

The View from the Bridge

Robin Ramsay

One of the Blair legacies

I have written in these columns before about the consequences of the American and British use of depleted uranium in their munitions, for example by the Americans in their assault on Falluja, in Iraq. A report on this, with pictures of babies with gross deformities born in the Falluja hospital, is to be found in Professor Paola Manduca's 'The biological legacy of warfare' at <www.uruknet.de/?s1=1&p=80103&s2=02>. The pictures are disgusting.

Quigley

The American conspiracy theorists of the 1970s promoted Carroll Quigley's then very hard to find *Tragedy and Hope* as a seminal work on the powers-that-be. In the first issue of this journal in 1983 I tried to assess his claims.¹ To my knowledge there is still no academic work on this subject, possibly because – as with Bilderberg – the interest of the conspiracy theorists in America has contaminated the material. Nonetheless the (non-academic) interest in Quigley remains and at <www.carrollquigley.net/> there is a collection of letters from him, photographs, articles about him, some of his lectures, reviews, discussions of his theses by others and his comments on them; at <www.bonanza.com/listings/Conspiracy-Digest-Summer-1976-Carroll-Quigley-s-Letters/16423871> are reproductions of some of his letters about the fate of *Tragedy and Hope*; and a 1974 audio interview with him is available on YouTube.

¹ A version of this is on-line at <www.variant.org.uk/10texts/Ramsay.html>

Traces of the Anglo-American network which Quigley described in his books, keep turning up. Former *Guardian* journalist, Richard Gott, had a piece in the *New Statesman* bemoaning the state of the current *Guardian*.² In that he referred to the paper's pro-American stance and noted of its 1956-75 editor, Alastair Hetherington:

'his favourite political tract was *Union Now*, a now forgotten bestseller from the 1930s by Clarence Streit, which advocated federal union between the US and Britain.'

Such a federal union was the vision of Cecil Rhodes, in pursuit of which he funded the Round Table network, which, in turn, set-up the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) in the US and Royal Institute for International Affairs (RIIA) and Chatham House in the UK. (These institutional links were the original core of 'the special relationship'.) Streit was an American member of that network. His *Union Now* was reprinted during WW2 (paper rationing and all) as *Union Now With Britain*.³ That the merging the US and the UK into a federal union was being promoted in 1941 by *anyone* is astounding. The second coming of Christ was about as likely.

Uncle Sam's Grauniad?

Richard Gott's account (above) of the *Guardian's* long-standing pro-American stance made me wonder, for the umpteenth time, if the *Guardian* had been part of the NCL (non-communist left) supported/penetrated/run by the CIA during the Cold War. In its attempt to regulate the entire Western media in those years, the CIA could take the conservative UK press for granted as good anti-communists; it was the left or leftish media it needed to concentrate on. And in the UK, America's most important overseas military base, that meant the *Guardian*.

The issue of the *Guardian's* pro-American position (against that of most of its readers, I would guess) arises

² <www.newstatesman.com/200201280039>

³ God help me, I have both of them.

again when you consider the Herman-Peterson-Monbiot affair. Rather than try and précis this complex event, I will merely quote one paragraph from Herman and Peterson's long response to their treatment by Monbiot and the *Guardian's* editors and urge you to read the whole thing.

'Monbiot believes (as does the Guardian-Observer) that the Yugoslavia and Rwanda tribunals have been trustworthy searchers for truth and unbiased dispensers of justice, and that the narratives of the conflicts each of them codifies are beyond reproach. The contrast between our view and theirs could not be more stark or clear. Whereas we believe that these are political institutions, operating with the mandate to deliver guilty verdicts to the Serb targets of the U.S.-led NATO bloc in the former Yugoslavia, guilty verdicts to the Hutu targets of the U.S., U.K., and RPF in Rwanda, and to dramatize all of this with faux-legal performances that stick to these two scripts, Monbiot et al. accept the tribunals' indictments, judgments, and guilt assignments on an ex cathedra basis.'

From 'George Monbiot and the Guardian on "Genocide Denial" and "Revisionism"' by Edward S. Herman and David Peterson at <<http://mrzine.monthlyreview.org/2011/hp020911.html>>.

Richard Webster RIP

Richard Webster, author of *The Secret of Bryn Estyn* (reviewed in *Lobster* 52) and most recently *Casa Pia: The making of a modern European witch hunt* (reviewed in *Lobster* 61) has died.⁴ This is a real loss. Webster was that unusual combination of someone who was seriously bright, independent of all intellectual fashions, and fearless. His Website is <www.richardwebster.net/>.

