

The View from the Bridge

Robin Ramsay

Prawn Cocktail Party

I rarely mentioned my *Prawn Cocktail Party* (PCP) in *Lobster* because I didn't want to encourage people to buy it. PCP was mangled by the publisher. They scrambled the footnotes to two of the chapters and added errors, including different titles on front cover and flyleaf and having the election of 1997 taking place in 1996. Then they put it out without bothering to show me a proof copy. When the mess they'd made was revealed I was told it would be pulped; but it wasn't. Some years later I received an anonymous phone call. A middle aged man with an RP accent told me that the Labour Party had contacted the publisher of PCP and offered to pay to suppress the book. How thrilling! Then I asked how much was offered: £5000. Which put me in my place. Did my caller have any evidence? None he would share with me.

Some of it I recycled through *The Rise of New Labour*, and some through 'Well, how did we get here?' and 'Thatcher against the City' in this issue.

Storming teacups 2.0

I recently read on Stephen Dorril's website his account of what he sees as his ouster from *Lobster*.

Lobster was [sic] a journal of parapolitics, primarily covering the activities of the British Security and Intelligence Services. It was co-founded/edited with Robin Ramsay, who went through something of a self-confessed mid-life crisis and unceremoniously ejected Stephen Dorril, stole the Lobster name, subscription list and back copies.

Almost none of this is true. Yes, Dorril suggested the name and was cofounder. But there was no mid-life crisis; and my 'ejection' of Dorril consisted solely of taking his name off a magazine which had always been entirely edited and produced by me. I merely carried on as usual but took his name off it. (On becoming a book writer, he had contributed very little after issue 11, and *nothing at all* to six of the issues preceding number 24 when I deleted his name.) I had always had the back copies and subscription list and thus could hardly 'steal' them. If anyone wants to read more about this, see my 'Storming teacups! Or: Steve Dorril, *Lobster* and me' in issue 39.

Having written or co-written four significant books in difficult fields, having become a regular commentator on intelligence for the major media, and an academic, why does Dorril need to tell lies about something so piffling?

Chemtrails

Chemtrails – high altitude aerial spraying for purposes unknown – have become a regular feature on US conspiracy theorists' websites and are now starting to appear in the UK equivalents. If you presume it's all hogwash, take a look at www.brasschecktv.com/page/899.html. If that isn't film of a twin-engined jet engaged in high altitude aerial spraying, what is it?

The consequences of Chernobyl

You may remember the 2005 United Nations report which claimed that the fallout from the Chernobyl meltdown was going to result in perhaps 4,000 deaths.¹ I always wondered how the figure was arrived at. A report on a new book on the incident by some Russian and Belorussian scientists tells us: there was a 1959 agreement in which the World Health Organisation was obliged to clear any information it had on radioactivity with the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency). Hence the low figure from the nuclear lobby. The new book, published by the New York Academy of Sciences, shows, from statistical analysis of deaths in the areas affected by the fallout, that the death toll will be at least 985,000, mostly from cancer.²

One cat, let out of bag

In comments to trade unionists on the eve of the TUC conference this year, the Governor of the Bank of England, Mervyn King, was reported to have said:

'The role of the Bank of England changed with independence [of the Bank]. *It was an apologist for the City.* I now see it serving the nation as a whole.'³
(Emphasis added.)

¹ See, for example, the report by Bronwen Maddox, 'Chernobyl fallout not as bad as first feared' (*The Times*, 7 September, 2005), which began, 'Only 56 people have so far died directly as a result of the explosion at Chernobyl in 1986, including 9 children with thyroid cancer. In the end, perhaps up to 4,000 people will die from radiation-caused illness.'

² <www.opednews.com/articles/1/New-Book-Concludes-Cherno-by-Karl-Grossman-100902-941.html> The article notes that the 4,000 figure is still on the IAEA website.

³ <www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/economics/8002938/Mervyn-King-to-face-hostile-TUC-amid-determination-to-protect-public-from-banks.html>

I guess we all knew this but it is interesting to see it acknowledged.

David Kelly's death

I have never been greatly interested in this for two reasons. First, I cannot see why anyone or any group would bother to kill Kelly. Cui bono? Norman Baker MP, I understand – I haven't read his book – concludes (his best guess) that he was 'suicided' by a pro-Saddam group. Did that ever make sense to you? I read recently somewhere that some Australian spooks thought SIS had done it. Why would they bother? Like the rest of the UK foreign policy establishment, SIS were against the war. Kelly was of relatively little consequence: the war was going to happen no matter what anyone said. Had Kelly called a press conference and told the world everything he knew, he could have embarrassed the Blair government; but that's all.

