

Whistling Past the Wildfires

Anti-government extremists of the American Right continue to insist that concern about global warming is some sort of “statist” plot as they block policies to address the worsening crisis and slash funds needed to respond to its effects like deadly wildfires, as Michael Winship explains.

By Michael Winship

In the weeks and months immediately following 9/11, one of the most touching responses in my neighborhood, not far Ground Zero, was the overwhelming support of police and fire departments from around the country.

Across the street from my apartment, at the 6th Precinct headquarters from which two officers had rushed to the scene and died, every day a different police contingent from a different town in America guarded our street. And a couple of blocks away, at the Squad 18 firehouse, which lost seven men on September 11, fellow firefighters from all over came to stand vigil and pay their respects. Solidarity.



All this came back to me when the memorial was held a couple of weeks ago for the 19 firemen who died battling the Yarnell Hill wildfire in Arizona. The tragedy was the worst to befall firefighters since the World Trade Center came down, and the most deadly in 80 years for the men and women who dedicate themselves to taming blazes in the wilderness.

Thousands jammed into an arena in Prescott Valley, Arizona, with the overflow of the crowd in an adjoining parking lot, standing, listening and mourning under the desert sun. There were firefighters there from Phoenix, Tucson and Yuma, but also from Sacramento, Los Angeles and New York.

Nine days before, the crew members of the Granite Mountain Hotshots had been fatally overtaken by flames and smoke. When the winds picked up and the fire changed direction, surging four miles in 20 minutes, they were trapped,

surrounded in a box canyon, trying to save themselves under emergency fire shelters that melted from the heat.

Anyone who has ever been in the middle of a serious fire knows how terrifying they are and unpredictable, even for those like the hotshots, with their courage, skills and conditioning. Much of what gets them through is their camaraderie and the knowledge that what they do saves lives and property.

The least we can do is stand in solidarity behind them, but on both a micro and macro level, our stalwart U.S. Congress, aided and abetted by government bureaucracy, is cutting Western firefighters' lifeline much as it did when members of the House initially balked at aid for sick and dying 9/11 first responders. This, despite their publicly professed pride in the men and women who rush into danger when the rest of us rush out to safety.

"In May, Obama administration officials warned that sequester cuts would inhibit the nation's ability to effectively fight wildfires in the West," Derek Pugh wrote in the progressive Campaign for America's Future blog on July 1. "Budget cuts are putting the lives of our firefighters and those who live in and near forests at an unacceptably high risk.

"The automatic spending cuts have forced the U.S. Forest Service to shed 500 firefighters, between 50 and 70 fire trucks and two aircrafts in this year's budget. The sequester will leave agencies \$115 million short of normal firefighting capacity, meaning that 200,000 fewer acres will be treated to prevent fires."

Fighting actual fires has meant shifting money from fire prevention, which in a Catch-22-like situation may actually create more and worse fires in the future. And, according to the Climate Desk at *Mother Jones* magazine, "The agency's next proposed budget cuts preventative spending by a further 24 percent.

"It's all part of what fire ecologists, environmentalists, and firefighters interviewed by Climate Desk describe as an increasingly distorted federal budget that has apparently forgotten the old adage about an ounce of prevention: It pours billions (\$2 billion in 2012) into fighting fires but skimps on cheap, proven methods for stopping megafires before they start."

This worry was echoed by four Western senators in a letter to the Office of Management and Budget and other cabinet departments written, coincidentally, on the very day the fatal Yarnell Hill fire began: "This approach to paying for firefighting is nonsensical and further increases wildland fire costs."

And a May report from Northern Arizona University's Ecological Restoration Institute "found that the bulk of the costs from megafires are borne not by the

federal government but by local governments and the federal budgeting process ignores those bills when weighing whether prevention saves money.”

As for the macro, the simple fact that we refuse to take legislative action to curb climate change is part of the reason fires will continue to worsen.

“Big wildfires thrive in dry air, low humidity, and high winds,” James West reports in *Mother Jones*. “Climate change is going to make those conditions more frequent over the next century. We know because it’s already happening: A University of Arizona report from 2006 found that large forest fires have occurred more often in the western United States since the mid-1980s as spring temperatures increased, snow melted earlier, and summers got hotter, leaving more and drier fuels for fires to devour.

“Thomas Tidwell, the head of the United States Forest Service, told a Senate committee on energy and natural resources recently that the fire season now lasts two months longer and destroys twice as much land as it did four decades ago. Fires now, he said, burn the same amount of land faster.”

It’s part of that “new normal” you keep hearing about drought, heat, earlier growing seasons, new insect infestations, global air and water currents, like the Gulf jet stream, shifting. And fewer trees mean less carbon dioxide being absorbed by them, more CO₂ given off when the remaining ones burn, which adds to the warming and more fires you get the picture.

“The West is burning,” Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid recently told reporters. “We have climate change. You can’t deny it.”

And if you don’t believe him, listen to Dr. Michael Medler, a scientist at Western Washington University who used to be a wildland firefighter himself. “On the firelines, it is clear that global warming is changing fire behavior, creating longer fire seasons, and causing more frequent, large-scale, high severity wildfires,” he told a House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming. “Many firefighters have commented that they are facing more extreme fire behavior than they have witnessed in their lifetimes.”

The good news is that Dr. Medler says some of his colleagues speculate there’s a ten-year “window of opportunity to have some control over fire behavior with desirable effects”

The bad news is he said that nearly six years ago. The Granite Mountain Hotshots have just finished burying their dead.

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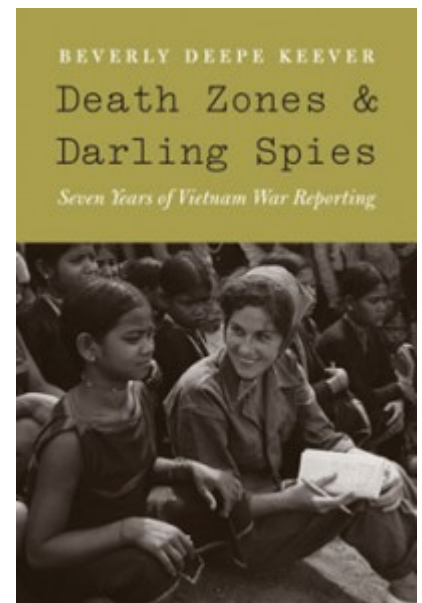
Scooping ‘the Boys’ of Vietnam Press

Exclusive: During her seven years covering the Vietnam War, Beverly Deepe Kever broke through the male-dominated world of war reporting and nearly changed history with her discovery that Richard Nixon’s 1968 campaign was sabotaging the Paris peace talks, notes Don North in his review of her memoir.

By Don North

Before the Vietnam War, female war correspondents were a rarity, but that conflict, nearly a half century ago, often put women covering war on par with their male colleagues and Beverly Deepe Kever set the bar high as she plunged into the bloody jungles and political intrigue of Vietnam.

Between 1965 and 1973, the U.S. command would accredit 462 women, 267 of them Americans. Two were killed reporting the war. Kever arrived in 1962 and stayed until 1969.



In seven years, she established a reputation as one of the hardest-working, resourceful and well-connected journalists working the war. She soon changed the attitude of old hands who resented women as war correspondents and thus helped create a respectful attitude toward women reporters from young male reporters like myself newly assuming the mantle of war correspondent.

