonial power' . . . with its single base in Djibouti and for financing hundreds of billions in infrastructure, while the colonialism label is not applied to the US with several hundred military bases in five continents. China's crackdown of US

funded Uighur terrorists, who have murdered hundreds of Chinese citizens, is described as genocide, a term more apt for the US intervention in Libya, Iraq, Somalia and Syria.

The FT has a stable of journalist hacks who specialize in ignoring US economic warfare against China, Russia, Iran, Venezuela etc.

All the economic 'slowdowns' among US adversaries are attributed to internal mismanagement never US intervention.

The one-sided propaganda pieces written by the FT leading hackers--- Hornby, Feng, Politi, Kynge, Mallet, Anderlini, Bozorgmehr etc--- are notoriously repetitive: China's economy is on the verge of crises--which prediction never occurs and smart investors ignore while smirking all the way to their bank accounts.

The FT would offer its subscribers plenty to laugh about over late afternoon beers, if it were not for the war crimes it endorses. Their apologies of bloody western imperial invasions in the Middle East are not laughing matters.

The FT joins the Anglo-American chorus accusing Russia of political assassinations on British soil, without evidence or witnesses.

The FT has yet to chastise their US and British paymasters for their prolonged economic war against the elected governments in Venezuela.

The upwardly mobile FT scribes ,scrambling for senior posts, ignore the laughter at their pious claims of 'democratic values' because their columns reek of lies and denials of

China's advances, Russia's economic recovery from the catastrophic decline which the Times celebrated alongside the oligarchs' plunder during the lost decade of the nineties.

Conclusion

The difference between the articles in the FT and the handouts from the war ministry is a matter of source not substance.

As the US engages in a total war on China's cutting-edge industries, particularly, the world's most advanced telecom company Huawei, the FT parrots US threats and warnings without the least effort to sort out facts from propaganda.

The fact is, the Times is part and parcel of the imperial revival which attempts to block China from establishing its pre-eminence in the world. The FT echoes President Trump's lies about economic theft as the basis for China's Huawei's global leadership in telecom technology.

The FT gloss over its overt political role, evokes smirks among knowledgeable insiders as they scoff their beer.

Anti-Trump rhetoric fails to obscure the fact that the FT fronts for most of his policies – from financial deregulations, pro-Israel apologetics and Middle East wars.

There is one caveat; the FT is more warlike than the President! The FT is for remaining in Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia and any other independent country! While the FT

publishes upscale articles on wine tasting, the arts, literature, travel and jewel collecting ,its 'serious' news promotes bloody imperial wars. There is nary a western war that the Times fails to support.

In truth, the FT are the print- police and gatekeepers overseeing the defense of 'democratic values' by any means necessary (including wars of untold destruction)!

The larger issue confronting the US public concern the link between the 'serious press', the educated reading public and Washington's perpetual war strategy.

The 'serious press' like the FT is no stranger to propagandizing in favor of imperial wars, since its founding. Its lack of objectivity is a fact of life and is predictable. What is new and dangerous is that journalist-critics are few and far between, particularly as the US empire is challenged at home and abroad.

The turn to militarism and the decline in imperial economic dominance puts a premium on media propaganda; its job is convincing and activating the young, politically educated class, which does not have a commitment to the serious press.

Financial elites continue to subscribe but many laugh at the one-sided advocacy of US denigration of China – since most investors have made money on China's robust growth.

Most investors are bored by the Times fables about ending wars in Afghanistan and elsewhere. It may come to pass someday that ridicule, loud and repeated laughter, will bankrupt the serious press, that its readers will be confined to Wall Street and the Pentagon.

Even today, readers are disgusted by the FT grotesque front page features. Madeleine Albright appears on the House and Home section which mentions her 'hospitality' omitting to include her murderous bombing of hundreds of thousands of Iraqi homes and her claim that the murder of a half-million Iraqi children was 'worth it' to win the war!