

2008

Australian Prime Minister **Kevin Rudd** makes a historic apology to the Indigenous Australians and the Stolen Generations.



2010

A bomb explodes in the city of **Pune, Maharashtra, India**, killing 17 and injuring 60 more.

2012

The European Space Agency (ESA) conducted the first launch of the European Vega rocket from Europe's spaceport in Kourou, French Guiana.

2017

Kim Jong-nam, brother of North Korean dictator Kim Jong-Un, is assassinated at Kuala Lumpur International Airport.

Putin I know



The Putin I know is in many ways similar to President Donald Trump. Like him, Volodya makes decisions based on snap judgments, rather than long deliberation.

from Russia's main intelligence agency, the FSB, and its military intelligence agency, the GRU, will be involved in more attacks against and murders of Russian dissidents and opponents of Putin living in the West. To the Putin I know, borders mean nothing.

A couple of months ago Volodya tried — luckily, he failed — to insert a crony as head of Interpol, the international police organisation, presumably so he could turn it into his personal posse. Of course he did. Corruption is in Russia's DNA, as it is in Putin's.

Something else I've discovered since moving is that many of America's Kremlin-watchers don't understand that Putin is running scared these days. His recent election may have been guaranteed; his future is anything but.

Why? Because Volodya has no

one watching his back. Sobchak and Yeltsin hired and promoted him because of his personal loyalty, but both are long dead. The Putin I knew back then allowed his superiors to accumulate huge wealth, and then he shielded them from indictment. He built a protective wall around Sobchak even as the mayor was caching millions of dollars in Paris. Later, as head of Yeltsin's FSB, Putin quashed an investigation of the Yeltsin family by the prosecutor general at the time, Yuri Skuratov, by vouching for the authenticity of a fuzzy video of a man said to be Skuratov in bed with two prostitutes. And in his first hours as acting president of the Russian Federation on Dec 31, 1999, Volodya wrote a decree that pardoned Yeltsin and his family from any criminal charges.

But there are no such decrees in Volodya's future. It has long been rumoured that he has a huge fortune stashed away. But if that is true, it is likely held by friends, associates or even some of the criminals Putin has made filthy rich.

So, my question is: When Volodya finally leaves power, will those filthy-rich friends, associates and co-conspirators give him back any of those billions?

Somehow, I don't think so. I've lived in Russia. Sharing's not the Russian way.

(Franz J Sedelmayer is the chief executive officer of MARC, the Multinational Asset Recovery Co, and the author of "Welcome to Putingrad".)

World's boom year

ere of the movies

York's new Capitol Theater, said to be the largest in the world. He followed with "When the Clouds Roll By" in December.

Yet Fairbanks' partners owed projects to other companies. Pickford managed to bring out two features in 1920, but Chaplin would not complete a United Artists release until 1923, and that ("A Woman of Paris") failed, partly because he appeared merely in a walk-on role. Griffith could meet his immediate United Artists obligations only by buying, at a hefty price, his film "Broken Blossoms" from Adolph Zukor's company, where he had made it.

The new firm needed product, and soon it was contracting with other producers, including Samuel Goldwyn, to fill out its obligations. Another problem, as the historian Tino Balio has shown, was funding. Thanks to program booking and a rigid schedule of releases, studios could attract backers. But banks recoiled from a company of independents working at irregular intervals to please themselves. For the most part, the Big Four had to self-finance.

United Artists survived through the 1920s, largely because of Pickford and Fairbanks. They married, and as Hollywood royalty, they enjoyed a huge fan following; crowds choked the streets during their world tours. Pickford turned out several projects, notably "Ros-

Nobody understood star power better than the producer Zukor, a dapper former furrier now at the top of the film industry.

ita" (1923), directed by Lubitsch, who had recently arrived from Germany, and "Sparrows" (1926). Fairbanks changed his image, from a whimsical go-getter to a debonair adventurer, as Zorro, D'Artagnan, Robin Hood, the Thief of Baghdad and the Black Pirate. The scapegrace heroes he played would be "re-imagined" by Hollywood filmmakers for decades to come.

Under the guidance of Joseph Schenck, the United Artists president, and thanks to Goldwyn's polished independent productions, the company managed to keep going, but things got harder for the founders. Fairbanks and Pickford mounted lush, expensive productions, while Chaplin proceeded at a leisurely pace. Griffith, plagued by financial problems, pulled out

of United Artists briefly, then returned at intervals to direct a string of failures. Soon after the coming of sound, nearly all of the United Artists founders ended their careers. Chaplin persisted, but when he abandoned his Tramp persona in the 1940s, he too lost his public.