Then known by her maiden name, Beverly Deepe, she was well prepared to land in Saigon. At 26, she held a masters degree in journalism from Columbia when she began her career in Vietnam with a seven-month “freelancing” stint. For those of us who don’t have the patience or time to wait around for a staff job, freelancing is the way to become an instant journalist by selling individual stories to editors and eventually hoping for regular assignments or a fulltime job.

There are many downsides to freelancing. Over half your time is spent pitching stories or seeking clients for your work. And the paychecks are often meager. But not having to meet regular deadlines freelancers can linger for long periods on interesting stories and choose ones they like and not those assigned by out-of-touch news editors back home. Beverly Deepe eventually earned reporting jobs with *Newsweek*, the *Christian Science Monitor* and other major news outlets.

Now 44 years after leaving Vietnam, she has written a memoir and perspective on her experiences, *Death Zones & Darling Spies*. It was worth waiting for. She saved every note and document from her years in country and they provide colorful and accurate recollections of her work.

From her earliest days, she established solid Vietnamese sources and through her interpreters interviewing villagers at the rice-roots gained an insight on the Vietnamese that few journalists matched. Her reporting on the failure of President Diem’s Strategic Hamlet Program, which had been praised by U.S. officials, would herald the fall of President Diem in a violent coup.

For a cash-strapped freelancer, Kever took a big financial risk hiring two Vietnamese journalists as part-time translators and fixers, but the advantages to her command of the news scene were enormous providing constant insights into the shadow world of Vietnam. Where she economized was in transportation, regularly hailing Saigon “Peugeot” taxicabs to take her through dangerous Viet Cong-threatened highways to where the action was.

When she got wind of an important battle looming at Ap Bac, rather than wait to hitch a helicopter ride she took a commercial taxi to the staging area of the Vietnamese Seventh Division. The gamble paid off as the battle of Ap Bac became a big news story and she filed more than 20 pages of text to *Newsweek*.

Kever also suffered heartbreak when some of her best stories were ignored by editors with poor judgment. With great enterprise she had obtained an exclusive interview with Buddhist monk Thick Quang Duc who was threatening to be the first monk to sacrifice himself as a protest against the Diem government. The story was sent to the *London Sunday Express*. Three days later the monk burned himself alive, electrifying world opinion. When she asked if the *Express* had used her

work, an editor replied, "We didn't use incendiary monk which proves what an idiot I am."

Keever's reporting was often resented at the U.S. Embassy in Saigon and she was the only American reporter not regularly invited to Embassy background briefings. However that was not always a negative. At one such background given by Ambassador Maxwell Taylor she was able to learn the gist of his remarks and reported them while the invited journalists were forbidden to identify the "U.S. official."

Not being invited to such "boys' club" briefings, which often morphed into hard-drinking, high-stakes poker games, saved her from massive hangovers and loss of wages to poker sharks.

Keever spent much of her time in the field with U.S. and ARVN combat forces and observed their high-tech war methods as well as their inability to distinguish friendly farmers from hide-and-seeK guerillas. At the same time she reported widely on Vietnamese women's role and established a rapport with powerful women like Madam Ngo Dien Diem and Mrs. Nguyen Cao Ky while writing in-depth stories on their lives.

On the eve of Tet in January 1968, she rode a motorcycle into the French rubber plantations near Bien Ho to interview top Viet Cong political cadres and guerillas, a scoop seldom accomplished during the war. She reported the chaos of the Tet offensive on Saigon and moved up to Hue where the U.S. Marines fought for almost a month to dislodge North Vietnamese regulars from the Citadel.

At Khe Sahn in the wake of Tet, she settled in to write over a half dozen reports at the peak of the siege. Her Khe Sahn stories were nominated by the *Christian Science Monitor* for a Pulitzer prize.

Perhaps the most important and enterprising of Keever's work which didn't get published by nervous editors at the *Christian Science Monitor* was her exclusive report on presidential candidate Richard Nixon's encouragement of South Vietnam's President Thieu to withhold a delegation to the Paris Peace talks until after the 1968 election – and thus sabotage President Lyndon Johnson's effort to end the war.

The *Monitor* editors chose to kill the story claiming it lacked adequate evidence to charge Nixon with "the virtual equivalent of treason," which is what later historians found was also President Johnson's view of Nixon's behind-the-scenes maneuver.

The story of what happened to Keever's 1968 election story was recently uncovered by investigative reporter Robert Parry when he was searching through a

once highly classified file at Johnson's presidential library in Austin, Texas. Parry discovered that the *Monitor* had asked its Washington correspondent to run the information past the White House.

Keever's material, which was based on South Vietnamese sources, reached President Johnson himself. He knew the story to be true because of national security wiretaps that he had placed on the South Vietnamese Embassy in Washington and on at least one of Nixon's operatives.

So, on the eve of the Nov. 5, 1968, election, Johnson convened a conference call with Secretary of State Dean Rusk, Defense Secretary Clark Clifford and national security advisor Walt Rostow all of whom counseled Johnson against confirming Keever's story for fear that Nixon might win anyway but with his presidency severely damaged by revelation of his treachery.

Johnson agreed to stay silent; the *Monitor* editors spiked her "unconfirmed" story; and Nixon narrowly defeated Vice President Hubert Humphrey the next day. Nixon then extended the Vietnam War four more years. [For details on how Keever's almost scoop was discovered and the historical consequences, see Consortiumnews.com's "[The Almost Scoop on Nixon's 'Treason'](#)" or Robert Parry's [American Stolen Narrative](#).]

Asked by Parry if publication of her story and a Nixon loss in the election would have changed history, she replied, "I think the final outcome would ultimately be the same for Vietnam, with the Communists seizing control of the South. [But] the war would have been shorter and less bloody without the incursions and bombing in Laos and Cambodia."

Keever faced other disappointments from her years in Vietnam. In 1990, Pham Xuan An, who had been her chief assistant and translator, was exposed as a Colonel in the Viet Cong and a master spy. Keever was shocked and surprised although she said An had not undermined the truthfulness of her dispatches. Still, she felt she had been betrayed and never again spoke to An who died in 2006.

In choosing her book title, Keever had checked the source of a quote by Mao that An had translated and found he had mistyped "*daring spies*" as "*darling spies*." Keever reflected, "An indeed qualified as a darling spy, and years later I learned that Vuong (her second Vietnamese assistant) did too. Vuong worked for the CIA. I thought darling spies seemed like an ingenious, fitting label to describe both patriotic Vietnamese risking their lives to sleuth for foreign governments engaged on opposite sides of a cataclysm."

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Conduct, the story of a World War II correspondent whose career was crushed by the intrigue he uncovered.

Zionism's Lost Shine

Secretary of State John Kerry got an agreement for renewed Israeli-Palestinian talks, but Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu's insistence that Israel not only keep much of the Occupied Territories but be formally recognized as a Jewish state precludes a just resolution for the Arab people of Palestine and promises continued resistance, as Lawrence Davidson explains.

By Lawrence Davidson

The Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement directed toward Israel started in 2005 when a coalition of Palestine-based social and economic organizations called for such a comprehensive effort. At first the BDS movement appeared to be a long shot.

Israel, with its worldwide coterie of Zionist supporters, both Jewish and Christian, seemed invincible. Particularly in the Western world, the belief in Israel's legitimacy had reached the status of sacred tradition. The Zionists worked very hard to achieve this status by controlling the historical interpretation of events that had led from World War I and the Balfour Declaration to the creation of Israel in 1948 and beyond.

