

# Two Hundred Years of Errors and Misjudgments at The Guardian

by Conrad Black



The baneful leftist British newspaper, *The Guardian*, is celebrating its 200th anniversary, and as part of an extensive exercise in reflective self-adulation, it produced on May 7 an exposé of what it considered to be the worst editorial errors of judgment it had committed in these 200 years.

The relevance of this to American readers is that *The Guardian* persists in imagining that it has some insight into American political affairs, though it has throughout its history been and remains up to the most recent days, an inexhaustible source of asinine misrepresentations of what happens in U.S. politics.

The May 7 piece was enlightening, as it revealed the continuing chronic misjudgment that has afflicted that newspaper in foreign policy matters almost throughout its history.

No one could begrudge it news misjudgments such as confining the sinking of the Titanic in 1912 to a small part of page 9, or technical comments that were proved many years later to have been mistaken, such as a 1927 article highlighting the virtues of asbestos, and others in the 70's warning of an impending Ice Age. Its endless current harping about the dangers of global warming is less cordially excusable.

*The Guardian* has generally supported first the British Liberal and then the Labour Party, which has usually been a mistaken view since Labour became the alternative government to the Conservatives in the late 1920's. In all that time the two prime ministers of the United Kingdom who may be said to have saved Britain were Winston Churchill and Margaret Thatcher, who led the Conservative Party, between them, in six general elections and the only occasion on which *The Guardian* recommended the election of either of them was Mr. Churchill in 1951.

But it is in foreign affairs where the *Guardian* has been most conspicuously misguided and has misled and misinformed seven generations of its well-intentioned British academic and middle-class soft left readership.

In the mid-19th century, it equated democracy to nationalism and despised nationalism, so it had no time for the nationalistic (and democratic) impulses that seized Hungary and sent the long-serving Habsburg Holy Roman Chancellor Metternich, "the Coachman of Europe," packing in 1848.

The same reasoning motivated *The Guardian* to support martial law in Ireland in the 1850's and outright suppression of unrest generated by the infamous potato famines. The vintage

leftist reasoning was that Ireland needed investment and that this can only be achieved by political stability which would have to be provided by the UK Armed Forces; the fact that a province of the United Kingdom itself was starving and lost half its population in one decade to famine and emigration was neither here nor there.

In the same spirit, when the Indian Mutiny broke out in 1857, *The Guardian* roared that Britain must suppress it, (in what are now India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Bhutan), in the “unfaltering confidence in our right to rule over the native population by virtue of inherent superiority.”

But it was in its reflections upon the United States that the *Guardian* failed most miserably and has almost uninterruptedly continued to fail miserably right up to the present.

Most of the British establishment welcomed the U.S. Civil War as a comeuppance to the Americans for having had the impudence to revolt and to make a disturbing success of their new country until the secession of the Confederate states. The reformer W. E. Gladstone, and three other great prime ministers (for a total of 42 years): Lord Palmerston, Lord Russell and even the great future Conservative prime minister and scion of Britain’s most exalted family, the Cecils, the future Marquis of Salisbury, audibly hoped for the success of the Confederacy.

These men could barely contain their satisfaction at what appeared to be the sanguinary demise of the insolent American project. The comparative outsiders, Prince Consort Albert, a German, and the Conservative leader Benjamin Disraeli, an ethnic Jew, were required to point out that Britain could not take its stand in favor of secessionism and slavery, which the British had abolished in 1833.

One might have expected more liberality from *The Guardian*, but

the editors managed to persuade themselves in 1861 that the breakup of the United States would assure the end of slavery, despite the fact that the reason invoked for the secession was the election of the new Republican Party led by Abraham Lincoln who advocated that slavery be confined to its current extent and not permitted in any future states of the Union.

With that sadistically irrational sequentiality of thought that afflicts *The Guardian* and the entire left still, by the same measure that it believed that establishing the independence of the slaveholding Confederacy would lead to the end of slavery, Abraham Lincoln, slavery's most prominent American opponent, was abominated as someone who stood in the way of emancipation.

*The Guardian* declared that it was "impossible not to feel that it was an evil day both for America and the world" when Lincoln was elected president. And when Lincoln was assassinated, *The Guardian's* comment was "Of his rule we can never speak except as a series of acts abhorrent to every true notion of constitutional right and human liberty" (including the Emancipation Proclamation). The best it could do on Lincoln's assassination was that it was "to be regretted."

*The Guardian* supported the Balfour declaration of 1917, in which the British foreign minister and former prime minister, Arthur J. Balfour, proposed that when the Turks had been evicted, Palestine would become a Jewish homeland, though without compromising the rights of the Arab population; a device designed to placate American opinion but which has proved to be a method of simultaneously selling the same real estate to two different opposing parties.

*The Guardian* patted itself on the head for having supported Balfour and "helped facilitate the Balfour declaration," (a dubious claim), but effectively recanted, implying that the present state of Israel is an immoral deformation of any reasonable concept of a Jewish homeland.

The inescapable fact is that, given Israel's neighbors at its founding in 1948, anything less than the vigorous and militarily formidable Israel that has arisen would merely have been yet another European formula for the subjugation, expulsion, or genocidal liquidation of the Jews, all of which its founding as a Jewish state was intended by the unanimous founding powers of the United Nations to prevent.

*The Guardian's* essentially hateful coverage of the United States continues and their principal American commentator is none other than the cranky Democratic Robert Reich who believes all 75 million Trump voters should be compulsorily debriefed.

Reich is a dyed-in-the-pink wool socialist who considers that Missouri Senator Josh Hawley and the majority of House Republicans who voted against seating some Biden electors in the Electoral College following the November elections, were guilty of "seditious" conduct.

Reich is both a fantasist and a compulsive myth-maker; he knows as well as anyone else that none of the constitutional issues raised by the Trump campaign or the attorney general of Texas, supported by 18 other states, was adjudicated.

Technical reasons were found to avoid any consideration of the merits of those lawsuits and the Trump-hating media, led in unwavering venom by Robert Reich, pretend that all the ill-considered actions put up by Trump supporters on side-issues constituted proof of the pristine quality of the election.

The much-invoked Big Lie in all this is that it was an untainted election and that Trump tried to incite an insurrection to undo it. Cheer-led by Reich, *The Guardian* has rushed forward as a witless dupe and useful idiot promoting these frauds. We see that is a lengthy tradition.

*The Guardian* is now financed by crowd-funding among the British left; its American coverage is conspicuously

undeserving of such patronage.

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