4 <www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/community/obituaries/obits/9124832.Richard_Webster__Author_who_got_to_heart_of_issues/>

Good riddance

Still with the *Guardian*, Professor Paul Wilkinson, the terrorism propagandist, was the subject of an extraordinarily uncritical obituary in the *Guardian* on 18 August. The appropriate corrective can be found in a piece on him on Powerbase.⁵ This includes Wilkinson's role in trying to disinform Channel Four News' investigation of the allegations of Colin Wallace. Wilkinson passed to Channel Four an elaborate smear about Wallace, accusing him of being an accessory to murder, which Wilkinson claimed came from one of his department's researchers on the Wallace affair. Of course his department had no researchers working on Wallace and the smear was something concocted years before in Northern Ireland for which Wilkinson was just the messenger boy. (Being the conduit for the nonsense from military and intelligence agencies was one of his roles.) When this was demonstrated to Channel Four's management, Wilkinson lost his gig as ITN's 'consultant' on terrorism. None of this appeared in the *Guardian* obituary.

If you copy America, you get America.

A former Republican staffer in Congress, who has resigned after 30 years, had a very interesting piece on Truth-out. He wrote this about the Republicans:

'It should have been evident to clear-eyed observers that the Republican Party is becoming less and less like a traditional political party in a representative democracy and becoming more like an apocalyptic cult, or one of the intensely ideological authoritarian parties of 20th century Europe.'

After describing some of the mind-bogglingly cynical manipulations by the Republicans in Congress, he included this paragraph about the Democrats:

'What do the Democrats offer [ordinary Americans]?

⁵ <www.powerbase.info/index.php/Paul_Wilkinson,_extract_from_The_%22Terrorism%22_Industry>

Essentially nothing. Democratic Leadership Council-style “centrist” Democrats were among the biggest promoters of disastrous trade deals in the 1990s that outsourced jobs abroad: NAFTA, World Trade Organization, permanent most-favored-nation status for China. At the same time, the identity politics/lifestyle wing of the Democratic Party was seen as a too illegal immigrant-friendly by downscaled and outsourced whites.’⁶

Substitute New Labour for Democrats.....

Guilty Men

The pamphlet by Peter Osborne and Francis Weaver, *Guilty Men*⁷ is a terrific account of the creation and effects of group-think among the British political and media groups about the unassailable virtue of the European Union project in general and the single currency in particular. Feeling vindicated by the current single currency crisis, the Euro-sceptic authors have disinterred and held up to ridicule – rightly, in my view – the speeches and statements of the pro-single currency sections of British opinion. The authors also show how those who opposed this pro-EU, pro-single currency group-think – particularly those in the Conservative Party, their chief focus – were marginalised or ridiculed.

Rod Liddle used to be editor of the Radio 4 ‘Today’ programme; and thus, as ‘Today’ sets the daily political agenda for so much of the British media, for a time one of the more powerful people in British politics. Commenting on *Guilty Men*, he rebuts a position that Osborne and Weaver do not hold: namely that there was a conspiracy within the BBC, and offers an insider’s view that is exactly that of the authors:

‘Osborne seems to imply that there was a covert plot within the top echelons of the BBC in favour of the European project, and that’s not true either. It is rather

⁶ <www.truth-out.org/goodbye-all-reflections-gop-operative-who-left-cult/1314907779>

⁷ Downloadable at <www.cps.org.uk/cps_catalog2/oborne%20guilty%20men.pdf>

more the case that the civilised, decent middle class liberals who ran the corporation genuinely believed that the Eurorealists were a bunch of deranged xenophobes, one step up from the BNP, and therefore their arguments should be discounted. I realise that covert plot or otherwise the result was the same – a heavy pro-Euro bias, and so you might argue my quibble does not matter. But the BBC's bias was arrived at through a sort of inherent wet liberalism, rather than an actual plot as such.'

The Baer essentials

Promoting one of his books, former CIA officer Robert Baer was interviewed about the war on Iraq and was asked, 'What kind of intelligence did you see on the ground that was being manipulated?' He replied:

'We knew that Saddam Hussein had already destroyed his weapons of mass destruction, and that he was pretending to keep them in order to deter Iran.'⁸

To my knowledge this is the first time any CIA officer, past or present, has said this. Hitherto the line has been 'We didn't know that the Iraqis had scrapped their WMDs.'

Innocents abroad?