They might well have been able to maintain control of Israel's past, present and future if the Zionist leadership had not succumbed to the sin of hubris. They became so ideologically self-righteous and militarily muscle-bound that they believed their place in the world to be untouchable. Thus, as they built a country based on discrimination and colonial expansion in an age increasingly critical of such societies, they refused all compromise with the Palestinians and treated criticism of their behavior and policies as at once anti-Semitic and irrelevant. They therefore failed to notice that their stubbornness was allowing others to erode the Zionist version of the history of modern Palestine/Israel.

Eight years is not a very long time, but a surprising amount has been accomplished. Increasing numbers of people, particularly in the Western world, have been made aware of the plight of the Palestinians as well as their version of the history of Palestine/Israel. With this change in historical perspective, BDS established a foothold and started to grow. The movement has spent most of its time since 2005 coordinating a series of efforts to convince private-sector

consumers, businesses, academics and artists to cut their ties with the Zionist State and its colonies.

The latest success in this effort came just recently, when two of the largest supermarket chains in the Netherlands announced they would no longer sell Israeli merchandise manufactured or grown in the Occupied Territories (OT). Indeed, so successful has BDS been that the Israeli government has established an official task force to counteract it.

European Union Makes a Move

Another recent event may be even more significant, because it suggests the potential for expanding BDS from the private to the public sphere. This was signaled when the European Union (EU) issued new rules for implementing certain categories of funding agreements with Israel. Funding of grants, prizes, loans and other financial cooperative ventures will now exclude Israeli institutions located in or doing business with the OT.

I want to emphasize the notion of “potential” because the EU move is not a boycott action as such. It is a signal to Israel that the EU will not recognize Israel’s claim to any part of the Occupied Territories without a peace settlement, and therefore this move serves as a point of pressure on the Israeli government to give up its hubris and negotiate with the Palestinian National Authority (PNA). By the way, the PNA as presently constituted is not a representative body and therefore has no legal authority to negotiate anything. However, the EU (along with the Israelis and the United States) persistently ignores this fact.

Nonetheless, this EU ruling is a step in the right direction, and some important Israelis understand the message. For instance, the Israeli peace organization Gush Shalom released a statement saying the “EU has started to confront the government of Israel – and every citizen of Israel – with a road sign that cannot be ignored.” At least not without moving Israel toward “being an international pariah.”

The renowned columnist and reporter for Israel’s newspaper *Haaretz*, Gideon Levy, has declared “The change [Israel needs] won’t come from within. . . . Change will only come from the outside.” Therefore, “Anyone who really fears for the future of the country needs to be in favor of boycotting it economically.”

And, Israeli Justice Minister Tzipi Livni, the present government’s only minister publicly in favor of negotiations with the Palestinians, has warned that the threat of European economic sanctions extends beyond the OT. “It’s true

that it will begin with the settlements,” she stated. “But their [a growing number of Europeans’] problem is with Israel, which is perceived as a colonialist country, so it won’t stop with the settlements and will reach all of Israel.”

Livni is correct. Israel’s version of history notwithstanding, the country’s origin is as a colonial settler state. As suggested above, the result was an inherently discriminatory society. This is not because most Israeli citizens are Jewish. It is because most are Zionists.

Modern Zionism, which still reflects the colonial outlook of Nineteenth Century imperial Europe, is the guiding ideology of Israel, and it proclaims that the country must be a Jewish State. Unfortunately, you can’t design a country for one group only in a land where there also exists other sizable groups and not end up with a discriminatory and oppressive society. Therefore, even if, by some miracle, the Israelis see the light and withdraw from the OT, there will still be a BDS movement agitating for an end to discrimination against non-Jews within the 1948 borders.

Israel’s Negative Reaction

Becoming a real democracy, where all citizens enjoy genuine political equality, is Israel’s only way of escaping the inevitable isolation that comes with the growing BDS movement. Yet, there is no reason to believe that the ideologues who now control the Israeli political and religious power structures are going to move in this direction. One can see this not only from the growing effort the Israeli government is putting into countering BDS, but also from the angry reaction of its political leaders to the EU decision.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu reacted to the EU decision with the temperament of a monarch. “We will not accept any external edicts on our borders.” That was, perhaps, the royal “we” he used. Then it was back to the first-person singular: “I will not let anyone harm the hundreds of thousands of Israelis living in Judea and Samaria, in the Golan Heights, or in Jerusalem – our united capital.”

The prime minister was quite off base in his pronouncements. He is the head of a country that has meticulously avoided setting borders for decades just so Israel could expand at opportune moments. That sort of imperial behavior is not well accepted in today’s world. Also, unless he can greatly increase Zionist lobby leverage on the EU, he has no way to prevent the “harm” that may finally befall his compatriots for naively assuming the whole world will accept their criminal

behavior forever.

The entire episode points to the fact that, both in the private and public sectors of Western society, greater numbers of people no longer follow the line of historical interpretation set down by the Zionists. This is a major shift. Many Zionists might see this as a sign of growing anti-Semitism, but it really is nothing of the sort. There is nothing inherently Jewish about discrimination and colonialism. However, the same cannot be said for modern Zionism.

Again, the BDS movement is only eight years old. We can compare this to the more than 30 years it took the boycott of South Africa to end apartheid. So, comparatively, BDS is only at the beginning of its trek. Its fast start and ongoing achievements should bring hope and pride to those involved in the movement. They should also raise some serious second thoughts in the minds of those Israelis who think Netanyahu and his government of ideologues can prevent their country's increasing isolation.

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Puttin' the Pressure on Putin

Exclusive: The Obama administration continues to compound the diplomatic mess around former NSA contractor Edward Snowden. The latest blunder was announcing that the U.S. wouldn't torture or execute Snowden, a reminder to the world how far Official Washington has strayed from civilized behavior, notes ex-CIA analyst Ray McGovern.

By Ray McGovern

The main question now on the fate of truth-teller Edward Snowden is whether Russian President Vladimir Putin will see any benefit in helping stop the United States from further embarrassing itself as it prances around the globe acting like a "pitiful, helpless giant." That image was coined by President Richard Nixon, who insisted that the giant of America would merit those adjectives if it did not prevail in South Vietnam.

It is no secret that Putin is chuckling as Attorney General Eric Holder and other empty-shirts-cum-corporate-law-office-silk-ties assisted ably by White

House spokesperson Jay Carney proceed willy-nilly to transform the Snowden case from a red-faced diplomatic embarrassment for the United States into a huge geopolitical black eye before the rest of the world.

Reminding the planet how out of step the United States has been from most of the civilized world, Holder offered a written promise to the Russians on July 9 (and released on Friday) that Snowden would neither be tortured nor put to death for disclosing secrets about how the National Security Agency has been spying on Americans and pretty much everybody else on Earth.

Holder assured the Russian Justice Minister that the U.S. "would not seek the death penalty for Mr. Snowden should he return to the United States." Holder also saw fit to reassure his Russian counterpart that, "Mr. Snowden will not be tortured. Torture is unlawful in the United States." Wow, that's a relief!