Second, if Kelly's death looked like an unlikely and/or incompetent way to commit suicide, it was an even more incompetent way to *fake* a suicide.

Richard Webster, the author of the wonderful study of the paedophile panic centred round a children's' home in Wales, *The Secret of Bryn Estyn* (The Orwell Press, 2005), has written a very interesting essay on the growth of the Kelly conspiracy theories.⁴

Cometh the hour

And then there as the case of Rory Stewart, new Tory MP for Penrith and the Border, still sort of trying to deny that he was an MI6 officer. A piece in the *Telegraph*⁵ said 'Stewart last year dismissed claims circulating on the internet that he himself had

⁴ At <www.richardwebster.net>.

⁵ Jon Swaine, 'Rory Stewart concedes career "gives appearance" that he worked for MI6', *Daily Telegraph*, 8 November 2010.

been an MI6 officer.' Said claims were made by former British Ambassador Craig Murray (evidently unmentionable by the *Telegraph*), who wrote this:

'One person I would not vote for is the crusading neo-Conservative Rory Stewart. It is particularly annoying that he is constantly referred to as a former diplomat. Stewart was an MI6 officer and not a member of the FCO.

Three years ago I received a message from the FCO asking me not to mention this as, at that time, Stewart was still very active for MI6 in Afghanistan and his life could have been endangered. I agreed, and even removed a reference from my blog. However now that he is safely and lucratively ensconced at Harvard, I see no reason to conceal the truth. It is necessary to reveal this so that people can correctly evaluate his political pronouncements on Iraq and Afghanistan, and his motives in making them.'⁶

Wikileaks

There is an interesting discussion of what if anything the US state can do to stop Wikileaks at <<http://intelligencenews.wordpress.com/2010/08/19/01-541/>>. The conclusion is: not very much. There are too many mirror sites and there is a kind of insurance policy:

'...the site has posted *insurance.aes256*, a password-protected file, to act as insurance in case anything happens to the *WikiLeaks* website or its founder, Julian Assange.*WikiLeaks* volunteers have been instructed to send out a password to allow anyone who has downloaded the file to instantly open it. Considering that the file is estimated to be nearly 20 times the size

⁶ <www.craigmurray.org.uk/archives/2009/09/iain_dales_brac.html>

of the already released Afghan War Diary files, this seems like adequate insurance indeed.'

Which does not explain why Julian Assange is allowed in and out of this country. All manner of comparatively insignificant people are prohibited from entering this country, yet Assange, the figurehead of a movement apparently blowing the official secrets of this state's (much larger) ally on a scale never seen before, is allowed to come and go as if he was just another tourist. This needs explanation.

Farewell NuLab

Someone with the moniker JacktheNat wrote this on the *Guardian's* Comment is Free on 16 July:

'The core of New Labour was a bitchy queen, a depressive fawner upon powerful men, a couple of messianics, a coterie of ex-Communist Party opportunists, a few jaded, modist "thinkers" and a young Praetorian guard of ambitious student politicians and assorted money-grubbing lobbyists.

A bit more complicated than this?

Well chuck in devotion to the City, US foreign policy and Israel and there's little more to say.'

Which is essentially true; but I like the details. I haven't read the Blair/Mandelson/Jonathan Powell versions of NuLab yet but I did read – I confess I bought – Alastair Campbell's diary of the 1994-97 period, looking for clues as to the creation of the NuLab 'project'. There are few. Most of the book recounts either the daily chore of trying to spin/bully the mass media, or his attempts to mediate between the egos of the Mandelson-Brown-Blair triangle. (There is a play to be written with the best of the collected exchanges between these three.) Much of this is fascinating in a soap opera-ish sort of way – can the

depressed spin doctor get out of bed in time to save the day as one or other of the prima donnas flounces off again? – but there are only two sections which added anything to my knowledge.

The first concerns concerned the birth, short life and death of the notion of the 'stakeholder economy' in NuLab thinking. Originally promoted by Will Hutton, it was briefly adopted by Blair – not that he had thought its implications through; but it sounded good – and was kiboshed immediately by Brown. (Campbell presents Blair as to the left of Brown throughout this book.)

