

The Neoliberal Mindset. How the Mainstream Media Constructs False Narratives?

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Global Research, July 21, 2017

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [Global Economy](#), [Media Disinformation](#), [Poverty & Social Inequality](#)

What bothers me is not that we are unable to find the solution to our problems, what bothers me more is the fact that neoliberals are so utterly unaware of real structural issues that their attempts to sort out tangential issues will further exacerbate the main issues. Religious extremism, militancy and terrorism are not the cause but the effect of poverty, backwardness and disenfranchisement.

Empirically speaking, if we take all other aggravating factors out: such as poverty, illiteracy, disenfranchisement, deliberate training and arming of certain militant groups by regional and global players and, more importantly, grievances against the duplicitous Western foreign policy, I don't think that the Islamic State, al-Qaeda and the likes would find abundant supply of foot soldiers that they are getting now in the troubled regions of the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia.

Although I do concede that the rallying call of "Jihad in the way of God" might be one reason for abundant supply of foot soldiers to jihadists' cause, but on an emotional level it is the self-serving and hypocritical Western interventionist policy in the energy-rich Middle East that adds fuel to the fire. When Muslims all over the Islamic countries see that their brothers-in-faith are dying in Palestine, Syria, Iraq, Libya, Yemen, Somalia and Afghanistan, on an emotional level they feel outraged and seek justice.

This emotional outrage, in my opinion, is a far more potent factor than the sterile "rationalist" argument of God's supposed command to fight holy wars against the infidels. If we take all other contributing factors out of the equation, which I have described above, I don't think the Muslims are an "exceptional" breed of human beings who are hell-bent on killing heretics all over the world.

Identifying the victims and beneficiaries of neocolonialism:

It's very easy to distinguish between the victims of structural injustices and the beneficiaries of the existing neocolonial economic order all over the world. But instead of using words that can be interpreted subjectively I'll let the figures do the talking.

Pakistan's total GDP is \$300 billion and with a population of 200 million, its per capita income amounts to a paltry \$1450; similarly, India's per capita income is also only \$1850. While the GDP of the US is \$18 trillion and per capita income is well in excess of \$50,000.

Likewise, the per capita incomes of most countries in the Western Europe are also around \$40,000. That's a difference of more than twenty times between the incomes of Third World countries and the beneficiaries of neocolonialism, i.e. North America and Western Europe.

Only the defense budget of the Pentagon is \$700 billion, which is more than twice the size of Pakistan's total economy. A single multi-national corporation based in the Wall Street and other financial districts of the Western world owns assets in excess of \$200 billion which is more than the total GDP of many developing economies. Examples of such business conglomerates are: Investment banks – JP Morgan, Goldman Sachs, Barclays, HSBC, BNP Paribas; Oil majors – Exxon Mobil, Chevron, BP, RDS, Total, Vitol; Manufacturers – Apple, Microsoft and Google.

On top of that, semi-legit wealth from all over the world flows into the Western commercial and investment banks: in July 2014, the New York Post published a [report](#) [1] that the Russian oligarchs have deposited \$800 billion in the Western banks from 2002 to 2014, while the Chinese entrepreneurs have similarly deposited \$1.5 trillion in the Western financial institutions during the same period of time.

Moreover, in April this year the Saudi foreign minister [threatened](#) [2] that the Saudi kingdom would sell up to \$750 billion in treasury securities and other assets if the US Congress passed a bill that would allow the Americans to sue the Saudi government in the US courts for its role in the September 11, 2001 terror attack.

Bear in mind, however, that \$750 billion is only the Saudi investment in the US, if we add its investment in the Western Europe, and the investments of oil-rich UAE, Kuwait and Qatar in the Western economies, the sum total would amount to trillions of dollars of Gulf's investment in North America and Western Europe.

The first and foremost priority of the Western powers is to save their corporate empire, and especially their financial institutions, from collapsing; everything else like eliminating terrorism, promoting democracy and “the responsibility to protect” are merely arranged side shows to justify their interventionist foreign policy, especially in the energy-rich Middle East.

How the neoliberal mindset is structured?

The irony is that the neoliberal dupes of the mainstream media justify and validate the unfair practices of the neocolonial powers and hold the victims of structural injustices responsible for their misfortunes. If a Third World's laborer has been forced to live on less than \$5 a day and a corporate executive sits on top of hundreds of billions of dollars of business empire in the Wall Street, neoliberals don't find anything wrong with this travesty.

Regardless, we need to understand that how the neoliberal mindset is structured? As we know that mass education programs and mass media engender mass ideologies. We like to believe that we are free to think, but as a matter of fact human beings don't exist in vacuums; the human mind is always socially constituted and socially situated.

Thus, our narratives aren't really “our” narratives. These narratives of injustice and inequality have been constructed for the public consumption by the corporate media, which is nothing more than the mouthpiece of the Western political establishments and their business interests.

The media is our eyes and ears through which we get all the inputs and it is also our brain through which we interpret raw data. If the media keeps mum over vital structural injustices and blows the isolated incidents of injustice and violence out of proportions, then we are

likely to forget all about the former and focus all of our energies on the tangential issues which the media portrays as the real ones.

Arranged sideshows to distract attention from structural injustices:

Monopoly capitalism and the global neocolonial political and economic order are the real issues, while Islamic radicalism and terrorism are the secondary issues which are itself an adverse reaction to the former. This is how the mainstream media constructs artificial narratives and dupes its audience into believing the absurd: during the Cold War it created the “Red Scare” and told its audience that communism is an existential threat to the free world and the Western way of life. Its audience willingly bought this narrative.

Then, the West and its regional collaborators financed, trained and armed the Afghan so-called “freedom fighters” and used them as proxies against the Soviet Union. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, however, they declared the former “freedom fighters” to be terrorists and another existential threat to the free world and the Western way of life. Its gullible audience again bought this narrative.

And finally, during the Libyan and Syrian proxy wars, the former terrorists once again became freedom fighters – albeit in a more nuanced manner, this time around the corporate media sells them as “moderate rebels.” And the naive audience of the mainstream media has once again willingly bought this narrative. It really stretches the limit of human credulity that how easy it has been for the mainstream media to sell “fake news” and false narratives to its uncritical audience.

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Notes

[1] Why \$10 billion of China’s money is laundered every month:

<http://nypost.com/2014/07/26/why-10b-of-chinas-money-is-laundered-every-month/>

[2] Saudi Arabia Warns of Economic Fallout if Congress Passes 9/11 Bill:

https://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/16/world/middleeast/saudi-arabia-warns-ofeconomic-fallout-if-congress-passes-9-11-bill.html?_r=0

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