The United States is so refined in its views on human rights that it won't torture or execute a whistleblower. Of course, that only reminded everyone that the United States is one of the few advanced societies that still puts lots of people to death and was caught just last decade torturing detainees at CIA "black sites," not to mention the brutal treatment of other prisoners at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

And, there was the humiliating treatment afforded another American whistleblower, Private Bradley Manning, whose forced nudity and long periods in solitary confinement during eight months of confinement at the Marine base at Quantico, Virginia, just outside of Washington D.C. prompted international accusations of torture.

Holder's strange promise may have been designed to undercut Snowden's bid for asylum, but it also reminded the world of America's abysmal behavior on human rights. And, even if the United States promises not to torture someone, government lawyers have shown how they can play games with the definition of the term or just outright lie. Holder's reputation for veracity is just a thin notch above that of National Intelligence Director James Clapper, who admits he has chosen to testify under oath to the "least untruthful" things.

Perhaps no one has told Holder how shockingly out of step with other civilized nations the U.S. finds itself on the issue of capital punishment. Just calling attention to that is a diplomatic gaffe of some proportion. The global trend toward abolition of the death penalty is unmistakable and increasing. The United States even is the outlier on this issue when compared to "brutal" Russia. In Russia, there has been a moratorium on executions since 1996, although it is still technically lawful.

The European Union holds a strong and principled position against the death penalty, and the abolition of capital punishment is a pre-condition for entry into the Union. The U.S. enjoys the dubious distinction of joining a list with China, Iran, Iraq and Saudi Arabia as the leaders in executing people.

Closing the Barn Door Too Late

Holder's high-profile push to get the Russians to hand over Snowden damages the United States in other ways, too, such as reminding the world how the U.S. government has violated the privacy rights of people everywhere, including in allied countries. There is a reasonable argument to be made that the smartest U.S. move would be to simply leave Snowden alone.

Depending on your perspective, Edward Snowden has already done his damage or, in my view, accomplished his patriotic duty of truth-telling demonstrating with documents how the administrations of George W. Bush and Barack Obama have trashed the Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

Moreover, Snowden apparently had the foresight to handle his revelations in such way that, to the degree there are still more genies about to be let out of the bottle, it will be near impossible to stuff them back in. Indeed, he has said as much, in indicating how easily he can accede to Putin's condition that he does "no further harm" to the U.S. Snowden has even been specific in acknowledging that he cannot prevent journalist Glenn Greenwald and others from publishing more of the material he made available.

So why the hue and cry from Washington? While the Obama White House has utterly failed to honor Obama's earlier promises to run a transparent administration, there is one area in which it has been as transparent as Saran Wrap. And that is its fixation with pursuing whistleblowers "to the full extent of the law" ... and then some.

The administration has been transparently vindictive, revengeful and determined to exact retribution on "leakers" as a warning to others whose consciences might trouble them enough to reveal war crimes, as Bradley Manning did, or crass violations of our rights as citizens, as Edward Snowden did.

But the recent thrashing around – demanding and cajoling Putin to turn over Snowden – has further made the United States look petulant and inept. Meanwhile, Putin has demonstrated a much more deft touch in handling this delicate international incident.

After making it clear that "we do not extradite," Putin has had the good sense to put some distance between himself and the Snowden affair. As Secretary of State John Kerry bemoaned (from Saudi Arabia, of all places) about "standards of

behavior between sovereign nations,” and (of all things) “respect for the rule of law,” Putin said the issue is simple:

“Should such people [as Snowden] be extradited to be jailed, or not? In any case, I would prefer not to deal with such issues, because this is just the same as shaving a piglet too much noise but too little hair.”

Will Putin Cave?

Do the feckless folks running President Barack Obama’s foreign policy really think they can force Putin to back down? Can they actually believe they can achieve that by putting into play what they apparently consider a diplomatic “nuclear option”? The thinly veiled threat surfaced ten days ago that Obama will snub Putin by canceling their planned tete-a-tete before the G-20 summit in St. Petersburg in September.

Can they possibly think that by pouting, jibing and stamping their feet, they will frighten Putin into “behaving” as obediently as the malleable Italians, French, Spanish, Portuguese and Austrians did when they forced down Bolivian President Evo Morales’s plane for inspection? Morales was en route home from a visit to Russia when someone provided the U.S. with a “tip” that Snowden was hiding on Morales’s plane.

I find myself wondering who provided Washington with that great tip, and whether it is no longer the practice among U.S. intelligence agencies to take rudimentary steps to verify such tips before they let their masters get greasy diplomatic egg all over their faces?

Finally, how many more times does Putin have to say, as he did through his spokesman again Friday that: “Russia has never extradited anyone, and will not extradite [Snowden].”

Months ago, former UK MI5 intelligence officer Annie Machon coined the term “asymmetric extradition law” referring to U.S. policy, which, in the vernacular, might be called “pick-and-choose.” While there is no extradition treaty between the U.S. and Russia, there has been one between the U.S. and Italy for 30 years. Yet, Washington has turned a deaf ear to Italy’s appeals to extradite convicted kidnapper Robert Seldon Lady, former head of the CIA worker bees in Milan where the CIA mounted an “extraordinary rendition” against the Muslim cleric known as Abu Omar off the streets in 2003. Omar was given over to the tender mercies of Egyptian intelligence interrogators.

In 2005, when Lady got a tip that the Italian police were coming for him, he reportedly fled his villa without destroying sensitive files on the CIA’s mission. Italy convicted Lady and 22 other U.S. operatives in absentia and gave

them hefty jail sentences. Last December, Italy's justice minister signed a warrant for Lady's arrest. On July 18, Lady was identified and detained in Panama, but slipped away the next day on a plane headed toward the U.S.

Few were surprised that Panama was pressured into joining the servile company of the four U.S.-crony European countries that had already embarrassed themselves as accessories to the Washington's latest Excellent Adventure regarding Evo Morales's plane a fiasco code-named OARR (for Operation Airline Rest Room) after the suspected place where Snowden was believed stowed away.

But when it came to extraditing a convicted kidnapper from Panama to Italy? Puleeze. Great powers don't have to do that kind of thing, treaty or not. Except for Russia, you see. Moscow must surrender Snowden, even absent a U.S.-Russia extradition treaty. And Putin should understand that, no?

It must have been that kind of superpower-think that prompted Jay Carney on July 12 to add insult to injury, as he jibed at the Russian government to "afford human rights organizations the ability to do their work in Russia throughout Russia, not just at the Moscow transit lounge." That kind of comment is sure to endear the White House to the Kremlin.

Vladimir Volokh, head of the Russian Migration Service, seemed to welcome a chance to retaliate in kind. Rubbing in the awkwardness of Snowden's present status because of actions by Washington, Volokh told the Interfax news agency Friday: "We know that he is Edward Snowden only from his words. The passport he has has been canceled. ... He is under protection in the transit area for his safety. He is an individual being pursued and his life is in danger."

The Russians, and pretty much everyone else, are smart enough to realize that, given Washington's transparent motives, there is nothing to be gained by serving Snowden up to American "justice," such as it has become. Russia is no banana republic, so it beggars belief that President Putin will follow the supine example of Panama. Nor is the fawning example of Italy, France, Spain and Portugal something Putin would wish to emulate.

Russian History

Scholars of Russian history make an important point that is relevant here: it is Russia's deeply embedded inferiority complex vis-à-vis the West. Recite to Vladimir Putin the familiar adage, "Scratch the Russian and find the Tatar," and see what happens.

