

# Time correspondent “can’t wait” to write defense of drone strike that “takes out Assange”

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A Twitter message posted Saturday by *Time* magazine senior national correspondent Michael Grunwald highlights the authoritarian sentiments that predominate in the media establishment.

“I can’t wait to write a defense of the drone strike that takes out Julian Assange,” Grunwald wrote, referring to the founder of WikiLeaks. Assange is currently trapped in the Ecuadorean embassy in London, where he is fighting against extradition to Sweden and, ultimately, the United States.

The Obama administration has led an international campaign against Assange, reportedly filing secret criminal charges against him. Bradley Manning, who provided evidence of US war crimes to WikiLeaks, has been convicted in a court martial of espionage.

Grunwald’s comments take this persecution to its next logical step—drone missile assassination of those declared to be assisting “enemies,” including journalists such as Assange.

Grunwald is not a fringe figure. He is an establishment commentator with close ties to the Democratic Party and the Obama administration. He is a regular fixture in major news outlets, reporting for the *Washington Post*, *Boston Globe*, *New Republic*, *Slate* and *Foreign Policy*. In 2012, he wrote a book praising the Obama administration entitled *The New New Deal, the Hidden Story of Change in the Obama Era*.

Grunwald authored an article last April following the police-military lockdown of Boston entitled “Tread on Me: The Case for Freedom from Terrorist Bombings, School Shootings, and Exploding Factories.” The article was an unabashed argument for untrammelled state power.

Asserting that “we’re pretty free,” he wrote that

“there’s dangerous stuff out there... I’m more inclined to stand with the public servants keeping us safe, even when the Al Qaeda operative they ice in Yemen is an American citizen, even when they shut down an entire city to hunt for a single teenager...”

The individual whose “icing” Grunwald praised was Anwar Al-Awlaki, a US citizen whose drone assassination was ordered by President Obama and defended by Attorney General Eric Holder.

“I guess you could call me a statist,” Grunwald continued. “Our rights are not inviolate... The civil-liberties purists of the ACLU are just as extreme as the gun purists of the NRA...”

Grunwald’s comments are not an aberration. Such antidemocratic conceptions are rife within the US establishment media, which hardly attempts to disguise its role as an unofficial propaganda arm of the state.

There is barely a shred of democratic consciousness among the host of lavishly paid media mouthpieces for the military/intelligence apparatus and big business. On the contrary, they are instinctively hostile to anyone, including journalists, who expose the lies, secrets and crimes of the government.

That specimens with authoritarian if not fascistic inclinations like Grunwald can rise to the top levels of the media only shows that the corporate-controlled press would have no difficulty functioning under a military dictatorship.



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