Nobody understood star power better than the producer Zukor, a dapper former furrier now at the top of the film industry. He had quickly mastered the feature film and program booking. He had built a production juggernaut by merging his company, Famous Players, with that of Jesse Lasky, and then adding a distributor called Paramount.

Zukor, who had employed Pickford and Fairbanks at stratospheric salaries, knew that stars could be difficult to manage. His refusal to raise Pickford's pay helped drive her to create United Artists. At that juncture, he faced ominous competition from First National, an alliance of theater chains that was starting to sign up stars. In the summer of 1919, Zukor recruited Wall Street backing to fund his counter-thrust: buying theaters. Thus the year 1919 laid the foundation for the future of Hollywood.

(David Bordwell is a professor of film studies emeritus at the University of Wisconsin and the author, most recently, of "Reinventing Hollywood: How 1940s Filmmakers Changed Movie Storytelling".)

Wide Angle

Trading trouble in telecommunications



JOEL INDRUPATI

If countries use Huawei equipment, "it makes it more difficult for us to partner alongside them."

By saying this, to the European countries, the US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo shot another salvo intensifying the ongoing fight of US government, against the Chinese telecommunications giant Huawei.

He was speaking at an event in Hungary, on Monday, 11 February.

Since December 2018, when its Chief Financial Officer Meng Wanzhou, was arrested in Canada, on charges of fraud, the Huawei story has been grabbing headlines regularly in the business sections of news.

Apart from violating non-disclosure agreements and stealing trade secrets, Huawei is being accused of making their 5G technologies in such a way that the American public could be spied upon, by China.

Furthermore, by hiding its connection to a Hong Kong based firm Skycom, which was apparently doing business with Iranian telecom-companies, Huawei has allegedly disguised its own violations of US trade sanctions.

The USA is asserting a state-sponsored theft of intellectual property by China, through Huawei. However, the company is insisting that it is private and autonomous; and that it has no links to the Chinese government.

Personally, I feel there is more to this story than meets the eye. The whole trade-dispute could be much more complex than what we are thinking. And could involve a huge diplomatic power game on trade, where the US and China are arm-wrestling each other, with their telecom companies as visible fronts.

Why do I think so? Let us look at a few interesting facts.

In May 2018, Huawei became the world's third-largest smartphone maker, after Samsung and Apple. But by August 2018, it went up to become the second-largest smartphone maker, pushing Apple to third place. And in January 2019, one of Huawei's top executives ambitiously announced that, by 2020, it would become the world's largest smartphone company, by beating Samsung.

Most of Huawei's smartphone sales actually came from the outside of the US.

We must also note that the 'security issue' could be exaggerated much beyond the truth. If the US blames China for 'alleged spying', USA must first

look back at its own 'actual spying' of its own citizens. With its extensive internet and phone surveillance, as revealed by Edward Snowden, it is like that classic case of a pot calling the kettle black!

In this age, where voice or motion can activate devices and networks, and record data - on computers, GPS systems, digital cameras, drones, weather systems, microwave ovens, missile systems, satellite communications, and even home air conditioners - privacy and data security should be serious concerns not only for China but also for the US and others.

But look at the interesting situations. Firstly, US allies such as New Zealand, Australia and UK have already moved to block the use of Huawei's equipment as a part of their future rollouts of some 4G and most 5G networks. Secondly, European countries are being told - if not threatened - that using Huawei equipment could jeopardise the countries' relationship with the US. Thirdly, the Trump government may be planning a widespread ban on Huawei's equipment, much of which supports 5G internet connectivity. So, is it US and allies versus China?

It is clear, however, that Huawei products are selling well in developing countries of Southeast Asia, Africa and elsewhere. And the rise of its profits has not been from countries trying to ban it.

So, who knows, if it succeeds in disproving US government allegations, Huawei may come out even bigger and better. After all, Richard Yu, the CEO of Huawei's consumer business, had confidently said these words in Jan 2019, in Beijing: "This year at the soonest, next year at the latest, we (Huawei) will become number one".



TOP
4
TWEETS

01



If you look at those opposing the wall on the southern border it is easy to figure out motivation - the more Hispanic foreign nationals who become American citizens, the better it is for the Democratic Party--

@BillOReilly

02



We are fighting for all Americans, from all backgrounds, of every age, race, religion, birthplace, color & creed. Our agenda is NOT a partisan agenda - it is the mainstream, common sense agenda of the American People. Thank you El Paso, Texas - I love you!

@realDonaldTrump

03



Namo must declare Ram Setu as a National Heritage Monument by next week. Min of Culture file recommending is on PM's desk for signature

@Swamy39

04



I've gone back and forth on it, but for now I think quitting Facebook is not something the majority of people are going to be willing to do, or in fact, able to do because they need their community there. I believe in agitating for solutions that work for the most people.

@kateo

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