

Lobster 59

Sources

Robin Ramsay

SCADS

The entire February 2010 issue of the *American Behavioural Scientist* was devoted to State Crimes Against Democracy (SCADS) – parapolitics to you and me; conspiracy theories to the major media. The individual papers (which used to be on-line but have since been removed) are nothing to get too excited about but the fact that a major American academic journal has done this is interesting. I'm not a fan of the acronym SCADS and doubt it will achieve wide acceptance any more than parapolitics did. But you never know. Here is the abstract of the lead essay of the collection, Lance deHaven-Smith's 'Beyond Conspiracy Theory: Patterns of High Crime in American Government':

'This article explores the conceptual, methodological, and practical implications of research on state crimes against democracy (SCADs). In contrast to conspiracy theories, which speculate about each suspicious event in isolation, the SCAD construct delineates a general category of criminality and calls for crimes that fit this category to be examined comparatively. Using this approach, an analysis of post-World War II SCADs and suspected SCADs highlights a number of commonalities in SCAD targets, timing, and policy consequences. SCADs often appear where presidential politics and foreign

policy intersect. SCADs differ from earlier forms of political corruption in that they frequently involve political, military, and/or economic elites at the very highest levels of the social and political order. The article concludes by suggesting statutory and constitutional reforms to improve SCAD prevention and detection.'

The CIA and opium again

Professor Alfred McCoy, who first drew attention to the CIA's role in the shipping of opium during the Vietnam war, has returned to subject of opium and the US state in his 'Calling Afghanistan what it is: a drug war'.¹

The pro-Israel lobby in Britain

In November 2009 Channel 4's Dispatches series broadcast 'Inside Britain's Israel Lobby', a striking event in this country's political (and television) history. The programme was accompanied by the on-line publication of a pamphlet, going over the same ground in much more detail.² This is very good indeed.

Cell phones and cancer risk

The impressive Christopher Ketcham has turned his attention to the health risks of mobile/cell phones.³ This will make for deeply uncomfortable reading if you use one of these devices frequently. As will the report from The International Agency for Research on Cancer which reported increased cancers among

1 <www.salon.com/news/feature/2010/03/30/afghanistan_as_drug_war/index.html>

2 <www.opendemocracy.net/ourkingdom/peter-oborne-james-jones/pro-israel-lobby-in-britain-full-text>

3 <www.gq.com/contributors/christopher-ketcham>

Some of Ketcham's articles are at <www.christopherketcham.com>.

those using such phones the most.⁴

Neo-liberalism

A useful shortish account of neo-liberalism, its history and rise, is in a review essay by William Davies, 'The making of neo-liberalism'. Davies nicely explains a lot of complicated intellectual history but seems surprised to discover that the proponents of such ideas were funded by American corporations.

'But this collapse of politics into economics also occurs over the course of the neo-liberal gestation period, in the way that a marginalised philosophy and political strategy were offered constant sustenance in the form of corporate donations.

This is where the conspiracy theorist's (sic) view of neo-liberalism achieves maximum plausibility. At every stage of the development of American conservatism and neo-liberal thinking, an interested party was bank-rolling the project. The Volcker Fund supplied the funding for the Chicago School's Free Market Study and paid for Hayek to travel from London and tour America. Conservative think tanks collected donations from corporations, to convert their anti-government instincts into credible research. *Invisible Hands* [one of the books under review] reports that, as early as 1958, twenty-six of the largest fifty American businesses were funding the free market American Enterprise Association..... What is *shocking* is the nakedness and directness with which the wealth of corporate America was channelled into the neo-liberal project from the 1930s onwards.' (emphasis added) ⁵

4 <www.theaustralian.com.au/news/brain-tumour-link-to-mobiles/story-e6frg6n6-1225867464272>

5 <www.lwbooks.co.uk/journals/renewal/articles/Renewal%2017.4.Davies.Neo-liberalism.pdf>

This is *shocking*? What did the author think was happening?

