

## The view from the bridge

Robin Ramsay

### Knock, knock

As I read the first few paragraphs of the story about the British Territorial Army<sup>1</sup> unit tasked to infiltrate and penetrate the British peace movement in the 1980s, I was amused.<sup>2</sup> 'Infiltration' and 'penetration' means they joined it. Most of the peace movement in particular and the British left in general has been open: anyone can join; having the correct motives is not an entry requirement. The story reported that 'Some of the undercover soldiers became officials in the organisations they had infiltrated, one being elected membership secretary' – as if that was significant. In reality anyone, if even remotely plausible, could have become secretary or membership secretary of most left/peace groups in a few months simply because nobody wants to do those chores. The late Harry Newton, for example, an MI5-Special Branch agent, became the treasurer of the Institute of Workers Control. Newton is also said to have 'penetrated' CND headquarters.<sup>3</sup> On the one occasion I visited the headquarters of CND, the door was open and there was no-one checking who came and went. I just wandered in – as, no doubt, did Harry – and was immediately asked if I would help stuffing envelopes.

But after chortling to myself I noticed the wording of the memo which revealed the story.

'The instruction to 20 COY, a Territorial Army body which

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1 For non-UK readers, these are a reserve, part-timers.

2 Kim Sengupta, 'How Thatcher's election win launched secret war on CND', *The Independent*, 7 January 2012.

3 On Newton see <[https://wikispooks.com/wiki/Harry\\_Newton](https://wikispooks.com/wiki/Harry_Newton)> Donald Bateman, who knew Newton, wrote about him in *Lobster* 28, 1994.

had focused on Northern Ireland, the Middle East and the British Army of the Rhine, came in a memo from a General in September 1979:

“*The change of government* provides an excellent opportunity for the unit to play a more active role and to provide information about groups whose activities and interests are not beneficial and are opposed to the armed forces. The unit is well placed to do this because its members are civilians.”

An anonymous former member of 20 COY expanded the significance of the phrase ‘the change of government’:

‘The thing is there were some senior people in the forces at the time who were very right-wing and they thought that Thatcher coming in gave them carte blanche to get up to all sorts of things. We heard whispers that some of these people were trying to destabilise Labour before the Tories got back in.’

We’ve been here before. Back in the late 1970s, the people gathered round *State Research* and the *Leveller*, and individuals like Duncan Campbell and Tony Bunyan, had worked out for themselves that Mrs Thatcher was the candidate of the security state. That members of the armed forces took her election as their cue to begin operations against the left and peace movement merely confirms another belief of the ‘paranoid left’ (of which I am a member): the British state was and remains beyond democratic control.

## **Pluralities**

**P**olitical identities can be complex. Take Sir Robert Atkins: as the Conservative MP for Preston North and South Ribble from 1979 to 1997, he was part of the conspiracy to destroy Labour-supporting, millionaire businessman Owen Oyston (described at length in *Lobster* 34). But in 1999 Atkins became a Member of the European Parliament for the North West England region; and with that hat on he is the author of a report for the Conservative Middle East Council on a recent trip to Gaza which takes an unblinking look at the Israelis’

slow-motion ethnic cleansing.<sup>4</sup>

## **The idiocies of NuLab**

This is Peter Mandelson recently: 'We have seen that globalisation has not generated the rising incomes for all.'<sup>5</sup> Which is more depressing? That he really believed 'the rising tide lifts all boats' story before, or that he didn't but was unwilling to say so until now?

When Gordon Brown dips into the bullshit basket he calls for some global action which he knows will never take place but which he thinks sounds impressive. His latest was reported on the BBC News website: he wants a 'global fund for education'.<sup>6</sup> No doubt this will be next on the list after the new global financial system he wants is in place.

## **Labour and the City**

Who is doing the economic thinking for Labour these days? Well, Katherine 'Kitty' Ussher is. A Labour MP from 2005 to 2010, Ussher was a minister in the Brown government 2007-9, briefly at the Treasury. (She got caught in the expenses scandal, 'flipping' her homes to reduce her tax bill, and resigned.) Wrote the *Daily Mail*:

'The Oxford-educated economist and niece of Tory MP Peter Bottomley worked as a Labour researcher and chief economist for the Britain in Europe group before becoming Patricia Hewitt's special adviser at the Department for Trade and Industry in 2001.'<sup>7</sup>

This is the classic adviser turned MP; but also someone who understands economics, apparently. (What that means we shall see.) Since quitting as an MP – a period in opposition, representing her constituents, was apparently not part of her

4 <<http://cmec.org.uk/blog/the-rt-hon-sir-robert-atkins-mep-visits-gaza/>>

5 Quoted in Adam Lusher's 'Ed Miliband is "struggling", says Lord Mandelson', in the *Daily Telegraph*, 21 January 2012.

6 <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-16705691>>

7 <[www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1193753/12-days-promotion-Minister-Kitty-Ussher-quits-expenses.html](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1193753/12-days-promotion-Minister-Kitty-Ussher-quits-expenses.html)>

life plan – Usher has been director of the think tank Demos and is now a research fellow at the Smith Institute, a Labour-supporting think tank. This is someone we should take seriously because the political system does.