The second is a passing reference to the fund-raising activities of Lord Levy. Several accounts have stated that Levy raised around £7 million pounds for Blair's private office (liberating him from the financial clutches of the party and unions). On p. 515 Campbell quotes Levy as saying he'd raised £1.3 million. It might even be true.

Of rather more interest is Giles Radice's *Diaries 1980-2001* (London: Orion, 2004). Radice was essentially Tony Blair – pro American, pro EU, pro market – but with more principles and fewer ambitions; and this account of being a Labour MP from the days of Michael Foot to Blair is full of interesting bits and pieces. Radice went to Oxford, became a researcher for the GMB union (in one of its earlier incarnations) and then found a safe Labour seat in the North East.

The EU is one of the dominant themes. He tells us that he met the late John Smith at a 'young Koenigswinter'⁷ meeting in the early 1960s; his second wife is the cousin of Joseph Retinger, the founder of the Bilderberg group; he is a leading light in the European Movement; and was a 'parliamentary scholar,' attached to the FCO/SIS outpost, St. Antony's College, Oxford. In short, Radice was the very model of the sensible, middle of the road Gaitskellite, plugged into

⁷ <www.debrige.de/de/koenigswinter-conference-0>

the europhile Foreign Office's networks. To his credit (and to the detriment of his career) he never pretended to be anything other than the Euro-enthusiast that he was.

In one entry in 1998, he and Blair are discussing the possibility of a revolt against Murdoch by sections of the Parliamentary Labour Party, and he quotes Blair as saying: 'It only makes my job more difficult when I want to discuss policy issues with Murdoch and his executives.'

Blair discussing policies with Murdoch and complaining (Campbell p. 420) that 'It would be so much easier if I didn't have the party around my ankles the whole time', either sums up the dilemma for a modern Labour leader – lumbered with party members uninterested in the results of the latest focus group in the Home Counties and obliged to kiss the shite media's arse ⁸ – or expresses everything that was wrong with the NuLab 'project'.

Bilderberg

Radice's account of attending a Bilderberg meeting in 1995 is the third by a British politician I can think of. The brief comments of Denis Healey (in his autobiography) and Paddy Ashdown (in his diaries) are on-line. Radice writes: 'I am sent by the Blair office as none of the front-line Labour spokesmen can go.' So much for Bilderberg being the executive committee of world capitalism! Blair, Brown etc. had more pressing engagements. Bilderberg is 'much more right-wing than Koenigswinter', says Radice. (p. 337)

Another batch of Bilderberg meeting minutes has

⁸ This would be would be Radice's view. He was co-author of the influential 1992 pamphlet *Southern Discomfort* which, using focus groups to analyse the political attitudes of voters in marginal seats who had considered supporting Labour in 1992 but in the event stayed Conservative, provided support for those who believed that to get elected Labour had to become a version of the Conservative Party.

appeared, on Wikileaks;⁹ and Public Intelligence has many lists of participants at the meetings.¹⁰ I haven't read this latest batch of minutes and probably never will. How interesting or useful are the minutes of a meeting in which none of the speakers are identified? 'A German said.....an American said....'

The Wikileaks preamble to the minutes states that the organisation does not have a Website. It does now: <www.bilderbergmeetings.org>.

Bilderberg as an organisation was never quite as secret as the list of those attending its meetings used to be. When I wrote to its office in 1999 to ask if it was true that Labour leader the late John Smith had been on their steering committee, I received a brief but prompt reply from the secretary confirming it and giving dates.

Electromagnetic hypersensitivity (EHS)

EHS is barely recognised by the medical profession. One recent study concluded:

'The symptoms described by "electromagnetic hypersensitivity" sufferers can be severe and are sometimes disabling. However, it has proved difficult to show under blind conditions that exposure to EMF can trigger these symptoms. This suggests that "electromagnetic hypersensitivity" is unrelated to the presence of EMF, although more research into this phenomenon is required.'¹¹

And – of course – the mobile phone industry wants to deny its existence. So where is the evidence? Some French scientists

9 <http://wikileaks.org/wiki/Category:Bilderberg_Group>

10 <<http://publicintelligence.net/category/documents/bilderberg/bilderberg-participant-lists/>>

