



Burp! Pepsi v Coke in the Ice Cold War

Director: Alan Lowery
Reporter: John Pilger
Production Company:
Central Independent Television
Producer: Nicholas Claxton
Production Assistant: Julie Stoner
Film Research: Raye Farr, Sue Sudbury
Camera: John Varnish
Rostrum Camera: Duncan Holloway
Graphics: Chris Bent, Ivor Weir
Editors: Paul Cleary, Hazel Sansom
Assistant Editor: Hazel Sansom
Sound: John Marshall
Dubbing Mixer: Colin Martin
ITV tx 22.5.1984
53 mins

Flying the Flag – Arming the World

Director/Producer: David Munro
Written & Presented by: John Pilger
Production Company:
Central Independent Television
Production Accountant: Andy Ritchie
Production Secretary: Tracy Whitehouse
Senior Researcher: David Boardman
Photography: Kees 't Hooft, Bob Bolt, David Munro
Still Photography: John Garrett
Rostrum Photography & Graphics: Frameline
Editor: Joe Frost
On-line Editor: Chris Reynolds
Archive: ITN
Archive Research: Janet Rayner
Titles: The Look
Title Music: Steven Faux
'The Powers That Be' courtesy of: Roger Waters
Sound: Mel Marr, Alan James
Dubbing Mixer: Paul Roberts
Consultants: Paul Lashmar, David Hellier
Special Thanks: Peter Ward, Bruce Kent, John Reed, David Bull, Dr M.A.S. Al-Massari, Campaign Against the Arms Trade, Ben Jackson & Harriet Lamb – WDM, John Sweeney, Richard Norton-Taylor, Dr Paul Dunne, Robin Ballantine
ITV tx 15.11.1994
50 mins

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HIDDEN TRUTHS: JOHN PILGER AND THE POWER OF DOCUMENTARY **Burp! Pepsi v Coke in the Ice Cold War** **+ Flying the Flag – Arming the World**

Inspired by Jill Chen Louis's book *The Cola Wars*, John Pilger's *Burp! Pepsi v Coke in the Ice Cold War* tells the story of the struggle between 'those giants of carbonation and regurgitation, Coca-Cola and Pepsi-Cola' – and how the two multinationals have influenced American politics.

Standing in front of a war monument in Washington, his voice heavy with irony, Pilger says, 'This is a film about a world war. A war which in all my years as a correspondent has somehow escaped my attention. It is a war fought in more than 100 countries, regardless of ideology, in communist and capitalist countries, in Muslim, Buddhist and Christian countries. It's a war that has directly involved President Eisenhower, President Johnson, President Nixon, President Carter, Chiang Kai-shek, Mao Zedong, the Dalai Lama, Mr Khrushchev and Father Christmas... One side claims to have captured China. The other side says that it has taken Russia.'

Pilger begins with the invention of Coca-Cola in the days after the American Civil War. 'Coke' claimed a 'secret formula' – false rumours that it might contain cocaine contributed to its mystique. This was followed by Pepsi's 'magical ingredients'. As the companies grew, their success was the result of an innovative franchise system that spread to 150 countries and to advertising campaigns that associated a product of basically sugar and water with 'good times'. Coke could claim, with some truth, to have conceived one of the modern images of Santa Claus – jovial and plump, and drinking a Coke. By the 1980s, a landmark Congressional inquiry had identified soft drinks as the primary cause of obesity.

During the Second World War, Coca-Cola shipped whole bottling plants to the front line, with the US taxpayer – via the War Department – picking up the bill. Coke dispensers were installed in tanks, submarines, even fighter planes.

The Cold War presented an opportunity to capture markets long closed to American consumer goods. Coca-Cola was preferred in communist Poland, it claimed, to the 'ideologically pure' vodka, while Pepsi aligned itself with the infamous 'Red baiting' Senator Joe McCarthy, who called sugar rationing 'anti-American'. Film star Joan Crawford, wife of Al Steele, Pepsi's chairman in the 1950s, became a 'Pepsi ambassador'.

President Jimmy Carter ensured Coca-Cola's success in China, which the company 'recognised' before the United States had established diplomatic relations with the People's Republic. Throughout much of his career, former Vice-President and President-to-be Richard Nixon was bankrolled by Pepsi-Cola, especially on his world travels, which took him behind the 'Iron Curtain'. Thanks largely to its relationship with Nixon, Pepsi claimed what it regarded as the Cold War 'prize' – Russia.