In short, while Europe was coming out of the Dark Ages into the Renaissance, the Russians were for more than two centuries under the likes of Genghis Khan and his hordes a period the Russians call the "Tatar Yoke." This reality had very

serious consequences and is deeply embedded in the Russian consciousness. In a sense, the Russians have been playing catch-up ball ever since.

Their struggle seems never ending, but now and again they reach high ground. L’Affaire Snowden is one of those “nows.” Russia occupies the high moral ground, helped immeasurably by the behavior of the Bush and Obama administrations, which have squandered the moral advantage the U.S. used to enjoy.

Worse still, from President Obama’s perspective, there is little leverage he can bring to bear on the Russian Bear. If Putin thought Obama was really running things in Washington, he might try to barter Snowden’s freedom for some significant concession. But Moscow is not likely to believe Obama could deliver on any such concession, and Russian officials are probably right.

Obama, Holder, Carney and the rest would be well advised not to push any more geopolitical chips onto the table in a risky bet on winning back Snowden. Russia has the better cards on this one, and it is a mark of realism, as well as intelligence, to recognize “when to fold them.”

Otherwise, and particularly if Putin keeps seeing the pastel-tie empty suits pontificating on how Russia must do its duty in surrendering Edward Snowden, there is a chance we may see Putin take Snowden to asylum in Latin America on his own plane, overflying Austria, Italy, France, Spain, Portugal and Panama en route.

Ray McGovern works with Tell the Word, a publishing arm of the ecumenical Church of the Saviour in inner-city Washington. His graduate degree is in Russian history, which served him well as a Soviet analyst during the first decade of his 27-year tenure at the CIA. He is co-founder of Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity (VIPS).

Brushing Aside the Rule of Law

President George W. Bush famously mocked questions about international law with fake horror and the response, “I better call my lawyer!” But the rule of law is under broader assault within the U.S. government, now centered on whether to call Egypt’s military coup a coup, as ex-CIA analyst Paul R. Pillar writes.

By Paul R. Pillar

I have spent much time around government lawyers, and nearly all of the ones I have known have consistently conducted themselves with a couple of important objectives in mind. One is to apply legal analysis fully and fairly to whatever subject is at hand, not shying away from noting legal requirements even when they become policy inconveniences. Another is to support the larger missions of those they are advising by pointing out legal ways, if they exist, to accomplish those missions.

Against that background it is disconcerting to read that the issue of the most recent Egyptian military coup and its ramifications for U.S. aid is being side-stepped in Washington by just not offering any legal opinion about the nature of the Egyptian generals' move. A senior administration official said, "We will not say it was a coup, we will not say it was not a coup, we will just not say."

Setting aside the legal issue about characterizing the coup, whether any suspension of U.S. aid to Egypt at this time makes sense is a question about which reasonable people can and do disagree. It is not a clear-cut policy call.

I happen to believe that suspension would be an appropriate response to the overthrow by the military of a freely elected president. If the generals' promises about moving back in the direction of democracy are to be believed, such a suspension need not last long. There is good reason to believe a suspension would increase the likelihood the generals will keep their promises. The appropriateness of a suspension is made all the greater by indications since the military ousted Mohamed Morsi that so far the generals are moving less toward democracy than toward a replay of initial installation of military rule six decades ago.

The fact that there *is* a legal issue, given a statutory requirement to suspend aid in such circumstances, makes the costs of not recognizing the reality of the Egyptian coup all the greater. Failure to recognize this reality is an act of hypocrisy, which fosters additional foreign cynicism about anything the United States says concerning democratic or other values.

It also is a staining of our own political culture. It is a compromise of our respect for the rule of law, even when it is our own law. The rule of law represents one of the most fundamental differences between the United States and the least desirable polities of the world. We cannot afford to treat it casually.

To be sure, there is a problem of Congress using legislation to tie the hands of the Executive Branch in unhelpful ways that can impede effective foreign policy. Congress does too much of this; it ought to do less, especially when doing so is essentially political posturing, as it often is. At a minimum, Congress ought to

incorporate more consistently than it does in legislation related to foreign policy the possibility of an Executive Branch waiver. But this is all a larger problem that is not solved by simply flouting whatever law is, for better or for worse, on the books.

There have been in recent American history too many other indications of an erosion in respect for the rule of law, from those within government whose functions are all about making or executing the law. There has been, for example, the ignoring of judicial review requirements on a matter that, as we see in current debate about electronic surveillance, is controversial enough even when the law is observed.

There have been presidential signing statements, which are a way of explaining an interpretation of a law but at times have been used instead to declare an intention not to obey a law. There is the falling into disuse of the Congressional declaration of war, replaced by Congressional expressions that are outdated or unclear regarding the legal basis for the use of military force. If these things are all part of a coherent pattern, we ought to be worried.

Paul R. Pillar, in his 28 years at the Central Intelligence Agency, rose to be one of the agency's top analysts. He is now a visiting professor at Georgetown University for security studies. (This article first appeared as a blog post at The National Interest's Web site. Reprinted with author's permission.)

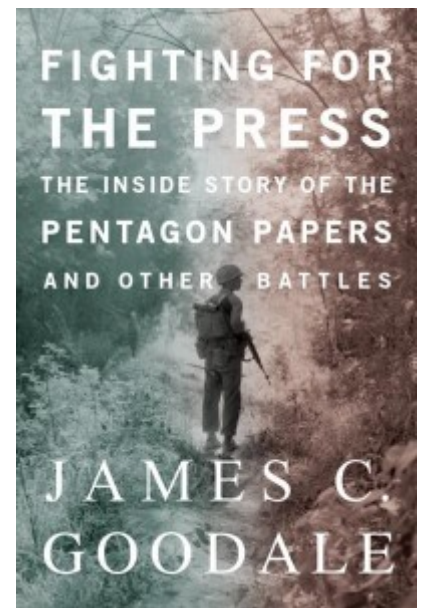
Chilling the First Amendment

President Obama has overseen an unprecedented legal campaign against leaks of classified information with New York Times journalist James Risen now facing possible jail for refusing to testify in the trial of ex-CIA officer Jeffrey Sterling for a leak published in Risen's book, *State of War*, a topic that First Amendment attorney James Goodale discusses with Dennis J Bernstein.

By Dennis J Bernstein

Federal prosecutors are seeking to compel New York Times reporter and author James Risen to testify at the trial of Jeffrey Sterling, a former CIA officer charged with leaking information about a flawed CIA operation to sabotage Iran's nuclear program that Risen reported extensively on.

On July 19, the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in favor of the Obama administration that Risen must testify at Sterling's trial, just the latest case of cracking down on leakers and journalists who publish classified information.



James Goodale, a prominent First Amendment lawyer, calls the administration's campaign against leaks a threat to the ability of reporters to do their jobs. Goodale represented the New York Times in the landmark 1971 Pentagon Papers case, when the Nixon Administration tried to stop the Times from publishing the top secret documents.

Goodale is the author of a new book, *Fighting for the Press: The Inside Story of the Pentagon Papers and Other Battles*, and sees parallels between the Pentagon Papers case and current efforts to prosecute Sterling, Bradley Manning and Edward Snowden. He was interviewed by Dennis J Bernstein on Pacifica's *Flashpoints*.

DB: Welcome Mr. Goodale, it's really good to have you. I don't think you could have picked a better time to write this book. And I understand you had some very specific reasons why you wanted to get this information out and posthaste. Could you give us the background?