Usher has written a paper for Labour's Business, a Website publishing policy ideas about the Labour Party's economic policies. It was started by Alex Smith and Luke Bozier. Smith is former communications adviser to Ed Miliband and Bozier was Miliband's internet guy. Also associated with Labour's Business are Hazel Blears, (ex-minister) and Shadow Business Secretary Chuka Umunna. There is nothing on the Website signifying official Labour Party status but this is only just at arm's length from Ed Miliband's office.

I stumbled into this thicket of Labour people because of a Kitty Ussher paper published by Labour's Business.<sup>8</sup> After the usual sleight of hand stuff about how many jobs are at stake in the financial services, Ussher's key message is contained in these lines:

'We want Britain to be seen as the destination of choice for financial services companies.... But business needs to be conducted in a safe manner. Our general regulatory approach will be to strengthen and de-risk banks as institutions, not target bankers as individuals.'

*In other words: there will be fewer regulations in London than are offered elsewhere and you can carry on making huge amounts of money.*

What really caught my eye, however, was Ussher's opening paragraph.

<sup>8</sup> 'Shaping the City: reforming financial services to encourage enterprise' at <<http://laboursbusiness.org.uk/>>.

An earlier paper by Ussher, 100 pages of it, published by Demos, is thoroughly trashed by Richard Smith's 'Why is a Powerful Faux Liberal UK Think Tank Using a Tarnished Pol and Recycled US Republican Talking Points to Fight Breaking Up Banks?' at <[www.nakedcapitalism.com/2011/03/16715.html](http://www.nakedcapitalism.com/2011/03/16715.html)>. Smith's account of the Ussher paper gives enough detail to see that this Labour Business version is a summary of parts of it. *Inter alia*, Smith points out that Ussher thanks for the City of London Corporation for their support of her writing.

'New Labour's view of the private sector in general was epitomised by its view of the City in particular. Although nobody ever presumed there were many votes to be found in the shiny buildings of the Square Mile or Canary Wharf, the ability to be taken seriously by senior financiers was considered important in demonstrating *fitness to govern*, both in the run-up to the 1997 election and in the decade that followed. Having the City on side, or at least not against, was an important component of Labour's *permission to speak* on economic policy, which in turn was required to demonstrate a break with the *perceived failure of Labour's economic record of the past.*' (emphases added)

So: the Blair government had to demonstrate to the City its 'fitness to govern' and thus acquired 'permission' to do so. Why is this necessary? Because of the 'perceived failure of Labour's economic record of the past'.

Huh?

Labour is deemed to be a failure because of the Wilson-Callaghan years? Really? Do you think anyone in the City remembers those years? Or cares? That's almost forty years ago! Ignoring Ussher's strange view of economic history, the underlying tone of 'Jump? How high, oh masterful ones?' is what matters.

Ussher's grovelling, almost submissive tone towards the City has been echoed by former Home Secretary, Jacqui Smith, who called for a new 'prawn cocktail offensive':

'We need a 'prawn cocktail' offensive for the 21st century – a "scallops and celeriac purée" offensive, a "baked figs and goats cheese" offensive – anyway, you get my point. In the 1980s and 1990s, energetic Labour spokespeople led by then City minister Tony Blair toured the private dining rooms of the City trying to decontaminate the Labour brand with leading business people. Their success was part of the foundation of New Labour economic and electoral success in the next 20

years.<sup>9</sup>

*Twenty years of New Labour success?* I don't know what she is talking about but we get the picture: like Ussher, Smith thinks she knows which butts need to be kissed and doesn't mind saying so.

### **If you copy America, you get.....America**

**W**ill Hutton described Prime Minister Cameron's December vetoing of the proposed revision of the Lisbon Treaty in defence of the City of London as 'an act of crass stupidity... [that] has rarely been equalled.'<sup>10</sup> He continued:

'Much of British finance in whose name Cameron exercised his veto – routine banking, insurance and accounting – was wholly unaffected by any treaty change. The financial services industry in Britain constitutes 7.5% of GDP and employs a million people; the City represents perhaps a third of that and, in turn, that part threatened – if it was threatened at all – some fraction of that. This is a tiny economic interest. If the coalition is serious about rebalancing the British economy, it is preposterous to place a fragment of the City at the forefront of our national priorities.'

