

...and the... of the... and... in
particular what... for the Soviet empire and...
It is not a compliment to the mainstream of U.S. international
relations studies, "IP" as they call it, that this (and his other
books on US foreign policy) are written by a linguist, although a
very special one, gifted ^{up} to the extreme of any distribution of talent
including an incredible energy ^{as a scholar}. When the history of the US social
science establishment in this period is written my guess is that
Chomsky will stand out, not the characters he occasionally quotes,
^{more or less} comparing their imaginative apologies with reality.
^{political science}

However, it is at this point that some critical remarks are warranted.
The atrocities are well documented, from genocide of the indigenous
peoples in North America to the death squads in El Salvador (one
of Chomsky's points is actually that the Washington support for
the contras in Nicaragua is more like a cover action to deflect
attention away from the neighboring country). Why does all of this
happen? Where does it come from, this violent streak in US policy
towards other races and peoples?

Chomsky's explanation is spelt out in chapter 2: the "fifth freedom",
the freedom and to rob and to exploit. Corporate greed, in other
words, and the greed of the corporations working for the military
in particular, with an obvious vested interest in conflict, even
war. "When the Fifth Freedom is threatened in its domains, the US
regularly resorts to subversion, terror or direct aggression to
restore it, declaring the target of these actions a Russian client
and acting to make tis acquired truth a reality" (pp. 50-51). I
think it would be hard to argue with this statement as one of many
factors in the general loom constituting the foreign policy of a
client.

... of the world... and the...
... of the... the two approaches
do not exclude each other. If contemporary reaganism is based on
a combination of corporate greed and right wing populism, then a
double-track theory is needed: "both-and", in other words. Chomsky's
"fifth freedom" does not look good on paper, ^{but} the missionary compulsion
provides legitimization. Of course, if the Evil forces in addition
are against the use of property to make more property, a more polite
formula than "to rob and to exploit", then greed and crusade combine
neatly.

I would go for both approaches in an effort to understand the giant
to the North, as the US is known in the rest of the hemisphere.
However, it is difficult to see that poor muslims really stand in
the way of corporate greed, easy to see the fight of the hypnotized
judeo-christian complex (and hypnotized Israel-America) as a continu-
ation of the ^{anti-moslem} crusades seven, nine centuries ago. Moreover, what
if socialism brings 90% of the population into a market for consumer
goods from abroad, as opposed to 10% for consumers' goods - would
that not be an argument for tolerating socialism for some time?

If US action is irrational, does not that lead to a search for
the root of that irrationality - and that might be in the Chosen
People complex rather than in corporate greed? And, does that not,
in turn, lead to an "honest inquiry" (p. 253) not only into the
US structure but also the US culture -- and perhaps particularly
their interplay? Emphasizing the word "interplay", not substituting
for vulgar materialism vulgar idealism.

Well, the reader will draw his own conclusions, but he will not
be left untouched. Hopefully, the reader will not stoop to the knee-
jerl level of "the Soviet Union is at least equally bad" or "do
not all big countries do this sort of thing?" What Chomsky does
is an invitation to realism, to knowing the facts, before we start
theorizing about the Western superpower.