JG: I wrote this book really as a clarion call to your listeners, to yourself, to journalists to wake up to President Obama and what he had in mind for the press, so that we would be prepared to deal with it. We're in a crisis right now, I would think. In this country, we're all concerned about national security, and what should be done to people who leak.

And my book is about one of the greatest leaks of all time. I was prompted particularly to do the book, not only by the clarion call to Obama but also by the fact that WikiLeaks had, in effect, created a leak comparable to the

Pentagon Papers. So that's the background. We've got two great leak stories going on now, one that went on many years ago and we have a president who is very concerned about national security, as indeed President Nixon was, at the time of the Pentagon Papers. So there's a lot going on that has familiar rings to it.

DB: You write ... and I want to ask you straight up. You say "Obama is worse for the press and press freedom than former President Richard Nixon was." Is that hyperbole or is that your case?

JG: Well, what I say is if President Obama goes forward, and he tries to prosecute WikiLeaks, and he tries to do it on a conspiracy theory and he succeeds, he will be worse than Nixon. Because Nixon tried to do the same thing against the New York Times, many years ago. People have forgotten what Nixon tried to do. But he tried to prosecute the Times for the publication of the Pentagon Papers, and he gave up. He failed. So I say, if President Obama could come around and do the same thing to WikiLeaks, that Nixon couldn't do to the New York Times, he will have topped, he will have topped Nixon.

DB: How would you describe Obama's approach to classified information and press freedom?

JG: Well, listen, I'm an Obama supporter. I'm a former member of the Rules Committee of the Democratic Party. But I have to tell you Obama's approach to press freedom, and national security, from my viewpoint is very, very poor. He chasing reporters, he's chasing leaks. I just don't think he's done a very good job about it. And I prove my case a little bit, by the case that came out Friday where he has chased James Risen, a former New York Times reporter, for not disclosing a source of a leak. [Risen] wrote about that leak in a book and that case, which was all over the papers on Saturday morning, is a very, very bad case. It proves to me that Obama is chasing the press unnecessarily. And I could go on and on. I've got a pretty good argument here because I predicted this actually, when my book came out on April 1st of this year that he would end up trying to put Risen in jail, etc., etc. ...

DB: Would you just take a moment to remind people what the so-called justification ... what happened here because I don't [think] people understand the details.

JG: Alright, so on Saturday morning if you picked up the front page of the New York Times or you listened to the radio you may have heard that James Risen, a New York Times reporter, had been ordered by an appellate court to disclose his source. His source was ... set out in the book Risen had written and the information in question concerned Iran's nuclear program.

Everyone knows his source was a gentleman named Sterling and what Sterling did, apparently, was he told Risen that the Iran nuclear program was screwed up by some activities by the CIA. Risen put that in his book. He was asked to confirm that the source of his story was the aforementioned Sterling. He refused to do it. So he said he's not gonna ever disclose it, he's gonna go to jail. And the court of appeals in Virginia said "No, the government is right. Risen you were wrong." And it looks like Risen is going to go to jail. That's what that story is about.

DB: Alright. Now put that in context, and your concern about where this is going.

JG: Well, my concern is that Obama, to put it in simple terms, is leak crazy. He has indicted six people for leaking. That's twice as many who have been indicted in the whole history of the United States. Three was the record before that. And he is over concerned about leaks, and as a consequence he's ending up wanting to put reporters in jail. And that's not very good for press freedom, obviously.

DB: I guess you could say that it raises some challenges and some real concerns about where press freedom is going, and what we all have the right to do now who consider ourselves journalists.

JG: Yes, I think journalists should be very, very concerned. He, Obama, has also threatened to prosecute Julian Assange. Now Julian Assange ran the web site WikiLeaks. And he, Julian Assange, is in England. He's holed up in the Ecuadorian embassy. He is scared to come back to the United States because he thinks that Obama will indict him. Now, Julian Assange may not be an attractive figure to your listeners, but he is someone who published leaks, that's what Risen did, he published them on his web site and he should be able to do that under the First Amendment, without fear of prosecution. But Obama seems to be going forward with that prosecution. The list goes on and on. But I just do not think that Obama is very good on press freedom.

DB: We're speaking with James Goodale. He's got a new book, it's called *Fighting for the Press*. He was the chief counsel to the New York Times when its editors published the Pentagon Papers in 1971. You know, in 1971, and for a long time after, I know as a daily journalist, I would die for the kinds of documentation that was provided by Julian Assange.

I mean this was what journalists look for, to document, instead of just somebody just saying here or there, you get the document. You can see ... what the policy was. ...It almost seems like journalists have ... turned on themselves, and feel like it's their job to prosecute the whistle blowers ... and the journalists like Glenn Grenwald who give them a platform. Where are we here?

JB: Well, I think that there's a couple of points here that you made that I want to emphasize. And number one, I've talked about journalists who publish information. But we gotta realize that in many cases that information is what we call whistleblower information. It's information that a particular person feels compelled to bring to the attention of the United States public. And the journalist believes that carrying that information to the public is carrying out his obligations as a journalist. That's the first point you made, which I want to emphasize.

The second point is that the journalistic community does not seem to be as enthusiastic as I am about supporting these whistleblowers. Now, in the case of Glenn Greenwald, he is a blogger. He's pretty much the same as Julian Assange. He's got his own web site, so to speak. He has published the information about the NSA program, which has been in the headlines over the last several weeks.

But I think your point is, and I would agree with it, not everybody is rushing to support Glenn Greenwald. Some people have said he should be prosecuted himself. But Glenn Greenwald is just like you. You are interviewing me, Glenn Greenwald interviewed the person who leaked the information about the NSA. And I really think the journalistic community should support the Glenn Greenwalds of the world and tell President Obama that he's not going to be able to scare journalists.

DB: How would you ... somebody who represented the New York Times in the Pentagon Papers in '71, how would you compare WikiLeaks ... what Assange has done to what happened with the Pentagon Papers? Is there a parallel there?

JG: Well, I think that there is a parallel. ... They are the two great leaks in American history. The Pentagon Papers, to refresh the recollection of your audience, was a 47-volume study of the history of the Vietnam War. And Daniel Ellsberg leaked all the volumes to the New York Timers. The New York Times didn't publish them all, but part of it.

In the case of Julian Assange, Private First Class Manning, who had access to classified information, leaked tons and tons of material to Assange. Part of that material was published first by the New York Times, and then later it was published by Assange. So, we're looking at two great leaks, by two well known leakers, one better known than the other, Ellsberg the great leaker, leakee, the New York Times, and Private Manning not as well known as Ellsberg. But he's a leaker, and he leaked it to Assange. So Assange is the same as the New York Times, so forth, and so on. So, generally speaking, they are identical.

DB: Amazing. Well, we don't have a ton of time left, but I guess if I could appoint you as a special advisor to the President for legal affairs what would

you want to tell him about his policies that have to do with going after [leakers]. Bradley Manning should spend the rest of his life in jail and some people around Washington feel he should be executed as a traitor? What would your advice be to the President?

JG: My advice to President Obama is very simple. Dial it back. Manning is a leaker, he's pleaded guilty to 20 years, he should go away for 20 years, but he doesn't need to go away for life. So tell your prosecutors to dial it back. And in the case with James Risen, Mr. President, you do not want to put a New York Times reporter in jail, dial it back.