Belatedly I flipped through a copy of the memoir of the former CIA officer Valerie Plame Wilson, *Fair Game* (Simon and Schuster, 2007). Plame Wilson had her CIA cover blown by the Bush regime because her diplomat husband hadn't gone along with the 'line' on Iraq and WMDs. Two things struck me: the first is the absolute political innocence of even comparatively senior CIA officers like Plame Wilson – about the reality of US foreign policy she has no idea. The second was her comment that within the CIA most of the officers had their TVs tuned to

8 <<http://thebrowser.com/interviews/robert-baer-on-being-spy>>

Murdoch's Fox channel – self-programming, their equivalent of praying five times a day to Mecca.

The good old days

It is often worth reading the comments underneath stories on the Net. For example there is this wonderful snippet about the final days of Enron:⁹

'I actually worked for a firm that audited Enron while they were going under..... the big scandal at the time was Enron's accounting firm, "Arthur Anderson", which actually brought in an enormous industrial shredder, and in Enron's dying days, A-A was shredding entire filing cabinets....*metal box and all*.....destroying ALL records of their role in hiding Enron's true fiscal malfeasance.

Deleting computer records is nothing to companies that will OPENLY destroy as much damning evidence as they can before someone tells them to stop. Archives and Backups? Toss the entire computer in the shredder!'

Bought and paid for

I saw this in a review by Michael Emmett Brady of Ron Suskind's *Confidence Men: Wall Street, Washington, and the Education of a President* on Amazon.¹⁰ I have repunctuated it a little.

'This book attempts to explain away the close and long standing connections that have existed between Obama and Wall Street. It presents a very incomplete picture of the long and close connections that have existed between Obama and Wall Street that predate the 2008 election.

9 <<http://crooksandliars.com/susie-madrak/taibbi-sec-has-been-destroying-invest>>

10 <www.amazon.com/review/RT4NX1OJ1ZFVS/ref=cm_cr_pr_viewpnt#RT4NX1OJ1ZFVS>

The interesting thing is that the Wall Street-Obama connection has been available for anyone to discover who is a regular reader of mainstream newspapers and magazines. Obama's voting record in the Senate in the 2004-2008 period demonstrates time after time a voting pattern supporting Big Oil, the insurance industry, the HMO's [health maintenance organisations] etc. The connection between Obama and British Petroleum had been established by his Senate voting record. The same holds for his long association with Goldman Sachs and his reliance on many libertarian academics associated/connected with the University of Chicago's economics department and Booth School of Business. The author attempts to submerge the long lived Obama-Goldman Sachs connection.

In general, the voting public has been ignorant of who they have been voting for. Consider the following information that was available in late 2007-early 2008: for example, one could simply read the July 9 2007 issue of *Fortune* magazine to discover who the major backers of John McCain, Hillary Clinton and Barrack Obama were. One could also have read *Business Week* (25 February 2008) or the *Los Angeles Times* of 21 March 2008. Through February 2008 the major donors to the McCain campaign were 1) Merrill Lynch, 2) Citigroup, 3) Goldman Sachs, 4) J P Morgan Chase and 5) Credit Suisse. The major donors to the Hillary Clinton campaign were 1) Goldman Sachs, 2) Morgan Stanley, 3) Citigroup, 4) Lehman Brothers and 5) J P Morgan Chase. Guess who were the major donors to the Obama campaign ? If you guessed 1) Goldman Sachs, 2) UBS Ag, 3) J P Morgan Chase, 4) Lehman Brothers and 5) Citigroup, then you are correct. Obama's reliance on Martin Feldstein, Alan Goolsbe, Summers, Geithner, Bernanke etc. is explained by the above connections.'

SCADs

I spoke at a conference in London about SCADs – state crimes against democracy. The concept was first used in 2006, but got noticed when the February 2010 issue of *American Behavioural Scientist* was devoted to essays about SCADs.¹¹ The SCAD concept is the latest attempt by American academics to find a way to write about covert politics when attempts to do so are routinely dismissed as conspiracy theorising and thus unworthy of the interest of the academic world or the major media.

My guess is that the SCAD concept will suffer the same fate as its predecessors, parapolitics and deep politics. Both were coined by Peter Dale Scott, parapolitics in 1970s and deep politics in the 80s; and neither have been taken up by orthodox political science. The commercial and political forces which inhibit the major media from dealing with state crimes will not be swept away by a concept; and academics will continue to see large subject areas as intellectually contaminated by conspiracy theorists.