Bloody Sunday

A new study of the events leading up the Bloody Sunday killings in Northern Ireland, 'Bloody Sunday: Error or Design?' by Niall Ó Dochartaigh, concludes:

' ...the killings were the outcome of a calculated confrontation carried out in the face of strong opposition from some elements within the security forces. At the heart of these events is a clearly planned confrontational initiative devised by one of the most senior military commanders in Northern Ireland. At the very least, a foreseeable consequence of the operation was the killing of civilians. If those involved in devising and implementing this confrontation calculated that they could act as they did with impunity, the Widgery tribunal proved their assumptions correct. The British Government may not have planned and approved a massacre in advance, but they sanctioned it in retrospect.'

The essay shows – no two ways about it, *shows* – that General Ford, Commander Land Forces in Northern Ireland, supported by Brigadier Frank Kitson and others, decided that they should stop pussyfooting about, sod the peace-keeping and instructions from the government, and shoot some people.

Why has this article not produced major ink since its publication? Is the article's implication, that the responsibility for the thousands of deaths and the billions of pounds worth of destruction lies in part with the British Army and the politicians who failed to control it, too difficult for the major media to accept?

'Bloody Sunday: Error or Design?' is published in the

March 2010 issue of *Contemporary British History*, volume 14, no. 1, pp. 89-108. It can be purchased on-line at <www.informaworld.com/>.

Psy-ops in Northern Ireland

Not unrelated to Bloody Sunday, in as much as the British state's colonial psy-ops techniques, introduced into Northern Ireland after the shootings helped provoke a kind of insurgency, the BBC broadcast on 22 March a radio documentary, 'The spin war in Northern Ireland' about the British state's psychological operations in Northern Ireland. This may still be available via iPlayer but if not a text, containing bits of the programme, was published on the BBC News website at <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/8577087.stm>>. It included this:

'There have long been claims that elements in the Army and British government were behind a widespread propaganda campaign throughout the early 1970s - mostly aimed at undermining the IRA.'

Nearly 30 years after this story was first discussed, when we know a great deal about the operations and personnel, the BBC is still talking about 'claims'. How much evidence will it take before this is simply reported as fact?

Bursting the Brussels Bubble

Corporate Europe Observatory has contributed to a new book (published by ALTER-EU), *Bursting the Brussels Bubble – the battle to expose corporate lobbying at the heart of the EU*, which was launched on 26 April.

It reveals how lobbyists from the world of big business have embedded themselves inside the European Union's decision-making process, creating a political culture where the influence of business has become the norm.

The book also highlights how campaigners have sought to challenge this corporate capture and sets out a way forward to build a more democratic and accountable European Union.

Copies of the book can be ordered online or *downloaded free* as a pdf file at <www.spectrezine.org/bursting-brussels-bubble>

Sibel Edmonds speaks

Sibel Edmonds was a translator for the FBI and found herself listening to FBI wiretap recordings of a Turkish government operation to buy US politicians, diplomats and – ultimately – nuclear technology. She was banned from talking about what she heard until last year when her testimony in a court case enabled her to talk on the record based on that testimony. At that point an investigation by the major media at least as big as that of Watergate should have begun, with the deployment of the full panoply of state law offices and a special prosecutor. None of which happened. She did, however, give a long interview to the *American Conservative* and an article about her and her allegations appeared in *Hustler*.⁶ Here's a sample, if atypical paragraph, from her interview:

'The monitoring of the Turks picked up contacts with Feith, Wolfowitz, and Perle in the summer of 2001, *four months before 9/11*. They were discussing with the Turkish ambassador in Washington an arrangement whereby the U.S. would invade Iraq and divide the country. The UK would take the south, the rest would go to the U.S. They were negotiating what Turkey required in exchange for allowing an attack from Turkish soil. The Turks were very supportive, but wanted a three-part division of Iraq to include their own occupation of the