All true of course. Hutton noted of Cameron:

'His circle is the hedge fund managers who payroll his party, rightwing media executives and the demi-monde of Tory dining clubs, Notting Hill salons and country house weekends, all of whom he knew could be relied on to cheer him for his alleged bulldog spirit and Thatcher-like courage in saying No to European "plots".'

Hutton just sails past 'the hedgefund managers who payroll [presumably he meant bankroll] his party'. I think we need the details. Research by the excellent Bureau of Investigative Journalism, shows that in 2010:

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<sup>9</sup> <[www.progressonline.org.uk/2012/02/06/a-new-`prawn-cocktail'-offensive/](http://www.progressonline.org.uk/2012/02/06/a-new-`prawn-cocktail'-offensive/)> Did Blair do much of this? Most accounts talk about the late John Smith and the late 'Mo' Mowlem.

<sup>10</sup> *The Observer*, 11 December 2011

'City money made up 50.8% of all Conservative Party donations, a leap from 25% five years previously, when Cameron and Osborne took over the helm.

The City has donated a total of £42.76m since 2005. Last year City money accounted for £11.4m, compared with £2.75m when Cameron took over.'<sup>11</sup>

And a companion piece piece showed that:

'Our trawl of 450 separate donations given to Conservative Central Office by individuals, companies and limited liability partnerships reveals that 27%, or £3.3m, of the £12.18m donated to the party [in year ending June 2011] came from hedge funds, financiers and private equity firms.'<sup>12</sup>

I don't think Will Hutton wants to face the reality that political parties today are for sale. Cameron wasn't being 'stupid'; he was simply a delivery boy. It might have been spun in the usual 'plucky Britain standing up against the Eurocrats' manner but it was just about money.

*If you copy America, you get America.*

In America the financial gamblers bought the politicians. They have bought a particular policy from the Conservative Party (and considering how much might be at stake for the hedge fund gamblers, at £3.3 million they got it cheap); and the Labour Party is afraid to challenge them.

The same sort of thing is going on with Conservative plans to let more of the private sector start 'tax farming' within the health service. £8.3 million in donations from the private health care sector to the Conservative Party since 2001 have been identified.<sup>13</sup> This buys policies; and it means that whatever the public thinks and the polls tell the Conservative Party about the damage to their electoral prospects, they have to deliver what they promised. They may make noisy concessions in some areas but not where it matters. If they

<sup>11</sup> <[www.thebureauinvestigates.com/2011/02/08/city-financing-of-the-conservative-party-doubles-under-cameron/](http://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/2011/02/08/city-financing-of-the-conservative-party-doubles-under-cameron/)>

<sup>12</sup> <<http://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/2011/09/30/hedge-funds-financiers-and-private-equity-tycoons-make-up-27-of-tory-funding/>>

<sup>13</sup> <<http://eoin-clarke.blogspot.com/2012/02/333-donations-from-private-healthcare.html>>

take the money and then don't deliver, they jeopardise future funding. This is the American model of politics.

*If you copy America, you get America*

## **The best and the brightest (not)**

There are some dumb, short-sighted fucks working in the intelligence services. Look at the CIA operation to run a fake vaccination drive in Abbotabad in the attempt to verify that Osama Bin Laden was living there. How many genuine vaccination drives will now be accused of being intelligence operations? (And how many vaccination drives in the past have been fakes?)<sup>14</sup> Or look at the CIA and Pentagon's use of aid programs as cover for its intelligence officers, corrupting the aid process.<sup>15</sup> *The Daily Telegraph* report on this concluded:

'Not only will these secret programmes put brave aid workers in harm's way, but they will add to the culture of mistrust and suspicion that currently characterises relations between Pakistan and the US.'

As stupid in a different way were the MOD and British armed services officers who responded to a fake (probably Chinese) Facebook 'friend' request apparently from the head of NATO, American Admiral James Stavridis. The *Telegraph* reported:

'They thought they had become genuine friends of Nato's Supreme Allied Commander - but instead every personal detail on Facebook, including private email addresses, phone numbers and pictures were able to be harvested.'<sup>16</sup>

What is more depressing? That senior MOD/military are footling about with Facebook? Or that they believed they had

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14 <[www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/jul/11/cia-fake-vaccinations-osama-bin-ladens-dna](http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/jul/11/cia-fake-vaccinations-osama-bin-ladens-dna)>

15 <[http://blog.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2012/02/13/did\\_the\\_united\\_states\\_use\\_the\\_kashmir\\_earthquake\\_to\\_send\\_intelligence\\_operatives\\_in](http://blog.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2012/02/13/did_the_united_states_use_the_kashmir_earthquake_to_send_intelligence_operatives_in)>

16 'How spies used Facebook to steal Nato chiefs' details' <[www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/9136029/How-spies-used-Facebook-to-steal-Nato-chiefs-details.html](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/9136029/How-spies-used-Facebook-to-steal-Nato-chiefs-details.html)>

received such a request from Nato's Supreme Allied Commander?