11 <www.bcuc.com/documents/proceedings/2006/doc_10736_b1-105_article-electromagnetic%20hypersensitivity.pdf>

have just provided some. They took an EHS sufferer and scanned – encephaloscanned – his brain. Then he went to live for several months in a spot in France almost free of electromagnetic radiation. Then they scanned his brain again and found that areas of his brain which had been relatively inactive have come back to life. You can see the pictures.¹²

La Lutte continue

Lady Falkender, Marcia Falkender as was, Harold Wilson's political secretary, has a website, <www.falkender.com>. I don't know if it is still open – I am now denied access – but when I had access to it and initially skimmed across its sections, she was using it to attack/critique the treatment of her and Harold Wilson, in the books of Joe Haines (*Glimmers of Twilight*) and Bernard Donoughue (*Downing Street Diary*).

The fascist plot to take the White House in 1933
I am still regularly gob-smacked by what is available on the Net. Take the infamous but murky 1933 plot by some Wall Street bankers to overthrow Roosevelt and his New Deal. The hearings of the congressional committee which half-heartedly investigated it are on-line¹³; as is the text of the only book written about it, Jules Archer's *The Plot to Seize the White House*, which relies heavily on the committee's report.¹⁴ Why did the committee do it so badly? One version quoted here has it that President Roosevelt used the plot's existence to neutralise the banksters in return for not prosecuting them. Practical politics first. On a quick skim neither account seems to

¹² A collection of articles about this and related subjects is at <<http://inthesenewtimes.com/>> Click on 'Studies and statements showing mobile phone health risk'.

¹³ <http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/McCormack-Dickstein_Committee>

¹⁴ <www.wanttoknow.info/plottoseizethewhitehouse>

answer the central question: why did the plotters want Smedley Butler, a high profile, Quaker general, to front their scheme?

From NuLab to NuTory

In the previous issue Anthony Frewin reviewed John Stafford's book about democracy (or its absence) in the Tory Party. Stafford has an essay on the current state of the TP,¹⁵ most of which could have been written about the Labour Party: take-over of the party by rich individuals and corporate money; no need for members who are just an encumbrance. It's the American model, of course; it's what Tony Blair yearned for. Very striking.

Tugwell and InfPol

Way back when.....there was a Canadian JFK researcher called Scott Van Wynesberghe who wrote a couple of pieces for *Lobster*. In number 27 I noted that Van Wynesberghe had graduated from writing for *Lobster* (e.g. issue 24) to one of Canada's leading daily papers, the *Globe and Mail*; and that his ticket into the big media had been a recanting of his previous writing, and acknowledgement that Lee Harvey Oswald had done the dirty deed in Dallas. I had declined to publish Van Wynesberghe's change of tack in issue 26 and suggested to him that he should try the straight media in Canada; they would love it. And they did.

I heard no more of the man until November this year when Dr Noel Currid alerted me to a piece in the *Globe and Mail*

15 'Allowing and encouraging meaningful participation is the key to reviving the Tory grassroots' at <<http://conservativehome.blogs.com/platform/2010/11/john-strafford-allowing-and-encouraging-meaningful-participation-is-the-key-to-reviving-the-tory-gra.html>>

by Van Wynesberghe, 'I Remember Maurice Tugwell'. Tugwell has appeared before in these columns as he had been in Northern Ireland at the same time as Colin Wallace, and in the same line of work. Tugwell, who lived in Canada, died in October this year; and in his piece Van Wynesberghe recounts an interview he did with Tugwell in 1994.¹⁶ This is the key section about the British psy-ops unit in Northern Ireland, Information Policy.

'He [Tugwell] sighed when I introduced myself and brought up Information Policy – I was obviously not the first to bug him about it. But he then spared me 15 minutes and patiently explained the actual nature of the unit.'

'No, he said, it was not a psychological-warfare gang that deliberately spread lies. Rather, its purpose was to co-ordinate between frontline troops and public-relations officers, who had not been interacting well in such a charged, political environment.'

'Also, the unit studied the media campaigns of the Irish Republican Army and suggested rebuttals. Taken aback, I mentioned the whistleblower Colin Wallace, who had been one of those PR officers working with Tugwell.'

'Wallace had admitted to peddling disinformation, but Tugwell quickly pointed out a major discrepancy between the highly professional man he and others once knew and the teller of lurid tales Wallace became years later.'

'Whatever Wallace had been up to, Tugwell was adamant that he himself had not knowingly spread false accounts.'

