I ran across an article in International Viewpoint entitled “Russia in Africa: mercenaries and predatoriness.” The rarely used word “predatoriness” made me chuckle because of the irony, not the creative vocabulary of author Paul Marial. Before we continue, consulting Webster’s seems appropriate:

“predatoriness - noun (pred·a·to·ri·ness): the quality or state of being predatory”

Though Marial’s report starts out like every other Russophobic narrative, at least the editor of Afriques en Lutte sees fit to disclose that China, and NATO have been “at it” providing predator-like mercenaries, arms, and military solutions to the economic/political problems of Africa. Sadly though, like all the other western analysts, he focuses on Wagner Group agents, and seems ultra-focused on creating the idea Russia in Sahel countries boils down to nothing more than hooligans profiteering. There’s no mention of cohesive Russia policy toward these countries. As always, Russia is just an arms and muscle supplier. I can’t get past the term he used in his title.

Turning the page, a story by Foreign Policy warns Africans that if the Russians move to stop NATO moving into Ukraine, then food supplies may run out! No, really. “A Russia-Ukraine War Could Ripple Across Africa and Asia” suggests the Russians are gambling with the lives of hungry people all over, and without mentioning for a second
that America and NATO could end any danger instantly by easing off. These stories are beyond fantasy, they’re dangerous. They incite or multiply unrest and social tension. And they exacerbate the already horrendous west-east detente situation.

“In politically unstable countries such as Libya, Yemen, and Lebanon, additional food price shocks and hunger could easily turn an already bad situation worse. In many other countries, too, price spikes and food insecurity could inflame conflict, heighten ethnic tensions, destabilize governments, and cause violence to spill over borders.”

Do I need to examine the root causes for problems in Libya, Yemen, and Lebanon here? Obviously, Foreign Policy is not reporting on a concern, it’s presenting a program for revolt, as usual. Do not fear, Africa, Russia and Egypt already have a deal to make sure there’s enough grain, no matter what.

Let’s go back to our funny term “predatoriness,” which could mean hunting, rapacious, or plundering depending on its usage. In neo-colonial Africa it most often means “theft” by taking. Where the western nations are concerned, the form “ravaging” comes to mind. Let’s skip past the history of Europe and America policies in Africa, however, and go straight to “the now” on relative predators. Where theorizing from emerging nations and people are concerned, we all know who the super-predators are, now don’t we?

This World Economic Forum report tells us what’s really going on with all the Russophobia/Africa dialogue. Get this, I love it. Colin Coleman, who was at the time the CEO of Goldman Sachs in Sub-Saharan Africa, gave us “This region will be worth $5.6 trillion within 5 years - but only if it accelerates its policy reforms.” Interestingly, I should say surprisingly, Coleman’s assessment of Africa’s current situation is not far off. It’s refreshing to know that the biggest predators on Earth, the Wall Street lions, do actually understand the situation. But before we hire Goldman Sachs to run the world, let’s dig deeper.

Coleman has now left Goldman Sachs to be a senior-fellow at Yale’s Jackson Institute for Global Affairs. I won’t detail this school here, but former Secretary of State John Kerry established the so-called “Kerry Initiative” here. Oh, and since Wagener Group seems such a hot topic in the Sahel and elsewhere in Africa, the presence of McChrystal Group LLC founder, the disgraced former commander of Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC), four-star General Stanley McChrystal as a fellow-fellow of Coleman seems pertinent. While the reader stews on this, more news from South Africa, where Coleman is one of the most influential people, bears mentioning here.

We need to understand the depth and breadth of American policy in Africa and the world. Warriors, the US State Department, and banksters educating future leaders should be of concern, or am I delusional? Fortunately, all the machinations of Wall Street, Downing, Street, Pennsylvania Avenue, and Think Tank Row do not seem to have swayed South Africa’s leadership with regard to Russia, and the NATO forward position in Ukraine. When I read this, I admit, I laughed out loud:

“Ukraine’s ambassador to South Africa, Liubov Abravitova is dismayed and disappointed that the government is not even prepared to talk to her country about its fears of an imminent invasion by Russia.”

Apparently, the powers that be in the western hegemony tried to leverage South Africa, one of the BRICS, to weigh in against the Russians on the issue of NATO enlargement.

Finally, it is important to weigh the relative “predatoriness” of all these foreign influences in Africa. To get a handle on this I read a report by Chris Ololouwa Ogunmodede, who’s associate editor with World Politics Review, where he says the Russia presence on the continent is drastically overblown:

“Russian public diplomacy and soft power in Africa is weak and uncoordinated, and like China, Russia is susceptible to a perception problem and messaging disadvantage, shaped to a considerable extent by the dominance of Western media and technology.”

The expert goes on to describe American strategies to discredit Russia. He says African states should operate using caution, wariness over American neo-colonial interests stewing. Ogunmodede says African nations should take full advantage of these great power struggles, in order for African leaders to glean the best possible results for Africans. I think he’s right, especially since the Joe Biden administration is being advised by big mouth Generals from the Yale
collective (McChrystal, really Mr. President?). Meanwhile, the second African leaders’ summit has been announced for St. Petersburg, and scheduled early November 2022. The first Russia-Africa summit, held in Sochi in October 2019, attracted more than 40 African presidents, as well as the heads of major regional associations and organizations.

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