New York Times is Crimea Tourism News for Dummies

The media was from New York onto Russia, it’s taken a turn for the worse this week. You know the fight has gotten dirty for sure, when there’s more blows below the belt than above. A post by the New York Times this week, is a woeful reminder what poor losers Americans can be. Have a read here, and discover how low publisher Arthur Sulzberger’s newspaper has sunk. The latest formed and fashioned feature against Mr. Putin, it is a crummy bit of journalistic license entitled, “Russia’s Pitch to Vacationers: Crimea Is for Patriots.”

Before I go on, I want to share a recollection about The New York Times. When I was a kid, my father spent every morning reading this newspaper before he’d step out to his law offices. The memory of the front page glaring at me from across the breakfast table, the crumple of the sheets as Dad turned the pages, it’s a vivid reminder of what once was. This scene, from 50 years ago, spurs me to decry the world’s most famous broadsheet today. An icon of informational excellence has turned into a tabloid.

On August 19th a writer named Neil MacFarquhar skillfully crafted a story about tourism in Crimea. It is a story timed to coincide with the visit of Vladimir Putin, and Dmitry Medvedev to that peninsula on business, and for pleasure. Putin, with a multiplicity of missions there including efforts on behalf of the Russian Geographic Society, draws negative reportage from the NYTs daily. This time MacFarquhar ventures farther astray than most other NYTs writers though, as the author paints a grim, grimy, and gray touristic destination out of this resort area. Here’s a section of his dispatch on Russia tourism to Americans. Speaking of the coastal town of Saky, the writer explains:

“The dreary shoreline with its view of rusted dredging equipment was perhaps less appealing than previous holiday destinations in Turkey and Europe, she said, but patriotism drove her choice this summer.”

So there you have the framing of a horrid picture, one capitalized by a carefully chosen image of two elderly ladies sitting by what appears to be the seashore. Oh but wait, this story is intensely misleading, a lie, for all intents and purposes. If you research the images MacFarquhar uses, or maybe call friends in Crimea like I have, geography and reality will slap you awake from this gifted storyteller’s fairy tale. Right here it’s necessary to profile MacFarquhar for you, as the Moscow based has a habit of being where the action is, or where the New York Times wants it to be. A former United Nations bureau chief, MacFarquhar’s stories intriguingly coincide with upheaval and/or diatribe, against individuals portrayed as “enemies” of America.

An expert on the Middle East, wherever US military forces go around the 40th parallel North, Neil MacFarquhar offers up editorial support. When the US helped unseat Libya’s Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi, the New York Times reporter who spent part of his childhood in Libya was the “go to” man to tell America about the dictator’s violent death, and to help justify it. Over a year before the west alleged Syria’s leader Assad used chemical weapons at Ghouta against his own people, MacFarquhar was reporting for the NYTs on alleged Syrian threats to use such weapons. And if you follow that story from 2012, you’ll find a familiar face of Western hegemony cited too. MacFarquhar and one Victoria Nuland (of Ukraine infamy) do tend to occupy the same pages of the grand old New York Times fairly frequently. The fact is, anytime one of America’s “enemies” is in the crosshairs, MacFarquhar is there, start to finish, telling of the evil deeds, and then of the justifiable demise of tyrants. He helped paint the terror
portrait of Iraq’s Saddam Hussein, and then wrote the man’s epitaph too. MacFarquhar profiled Osama Bin Laden on September 26th, 2001 right after the 9/11 attacks, and then profiled his possible successors for us.

I’m hesitant to go on here, for fear a good leader in Russia may be doomed just on account of being in the reports of this specter of the New York Times. Instead, maybe it’s better to announce the impending doom of Crimea tourism. Alas there is hope though, for my contacts on the ground there tell me business is booming! Let’s just hope the US State Department has not come up with some touristic alert to ruin Summer by the sea for Russians. If you’ll excuse the sarcasm briefly, MacFarquhar’s uncanny tendency of being surrounded with death and chaos is spooky indeed. Just how such a gifted writer came to discussing beach blanket bingo on the Black Sea, it baffles me actually. Instead, let’s move on to a bullshit finale to a story propped up by incorrect imagery, geography, and statistics.