DB: This is a speculative question. You're an attorney, but what do you think the New York Times would do if somebody put an equivalent version of the Pentagon Papers in their editor's hands today? Would they have the courage? Would they be risking their freedom, being closed down? What do you think? What would you tell them?

JG: Well, I think that the courage is out there. I mean, Risen is a New York Times reporter after all. He courageously went forward with the leak that he published. I think, to answer your question, the New York Times would go forward with the publication of its leak. But I think what's changed over the intervening time between the first publication of the Pentagon Papers and today, is that the screw has been tightened on the press. And that the risks to reporters particularly has increased. So, to the extent that the information that you talked about came from a source that had to be protected, I think reporters are going to be a lot more scared today than they were X years ago, particularly after the Risen case, and decision, which we talked about earlier.

DB: So you're expecting the big chill? You're expecting a big chill. You think this is going to chill the willingness of some reporters to ... if you have three kids...

JG: Yeah, I usually stay away from the word chill, I don't like to use it loosely. But I think it's quite clear that what all of these actions have done is that the reporters who would be Risens, who would be getting leaks of information which the public should know about, they're not that eager to risk their freedom and, secondly, I do not think the reporters that used to go that game, are going into it. So I will use the word chill to sum up that point to say that we're going to get less and less reporting about things we should know about because reporters are going to be scared.

Dennis J Bernstein is a host of "Flashpoints" on the Pacifica radio network and the author of *Special Ed: Voices from a Hidden Classroom*. You can access the audio archives at www.flashpoints.net.

Operating on a Summer Schedule

From Editor Robert Parry: Though Consortiumnews operates with a very modest budget, we take pride in being there for our readers, posting stories seven days a week and nearly year round. Over the next couple of weeks, however, we will be working on a summer schedule that may mean fewer stories and some delays in responding to your e-mails.

Filling book orders might be delayed, too, so you may want to order our books through Amazon if you need something right away. And, if a comment gets tagged for moderating which can happen for a variety of reasons please don't take offense if it takes us longer than usual to review it.

Thanks for your patience and support.

Robert Parry

Robert Parry is a longtime investigative reporter who broke many of the Iran-Contra stories for the Associated Press and Newsweek in the 1980s. He founded Consortiumnews.com in 1995 to create an outlet for well-reported journalism that was being squeezed out of an increasingly trivialized U.S. news media.

Why Consortiumnews Exists

From Editor Robert Parry: Eighteen years ago in 1995 I faced a dilemma. I was getting hold of important documents that rewrote the history of the Reagan-Bush era, but there was no interest from mainstream news outlets. Even some left-of-center publications were unwilling to go against the conventional wisdom.

At the time, there was the lingering myth of the aggressive "Watergate press corps," meaning that it was hard to convince people what was actually happening to the Washington news media. It had gone "on bended knee" for Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush, but that reality still wasn't widely understood.

So, my curiosity was piqued when my oldest son, Sam, began talking about the Internet and this strange new idea for publications, called "Web sites."

Perhaps, I thought, there was a way to circumvent the mainstream gatekeepers who had lost their journalistic commitment to letting through important facts.

Thus was born Consortiumnews.com, the first investigative Internet-based magazine. Over those 18 years, we have tried to give the American people and the world's public well-researched information that corrects history and illuminates today's issues.

Even when our stories look back in time, they do so with the goal of explaining today. Our reporting also has challenged people to rethink some of their cherished assumptions, making our work not always popular though I hope readers appreciate that it is always driven by a relentless honesty.

But we can continue only with the help of our readers. We are experimenting with some ads to defray costs but at best the money will cover only a fraction of our expenses. (I also hope the ads are not too annoying to you.)

To continue this project, we again need your support.

You can make a donation, which may be tax-deductible since we are a 501-c-3 tax-exempt non-profit. You can donate by [credit card online](#) or by [mailing a check](#) to Consortium for Independent Journalism (CIJ); 2200 Wilson Blvd., Suite 102-231; Arlington VA 22201.

(For readers wanting to use PayPal, you can address contributions to our account, which is named after our e-mail address: "consortnew@aol.com").

Thanks again.

Robert Parry

Robert Parry is a longtime investigative reporter who broke many of the Iran-Contra stories for the Associated Press and Newsweek in the 1980s. He founded Consortiumnews.com in 1995 to create an outlet for well-reported journalism that was being squeezed out of an increasingly trivialized U.S. news media.

UK Spy Warns of Iraq War Disclosures

Exclusive: For more than a decade since the Iraq invasion, President Bush, Prime Minister Blair and their senior aides have stuck to the story of innocent intelligence mistakes and evaded accountability. But the code of silence may crack if top British spy Richard Dearlove tells his story, says ex-UK intelligence officer Annie Machon.

By Annie Machon

In a surprising statement last weekend, the former head of Great Britain's foreign intelligence-gathering agency, MI6, suggested that he might break the code of omerta around the fraudulent intelligence case including the so-called "dodgy dossier" that was used as the pretext for the Iraq War in 2003.

Sir Richard Dearlove, former head of MI6 and current Master of Pembroke College, Cambridge, contacted the UK's *Mail on Sunday* newspaper to state that he had written his account of the intelligence controversy in the run-up to the U.S./UK invasion of Iraq and indicated that he might release it in the near future.

With the much-delayed official Chilcot Enquiry into the case for war about to be published, Dearlove is obviously aware that he might be blamed for "sexing up" the intelligence and former Prime Minister Tony Blair might once again evade all responsibility.

In the months before the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, the British government produced a couple of reports "making a case for war," as Major General Michael Laurie said in his evidence to the enquiry in 2011: "We knew at the time that the purpose of the [September] dossier was precisely to make a case for war, rather than setting out the available intelligence, and that to make the best out of sparse and inconclusive intelligence the wording was developed with care."

The first such report, the September Dossier (2002), is the one most remembered, as this did indeed "sex up" the case for war as the late Iraqi weapons inspector David Kelly revealed. It also included the fraudulent intelligence about Saddam Hussein trying to acquire uranium from Niger, a bogus claim that President George W. Bush and other U.S. officials cited with great effect.

Most memorably in the UK, the dossier led to the "Brits 45 minutes from Doom" front-page headline in Rupert Murdoch's *The Sun* newspaper, no less, on the eve of the crucial war vote in Parliament. The claim was that Iraq's Saddam Hussein could deliver deadly germ warfare against British troops and tourists in Cyprus in only 45 minutes.

Also, just six weeks before the attack on Iraq, the so-called "dodgy dossier" was presented by British spies and politicians as an ominous warning of the Iraqi threat, although it was later revealed that the report was based largely on a 12-year-old PhD thesis culled from the Internet, but containing nuggets of raw MI6 intelligence.

Interestingly from a British legal position, it appears that Prime Minister Blair and his spin doctor Alastair Campbell released this report without the

prior written permission of the head of MI6, which means that they appear to be in breach of the UK's draconian secrecy law, the Official Secrets Act (1989).

Thus was made the dubious case for war with Iraq, lies leading to countless Iraq deaths (with some estimates over a million) and many more wounded, maimed, and displaced, yet no one held to account.

Downing Street Memo

Subsequently, there was also the leak of the notorious Downing Street Memo in which Sir Richard Dearlove was reported as saying that the intelligence and facts were being "fixed" around a predetermined war policy.