⁶ See 'Who's Afraid of Sibel Edmonds?' in *The American Conservative*, 1 November 2009 at <www.amconmag.com/article/2009/nov/01/00006/> and <larryflynt.com/?p=693>

Kurdish region. The three Defense Department officials said that would be more than they could agree to, but they continued daily communications to the ambassador and his defense attaché in an attempt to convince them to help.' (emphasis added)

Asked about the fact that nothing has changed as regards this conspiracy with the arrival of Obama, Edmonds commented:

'The other thing I noticed is how Chicago, with its culture of political corruption, is central to the new administration. When I saw that Obama's choice of chief of staff was Rahm Emanuel, knowing his relationship with Mayor Richard Daley and with the Hastert crowd, [Hastert being part of the conspiracy] I knew we were not going to see positive changes. Changes possibly, but changes for the worse. It was no coincidence that the Turkish criminal entity's operation centered on Chicago.'

The annual Turkish military coup plot story

OK, I'm being facetious, and the hundreds of thousands of victims of the Turkish paramilitary alliances deserve better, but it does sometimes feel like there is one of these stories every year; and I wonder if they aren't being leaked by the military themselves to remind Turkish and (especially) Islamist Turkish citizens that they are still there. The Federation of American Scientists carried a twenty page report on Ergenekon, this latest expression of the so-called 'deep state'.⁷

Respect

Katharine Gun (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Katharine_Gun) was the GCHQ employee who, during the run-up to the

⁷ <www.fas.org/irp/world/turkey/ergenekon.pdf>

invasion of Iraq, leaked the fact that the Americans and Brits were planning to bug various countries' delegations at the UN. A book about her and that incident has been published in America: Marcia and Thomas Mitchell, *The Spy Who Tried To Stop A War: Katharine Gun And The Secret Plot To Sanction The Iraq Invasion* (PoliPoint Press, Sausalito, CA. 2008). This is reviewed in issue 39 of New Zealand's *Peace Researcher* at <www.converge.org.nz/abc/pr39-183b.htm>

Roderick Russell

Roderick Russell, whose experience at the hands of the Grosvenor people has been referred to in previous issues, continues with his struggle to get the mainstream media to take his claims seriously. On his Website he includes this section (the emphases are his):

The Guardian

In 2005 I went to The Guardian in Manchester, UK and met with their then Northern Correspondent. I showed him correspondence from UK-Cabinet Minister Hazel Blears (then responsible for MI5 and Special Branch) that proves that my complaints are being covered-up. He was appalled and told me that he would recommend to his Editor that an investigative journalist be put on the case. The Editor turned him down.

Threats for visiting The Guardian ~

On the way back from The Guardian's Office my wife and I were threatened. A week later my eldest son (then in Birmingham, UK) received a series of very **nasty telephone death threats, which he recorded**. 24 hours later they ***smashed a vehicle into my house in Manchester***. Meanwhile my **documentation had disappeared from The Guardian's secure office**. A year later I filed copies of this same documentation with a Court in Manchester, and it disappeared

again.⁸

Russell gives links on his site to the correspondence with Hazel Blears and you can read it for yourself. Russell interprets his experience at the *Guardian* as a demonstration of the penetration of the media by the intelligence services. But as I wrote to his daughter, Amy, who nudged my elbow about this story:

'Your dad's piece, which he has already sent me, does not in fact show that the spooks have penetrated the *Guardian*. That might be true, of course. But his experience doesn't make this conclusion unavoidable. All manner of people traipse into the *Guardian* and show the journalists stories. I've done it. Few of those people get the outcome they desire. I certainly didn't. The difficulty is that there are all kinds of reasons why a newspaper/editor/journalist didn't use the info given them, of which that he or she is working for the intelligence services is the least likely.'

I have no doubt that Russell's experiences are real but that does not mean I have to agree with his interpretation of them. In this case I don't. He may be right but he hasn't yet proved to me that the state is involved in this. But check it out for yourself.

⁸ Go to <<http://zerzetzen.wikispaces.com/>> This extract is from section 6.