Blum-wise

I noticed this choice little piece in issue 89 of William Blum's *Anti-Empire Report*.¹²:

'On February 17, 2003, a month before the US bombing of Iraq began, I posted to the Internet an essay entitled "What Do the Imperial Mafia Really Want"¹³ concerning the expected war. Included in this were the words of Michael Ledeen, former Reagan official, then at the

11 <See, for example, <http://abs.sagepub.com/content/53/6/795>. short>

12 To add yourself to his mailing list, simply send an email to <bblum6@aol.com> with "add" in the subject line.

Blum is the author of *Killing Hope: US Military and CIA Interventions Since World War 2*; *Rogue State: A Guide to the World's Only Superpower*; *West-Bloc Dissident: A Cold War Memoir*; and *Freeing the World to Death: Essays on the American Empire*

13 <<http://killinghope.org/bblum6/mafia.htm>>

American Enterprise Institute, which was one of the leading drum-beaters for attacking Iraq:

“If we just let our own vision of the world go forth, and we embrace it entirely, and we don’t try to be clever and piece together clever diplomatic solutions to this thing, but just wage a total war against these tyrants, I think we will do very well, and our children will sing great songs about us years from now.”

After a year of the tragic farce that was the American intervention in Iraq I could not resist. I sent Mr. Ledeen an email reminding him of his words and saying simply: “I’d like to ask you what songs your children are singing these days.”

I received no reply.’

Lest we forget

Lest we forget that the Republicans stole the presidential election in 2004, there is a short sharp account, with some new (to me) evidence at <www.benzinga.com/news/11/07/1789905/forget-anonymous-evidence-suggests-gop-hacked-stole-2004-election>.

Life at the top

If you haven’t seen it, do read a very striking piece by Kelvin McKenzie, erstwhile editor of the *Sun*, on Murdoch, the Tories and the media. McKenzie’s comments were provoked by ‘this bloody inquiry chaired by Lord Leveson’.¹⁴

Leveson’s inquiry into the British press has these terms of reference

‘To inquire into the culture, practices, and ethics of the press, including:

a. contacts and the relationships between national newspapers and politicians, and the conduct of each;

14 <www.levesoninquiry.org.uk/>

- b. contacts and the relationship between the press and the police, and the conduct of each;
- c. the extent to which the current policy and regulatory framework has failed including in relation to data protection; and
- d. the extent to which there was a failure to act on previous warnings about media misconduct.'

Who knows? Maybe some knuckles will get rapped.

Of Leveson, McKenzie writes:

'God help me that free speech comes down to the thought process of a judge who couldn't win when prosecuting counsel against Ken Dodd for tax evasion and more recently robbing the Christmas Island veterans of a substantial pay-off for being told to simply turn away from nuclear test blasts in the Fifties. It's that bad.'

Leveson was appointed by the prime minister of whom McKenzie says:

'After all, the only reason we are all here [with Judge Leveson] is due to one man's action; Cameron's obsessive arse kissing over the years of Rupert Murdoch. Tony Blair was pretty good, as was Brown. But Cameron was the Daddy.....

Cameron wanted Rupert onside as he believed, quite wrongly in my view, that The Sun's endorsement would help him to victory (when the paper did come out for Cameron the Sun's sale fell by 40,000 copies that day).

There was never a party, a breakfast, a lunch, a cuppa or a drink that Cameron & Co would not turn up to in force if The Great Man or his handmaiden Rebekah Brooks was there. There was always a queue to kiss their rings. It was gut wrenching.....¹⁵

An American with a disdain for Britain, running a

¹⁵ Details of meetings between party leaders and Murdoch's people are at <www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-14352403> and <www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-14219430>

declining industry in terms of sales, profitability and influence, was considered more important than a meeting with any captain of industry no matter how big their workforce or balance sheet.....

Rupert told me an incredible story. He was in his New York office on the day that The Sun decided to endorse Cameron for the next election. That day was important to Brown as his speech to the party faithful at the Labour Party conference would have been heavily reported in the papers.

Of course the endorsement blew Brown's speech off the front page. That night a furious Brown called Murdoch and in Rupert's words: 'Roared at me for 20 minutes.' At the end Brown said: 'You are trying to destroy me and my party. I will destroy you and your company.'¹⁶

Ah, Gordon, the penny dropped a decade too late.

Craig Murray on Fox, Werritty, MOSSAD and the coming attack on Iran¹⁷

As often happens, Craig Murray whacked the nail on the head.