The two images MacFarquhar uses to show us a pitiful Crimea touristic draught are all wrong. The two old ladies alone by the seaside, they are not actually on the sea. The ladies you see sitting, looking out across the water, they’re sitting the Sevastopol harbor, not exactly beach bunny Mecca, if you know what I mean. Rather than show New York Times readers the real beach of Saky, where his story is supposedly situated, it’s more appropriate somehow to show lonely old ladies marooned on one of the most industrialized harbors on the Black Sea. The misdirect is brilliant, if you want to paint Crimea as desolated of tourists, that is.

Skillfully, the veteran wordsmith draws the reader in. Illuminating “rusted” dredging equipment along the salt lake at Saky, MacFarquhar takes strategic advantage of a readership that has never laid eyes on the Black Sea, let alone mineral salt baths in Crimea. Being an expert on the Middle East, MacFarguhar has not doubt seen dredges on the Dead Sea, or along other ancient shorelines where therapy is sought? Maybe he’s unaware of the high concentrations of salt along these Crimean lakes’ shores, and of the effects of high saline concentrations on ferrous metals? No matter, the author’s second photo from clear across the peninsula, it shows an overweight sun bather choosing from empty beach chairs, his spot along a beach in Livadia, Crimea. Abandoned beach chairs in Livadia? “This cannot be right,” I thought.

Unfortunately for the New York Times, many of the resorts in Crimea have life webcams. Maybe MacFarquhar is unaware of Russians’ affinity for real-time, but facts are facts. The stream you will find at the therapeutic spa Poltava Crimea in Saky, it reveals normal tourist activity on the beach there. The screenshot provided is from 11:34 and 54 seconds, on the main beach at the resort town. Comparing this photo, with the resort’s promotional photos of their beach, anyone can determine for themselves the health spa is running true to form. Furthermore, my friend and colleague, Graham Phillips (in the feature image too) is in Yalta at this very moment, broadcasting live the buzzing resort MacFarguhar tells his American audience is dead as a door nail. I called Graham to help me illuminate the seeming darkness surrounding this Summer in Yalta and Crimea. For those who do not know, Graham is fairly famous for his reportage refuting incorrect Western news on the Ukraine conflict. Our chat today proved no less interesting for me, and for readers of the New York Times too. As it happens, Graham just filmed a video at the end of this link shot this week in Yalta. Not only does the footage refute the aforementioned Times story, but it also shows Graham meeting up with at least one tourist from Kiev. If we relied on the NYT’s and other mainstream media for our understanding of this region, then we’d surely believe Ukrainians are ALL dead set on killing Russians, rather than vacationing with them. But don’t take my word for any of this, follow the links and do your own 5 minute “truth” research. For more Crimea spa experience, this other Saky therapy resort called Sanatorium “Yurmino” posts almost daily photos of guests living it up in the mud baths via their VK profile.

In conclusion, the reader here should formulate his or her own opinion of what ANY truth about Crimea, Ukraine, or Russia is, from ALL the sources of information available. While American news and other media is dominated by entities like The New York Times, there are always good alternatives. Mr. MacFarquhar, and noteworthy journalists like him, they’ve been relied upon too much in my estimation. As anyone knows, ideas and methods in any profession are influenced heavily by resource and the prevalent mind set. That said, any skilled reporter can paint whatever picture is desired. Manipulating imagery, inserting well crafted words and inflection, and a Miami Beach bikini contest can become a cellulite extravaganza not worth attending. This is where we are in the world of so-called “news” – caught in between fact and a fabricated agenda. And believe you me, the New York Times’ is the tippy top pinnacle, of a fashioned corporate agenda against Mother Russia and her people.

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