On July 23, 2002, at a meeting at 10 Downing Street, Dearlove briefed Prime Minister Blair and other senior officials on his talks with his American counterpart, CIA Director George Tenet, in Washington three days before. In the draft minutes of that briefing, which were leaked to the *London Times* and published on May 1, 2005, Dearlove explained that President Bush had decided to attack Iraq and the war was to be "justified by the conjunction of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction."

While then-Foreign Secretary Jack Straw pointed out that the case was "thin," Dearlove explained matter-of-factly, "The intelligence and facts are being fixed around the policy."

There is no sign in the minutes that anyone hiccupped, much less demurred, at "making a case for war" in this dishonest fashion, let alone objected that Blair and Bush were preparing to launch a "war of aggression" outlawed by the post-World War II Nuremberg Tribunal and the UN Charter.

The evidence showed that the UK's top spies aided their political masters by disseminating to the public raw intelligence and forged documents, with disastrous consequences for the people of Iraq and the world.

Yet Dearlove long has remained unrepentant. Even as recently as 2011, after his retirement and his receipt of many official honors, he continued to deny culpability. When questioned about the Downing Street Memo during an address to the prestigious Cambridge Union Society by the fearless and fearsomely bright student, Silkie Carlo, Dearlove tried grandiloquently to brush her aside with the excuse that his remarks were taken out of context..

But were the remarks in the Memo really taken out of context? The context of the Memo – and the larger historical context of what the world now knows about the fraudulent case for war with Iraq – would suggest that the comments were entirely in context, that the intelligence was being "fixed" around a

preexisting decision to invade.

So Dearlove could potentially have saved many lives across the Middle East if he had gone public then, rather than waiting until the belated Chilcot report might sully his reputation. Would it not be far preferable if these servants of the Crown would actually take a stand while they are in a position to influence world events and prevent disasters like the invasion of Iraq?

Doing so now, purely to preserve his reputation after failing to act earlier to preserve the lives of innocent Iraqis, is even more “ethically flexible” than you would normally expect of an average MI6 intelligence officer. Perhaps that is why Dearlove floated to the top of the organization.

But Dearlove is right to be worried about how history and Chilcot will judge him. These intelligence failures and lies have been picked over and speculated about for years. They are now an open secret. However, finally threatening to spill the beans if he is harshly criticized smacks of desperation.

Dearlove is quoted as saying that he has no plans to breach the Official Secrets Act by publishing his memoirs. But by publishing an account of the run-up to the Iraq War, he would be equally guilty of a breach of the Official Secrets Act. It has been established under UK law that any unauthorized disclosure crosses the “clear bright line” of the law.

And Dearlove seems well aware of this his original plan was for his account to be made available after his death. I can see why he would plan it that way. First, he would escape prosecution, and second, he could protect his reputation for posterity. But an earlier disclosure by Dearlove could put Blair and Bush back in the spotlight.

The official motto of the UK spies is “Regnum Defende” – defense of the realm. Serving intelligence officers mordantly alter this to “Rectum Defende” – politely translated as watch your back. Dearlove seems to be living up to the motto. He must be one very frightened old man to be contemplating such premature publication.

Annie Machon is a former intelligence officer in the UK’s MI5 Security Service (the U.S. counterpart is the FBI).

US, China Contend with Resentment

Americans like to be liked and are often perplexed why so many people around the

world “hate us.” Some of that comes from specific policies like support for Israel and drone strikes, but there’s also the resentment toward big-power arrogance, a problem that is arising for China, too, says ex-CIA analyst Paul R. Pillar.

By Paul R. Pillar

The nature and causes of negative attitudes toward the United States have long been a subject of debate. The lines of debate most often pit an emphasis on what is changeable because it flows from U.S. policies against what is unavoidable because it flows from the inherent attributes of a superpower.

There is plenty of direct anecdotal evidence to shed light on this question, including what comes from the mouths of the most extreme adversaries of the United States. More systematic evidence comes from survey research, such as the most recent product of the Pew Global Attitudes Project, based on polling in over three dozen countries.

The overall picture this survey provides of the standing of the United States in world opinion is familiar, including abysmal numbers in most of the Middle East. This survey also continues a broader pattern in which there has been some reduction of positive sentiment toward the United States since the early days of Barack Obama’s presidency, but with the numbers still better in most of the world than they were under his predecessor.

The most interesting results of this latest survey, however, come from the same questions being asked about China that are asked about the United States. Such a comparison can aid in understanding the different components of sentiment toward the United States. Comparisons can be instructive because some aspects of China that might shape attitudes toward it are similar to the United States whereas other important attributes are very different.

Worldwide the United States still has a distinct lead over China as measured by the Pew survey’s recording of overall favorable versus unfavorable sentiment. The margin is surprisingly small, however, in some countries where there is reason to expect it wouldn’t be. In Britain the plurality for the United States over China in favorable ratings is ten percent, and in Australia it is only eight percent. Given that these are two of America’s closest allies, these results provide food for thought.

Some survey questions addressed specific issues that may contribute to the general sentiments. Drone strikes, for example, are quite unpopular in most places; because the United States uses such strikes and China doesn’t, this can only hurt the United States in the U.S.-China comparison. Conversely, the United

States has a clear advantage on most elements of what is generally considered soft power, except science and technology, where China gets good marks.

One of the most instructive questions, despite its flaws, concerns whether each of the two major powers “considers” the interests of the respondent’s own country in shaping its policies. The main flaw in the question is that someone else’s interests can be “considered” from a hostile viewpoint, not just an accommodating one.

Nonetheless, a perception that one’s interests are not being considered at all is a significant data point. The clear overall pattern in the survey results is that most respondents in most countries believe that *neither* China nor the United States is considering their interests.

Majorities in nearly every European and Middle Eastern country believe that the United States does not consider their interests. That is also the belief of large majorities in major U.S. allies in the East Asia-Pacific region: Australia, Japan, and South Korea. Interestingly, one of the few countries in which a plurality (49 to 38 percent) of respondents believes the United States does consider their interests is China.

The comparable question that asked whether China considers the respondent’s country’s interests yielded similar majorities saying that it doesn’t. An exception to this pattern, however, is Africa.

The issue of whether big, strong countries pay attention to the interests of littler ones probably, despite the multiple possible ways of interpreting this particular survey question, gets to what underlies a lot of the negative sentiment directed at the big countries. It is basically a matter of arrogance, and the perception of arrogance.

In places such as sub-Saharan Africa, where China’s resource-hungry engagement with no human rights strings attached has made it seem more solicitous of the locals (whether it really is or not), it has enjoyed a different image. But arrogance in the rising Middle Kingdom is still visible enough to shape a lot of opinion around the world.

To some extent the resentment involved is an almost inescapable part of being a big power with a big global footprint and many interests of its own to pursue and protect. This has been part of the image of the United States for years, and as China has grown stronger and projected more power it has taken on some of the same image.

But the negative feelings among populations in other countries are by no means entirely inescapable. Either the United States or China could enhance its

standing in the world relative to the other if it did a better job of avoiding the other's mistakes that come under the heading of the arrogance of power.

Paul R. Pillar, in his 28 years at the Central Intelligence Agency, rose to be one of the agency's top analysts. He is now a visiting professor at Georgetown University for security studies. (This article first appeared as a blog post at The National Interest's Web site. Reprinted with author's permission.)