So there was Tugwell still running the InfPol cover story, years after the British government had acknowledged that Wallace's

¹⁶ < <http://v1.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/LAC.20101122.IREMTUGWELLATL//TPStory/Obituaries> >

version of events was true.

News from Airstrip One

Solomon Hughes had an important piece in *The Morning Star* on the US-British military relationship.¹⁷ Using the Freedom of Information Act, Hughes got some British documents about the American use of British bases from which to bomb Libya in 1986.

'A "top secret" draft press release written by a senior official in the Defence Department on April 11 1986 makes clear that the raid was not a "joint decision" in terms of the 1952 communiqué [which governs US-UK actions]. It says:

"The prime minister agreed that the US should if necessary use their forces in the United Kingdom, but there was no 'joint decision' on the action in Libya, which is a national action by the United States."

In the accompanying letter the official makes clear the Ministry of Defence worried that allowing the US to fly its planes without a joint decision weakened British control of our territory. He writes:

"The argumentation about the decision on the use of US bases in this country raises two issues which will require very careful consideration."

These are "the need to avoid anything which could set a precedent affecting our ability in the future to control US use of assets in this country" and "our possible concern on this occasion to avoid stating publicly that the US actions had been a matter of 'joint decision' in the terms of the 1952 Churchill-Truman agreement." '

¹⁷ <www.morningstaronline.co.uk/index.php/news/content/view/full/97781> 18 November 2010

The whole thing is worth reading. Hughes concludes:

'The documents show that the US didn't really discuss the bombing, that the British government worried about losing control, that it rushed to support the US bombing anyway and that ministers were shocked at how unpopular the bombing was.'

My only quibble would be with Hughes' comment: 'In fairness to Reagan, it is likely Libyan secret services were involved in the nightclub bombing.' Is it? In his book *The Other Side of Deception*, the former Mossad officer, Victor Ostrovsky, claimed that Libya had been framed by Mossad for the nightclub bombing in Berlin which led to the American raid, with Mossad planting a radio beacon – a Trojan – in Libya and using to it broadcast signals implicating Libya in the bombing.

' "Using the Trojan, the Mossad tried to make it appear that a long series of terrorist orders were being transmitted to various Libyan embassies around the world," Ostrovsky continues. As the Mossad had hoped, the transmissions were deciphered by the Americans and construed as ample proof that the Libyans were active sponsors of terrorism. What's more, the Americans pointed out, Mossad reports confirmed it.

"The French and the Spanish, though, were not buying into the new stream of information. To them it seemed suspicious that suddenly, out of the blue, the Libyans, who had been extremely careful in the past, would start advertising their future actions.....The French and the Spanish were right. The information was bogus."'¹⁸

To my knowledge Ostrovsky is the only source on this.

Briefly

18 <www.mediamonitors.net/curtiss2.html>

* The filmmaker, Adam Curtis ('The Power of Nightmares', 'Pandora's Box' etc), perhaps the most important documentary maker in the English-speaking world today, has a blog – more accurately, a website – on which he puts bits and pieces of film and research. Well worth a look.¹⁹

* Richard Cummings, who wrote in *Lobster* about *The Paris Review* and the CIA, now has a blog.²⁰ His essay there on the actions of the Republicans in America, 'The Prosperity of Treason', concludes thus:

'All of these actions by the Republicans were treasonous, ... And because the Republicans keep winning, "none dare call it treason." '

* Ola Tunander's 'Approaching the dual state of the west', an interesting essay on the subject of the 'deep state', the parapolitical state, beneath the formal structures of democratic regimes, is on-line.²¹ Tunander considers a wide range of covert operations – the strategy of tension, Aginter Press etc. This essay was eventually incorporated into a chapter of the book *Government of the Shadows: Parapolitics and Criminal Sovereignty*, which I hope to review in the next issue.

* Did the CIA shelter Nazis after WW2? Yes they did; and now it's official. A 600 page report of a recent Justice Department investigation of the subject is now on-line.²² Of particular interest may be the chapter which critiques John Loftus's book *The Belarus Secret*, which for many years was the only source on some of this.

19 <www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/adamcurtis/>

20 <www.thefireinsider.com/>

21 <http://wikispooks.com/wiki/Document:Democratic_State_v_Deep_State>

22 <<http://documents.nytimes.com/confidential-report-provides-new-evidence-of-notorious-nazi-cases?ref=us#p=1>>