Burp! may claim the distinction of being the only film in which the heads of both Coke and Pepsi agree to appear and be interviewed, though separately. Donald R Keough, president of the Coca-Cola Company, leaves not a dry eye when he tells Pilger that he goes to bed every night believing his business adds 'a little brightness to life' and gives the example of an imaginary impoverished young woman in Colombia buying a drink of Coke. 'For a moment,' he says, 'she's got her hand around the same thing that the president of that country is drinking or that people of every walk of life drink. And I think that's terribly valid.'

johnpilger.com

HIDDEN TRUTHS: JOHN PILGER AND THE POWER OF DOCUMENTARY

I Am Not Your Negro

Sat 26 Oct 20:35; Sat 9 Nov 15:30;

Thu 21 Nov 18:30; Sat 30 Nov 18:15

Seniors' Free Talk: The Quiet Mutiny + intro and Q&A with author Anthony Hayward

Mon 28 Oct 11:45

Seniors' Free Matinee: The Last Day + intro with author Anthony Hayward

Mon 28 Oct 14:00

The Pilger Effect

Mon 28 Oct 18:15

The War You Don't See

Mon 28 Oct 20:35; Sat 16 Nov 18:10

Death of a Nation: The Timor Conspiracy + Palestine Is Still the Issue

Sat 2 Nov 15:00

The Golden Dream La Jaula De Oro

Tue 5 Nov 20:45; Thu 14 Nov 18:10;

Sun 24 Nov 15:30

Lousy Little Sixpence + Utopia

Sun 10 Nov 14:50

Year Zero: The Silent Death of Cambodia

+ Breaking the Silence: Truth and Lies in the War on Terror

Mon 18 Nov 18:10

Burp! Pepsi v Coke in the Ice Cold War

+ Flying the Flag: Arming the World

Sat 23 Nov 17:45

The Coming War on China

Sat 23 Nov 20:10; Fri 29 Nov 18:15

The Ballymurphy Precedent

Tue 26 Nov 18:10 (+ intro by director Callum Macrae); Sat 30 Nov 12:20

The documentaries in this season contain distressing scenes of both violence and racism related to the events they cover

With thanks to

John Pilger, Jane Hill, Sam Pilger, Christopher Hird, Matt Hird, David Boardman, Marcus Prince

Programme texts compiled by John Pilger, Jane Hill, Sam Pilger, Christopher Hird, Matt Hird, David Boardman, Maggi Hurt and David Somerset

Selections from Hidden Truths can be found on **BFI Player**

For more information about John Pilger's films go to johnpilger.com

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Flying the Flag – Arming the World: 1994 press notes

Britain's most profitable industry is not cars or whisky, but arms – a multibillion-pound business developing, producing and exporting some of the world's most dangerous killing machines. In *Flying the Flag – Arming the World*, John Pilger and David Munro lift the lid on the nation's military economy, which employs one in ten British workers and accounts for half of all research and development spending. The programme was transmitted as part of *The War Machine*, ITV's first ever themed week, exploring the international arms trade.

Pilger reports that the Ministry of Defence – despite newspaper headlines about deep cuts – is still the industry's biggest customer, receiving £20 billion-plus of taxpayers' money each year, although a new threat to replace Communism has yet to be found. But huge supplies of fighter planes, tanks, guns and bombs are also sold to poor and developing countries, often run by dictatorships with appalling human rights records, giving Britain a 20 per cent share of the world arms market, second only to the United States.

Pilger says: 'As the Scott Arms-for-Iraq Inquiry has revealed, the British Government will send any amount of arms to a dictator, regardless of his appalling human rights record and breach of government guidelines.'

Pilger interviews Denis Healey, who as Labour defence secretary in 1966 set up the Defence Sales Organisation to exploit the commercial opportunities for arms exports worldwide. But it was under Margaret Thatcher's premiership – and often personal involvement – that the biggest deals were struck.

The programme examines multimillion-pound arms sales to Saudi Arabia and Iraq and includes extraordinary interviews with highly-placed sources from intelligence and diplomatic circles about the secret workings of the government departments and manufacturers involved in the deals, as well as the middleman – who made money from them.

Pilger and Munro also travel to the Paris arms fair, which they liken in style to the Ideal Home Exhibition – with smooth-talking salesmen, glossy brochures, promotions women and special deals for bulk buys.

Pilger says: 'At the stand of one French company, a salesman described to me the workings of a "wonderful" new bomblet or grenade smaller than a grapefruit which, upon impact, breaks into millions of fragments, saturating the "objective".

'It reminded me of my time as a war correspondent in Vietnam when a less refined version of the dart bomb was first tested by the Americans, leaving many civilians including children to die a slow, agonising death from internal injuries.

'The only pleasure I get from such an arms fair is in helping the salesmen to relieve their verbal constipation. They have the greatest difficulty in saying the words "people" or "kill" and words like "maim" and "suffering" appear to have no place in their vocabulary.'

He adds: 'This film is not just about the arms business, it is also the story of the Thatcher Years – of the contempt shown for the people and Parliament, of lying, of an obsession with secrecy and corruption – all of it conducted in our name, with our money.'

Central Independent Television