'A mainstream media source has finally plucked up the courage to publish the widespread concern among MOD, Cabinet Office and FCO officials and military that the Werritty operation was linked to, and perhaps controlled by, Mossad – something which agitated officials have been desperately signalling for some days.

"Officials expressed concern that Fox and Werritty might even have been in freelance

¹⁶ Brown denies he said anything like this and has complained to the Press Complaints Commission when something similar appeared in the *Telegraph*. See <<http://pcc.org.uk/news/index.html?article=NzQ1MQ==>>.

¹⁷ MOSSAD is an acronym and thus is capitalised. But I notice that as NATO is now almost always given as Nato (though not on the NATO website), so MOSSAD is now frequently Mossad.

discussions with Israeli intelligence agencies” write Patrick Wintour and Richard Norton-Taylor in the Guardian.

As I have been explaining, the real issue here is a British defence secretary who had a parallel advice structure designed expressly to serve the interests of another state and linked to that state’s security services. That is not just a sacking offence, it is treasonable.¹⁸

In a later piece, with the answers to questions to the FCO by himself and Jeremy Corby MP, and some other input from diplomatic circles, he shows that the Werrity affair wasn’t, as some suspected, part of an Israeli operation, but was a piece of the Anglo-British–Israeli preparation for an attack on Iran.

Murray doesn’t comment on the operational incompetence of using the Defence Secretary’s bagman, or the possibility that the exposure of the Werrity connection has been done by those within Whitehall opposed to the coming attack on Iran.

Pinay and Crozier

At the ISGP site¹⁹ are a number of documents pertaining to, and membership lists of, the clandestine organisation called Le Cercle – a sort Bilderberg meeting for hard core anti-communists. Originally it was called the Pinay Circle, after its founder Antoine Pinay, and David Teacher wrote about it in *Lobster* in the 1980s. At that site is a new edition of Teacher’s enormous study of Le Cercle, which is downloadable there.

Of particular interest to me was a copy of Brian Crozier’s speech to the 1982 meeting of Le Cercle in which, amidst the standard (to me, comic) line of the enormous threat poised by the Soviet propaganda machine, led by the World Peace Council, was this:

‘In the United Kingdom, the counter-subversion arm of

18 <www.craigmurray.org.uk/archives/2011/10/page/2/>

19 <https://wikispooks.com/ISGP/First_ever_documents_of_Le_Cercle.htm>

the Foreign Office, the Information Research Department (IRD) was destroyed in a complex operation in which the CIA traitor, Philip Agee, played a leading part.'

Notice the misdirection: that IRD was the arm of the Foreign Office. A little research shows that it had become almost autonomous, running its own anti-detente foreign policy with the likes of Crozier. That was the problem for the FO and why, given the chance, the FO shut it down.

Curiously enough, no sign of said 'complex operation' has ever been made visible, not even in Crozier's memoir *Free Agent*.

Was Libya responsible for the killing of PC Yvonne Fletcher in 1984?

In one of Tony Gosling's many e-mails was a timely reminder of the 1996 Dispatches documentary for Channel 4 which seemed to show that the official version of the death of PC Yvonne Fletcher – murdered by a shot from the Libyan embassy – was false; that she was shot by a gunman in another building as part of the demonisation of Libya by American intelligence. That documentary is now on YouTube at www.youtube.com/watch?v=0l1J11WNQAs

Michael X

On Adam Curtis's site – www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/adamcurtis/ – in a section headed 'Dream on' there is some fascinating material about the early days of the so-called New Left in Britain (essentially London). Included in this is the story of the late Michael X (Michael de Freitas) and how he conned the London left. I was in London during that time and was part of a very short production of a Leroi Jones playlet called *The Black Criminal*, which did one performance, at the Roundhouse, in a benefit gig for Michael X's organisation. De Freitas was around during the day, surrounded by white admirers.

So we did our thing and I hung around backstage to watch the rest of the acts (I suspect it was the only time that Chris MacGregor's Bluenotes and Sammy Davis Jnr. shared a bill). One of those 'acts' was a visiting Black Muslim from America, who got on the mic and began running a load of rubbish about the Jews which, these days, would get him arrested. One brave soul, a white man, at the back of the primarily black audience, began heckling this 'Brother Elijah'. He got about four sentences out before a posse of Michael X's gang, 'the black Eagles', in their black suits and polo necks, grabbed him, beat him up and threw him out. I took that as my cue to leave and catch the tube home.

My first experience of Islam? Anti-semitism and violence.