## **Ah, closure**

**D**oug Thompson, while communications director for the re-election campaign of Congressman Manuel Lujan of New Mexico, met former governor of Texas, John Connally, on a plane in 1982. In the course of the conversation Thompson asked him if he thought Lee Harvey Oswald fired the gun that killed Kennedy?

'Absolutely not,' Connally said. 'I do not, for one second, believe the conclusions of the Warren Commission.'

So why not say so?

'Because I love this country and we needed closure at the time. I will never speak out publicly about what I believe.'<sup>17</sup>

This is the base line for so many American politicians: we do not talk about what really happened on 22 November 1963; we do not tarnish the brand.

## **Daniel Sheehan and UFOs**

**W**hen I should be looking at serious stuff, I have again been reading the story of Daniel Sheehan and the UFOs, one of the most interesting and puzzling episodes in the UFO field. If Sheehan isn't a fantasist – and I have seen no suggestion that he is – something significant and strange happened.<sup>18</sup>

In 1977 recently elected US President Carter asked DCIA, George Bush, to be briefed on what the intelligence community had on UFOs. (While governor of Georgia, Carter

<sup>17</sup> <[www.opednews.com/articles/opedne\\_doug\\_tho\\_060330\\_is\\_deception\\_the\\_bes.htm](http://www.opednews.com/articles/opedne_doug_tho_060330_is_deception_the_bes.htm)>

<sup>18</sup> This is based on Grant Cameron's 'The Marcia Smith Story – The President's UFO Study' at <[www.presidentialufo.com/jimmy-carter/98-the-marcia-smith-story-the-presidents-ufo-study](http://www.presidentialufo.com/jimmy-carter/98-the-marcia-smith-story-the-presidents-ufo-study)>. All the quotes are from that piece. There is a video of Sheehan telling this story on YouTube. Sheehan is now the lawyer for the Disclosure Project, in which various former US government employees have given affidavits about their experience of UFOs. Sheehan's pre-Disclosure Project biography is at <[www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/JFKsheehan.htm](http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/JFKsheehan.htm)>

said he had seen one in 1969.) Bush refused: Carter didn't have the need to know. Rebuffed, Carter decided to follow a suggestion that Bush had made for getting the information that Carter wanted on UFOs. As Sheehan tells it:

'Bush told him that he was going have to go to the Science and Technology Committee of the House of Representatives, in the legislative branch, and have them ask the Congressional Research Service to issue a request to have certain documents declassified so that this process could go on.'

This request went to Marcia S. Smith, Analyst in Science and Technology, Science Research Division, at the Congressional Research Service. She had done UFO research before. Sheehan reported that he was asked by Smith 'to participate in a highly classified major evaluation of the UFO phenomena, and extraterrestrial intelligence.'

During this process Sheehan reports that he was given access to the classified portions of Project Blue Book, the US Air Force's inquiry into UFOs which ran from 1952 to 1969, in which he saw film footage of a crashed UFO surrounded by USAF personnel. Marcia Smith wrote two reports for the House Science and Technology Committee, one on extraterrestrial intelligence, and the other on UFOs. Says Sheehan:

'The first report on extraterrestrial intelligence, stated the Congressional Research Service of the official United States Congressional Library, in its official report to the President, through the House of Representatives Science and Technology Committee, concludes that there are from two to six highly intelligent, highly technologically developed civilizations in our own galaxy over and above our own.

In the second report they had drawings of different shapes of UFOs that have been sighted. They didn't cite any particular cases, but they said that they believed there was a significant number of instances where the official United States Air Force investigations were unable to discount the possibility that one or more of

these vehicles was actually from one of these extraterrestrial civilizations. They put this together, and sent it over to the President. I ended up seeing a copy of it.'

This is a strange tale: no-one else has described seeing these reports; and it has never been suggested that a request from the Congressional Research Service would open a door that had been so securely bolted hitherto. Did Sheehan really see the classified sections of Blue Book? It seems highly improbable to me. More likely, surely, that he was the object of a disinformation operation. I wonder if the long US military disinformation project in the 1980s on UFOs, which climaxed with the MJ-12 nonsense about US government-alien contact, began initially as a response to Jimmy Carter seeking official information on the issue?<sup>19</sup>

## **Our subservience to America and its uses**

The explanation of the forelock-tugging by sections of the British state and its politicians to America is banal: erstwhile Foreign Secretary, the late Robin Cook, commented that for the military essentially it is simply careerism; the top jobs are all in NATO and since the Americans run NATO<sup>20</sup>..... For the politicians it's pretty much the same: those who oppose America do not prosper. And so they do what to many of us are degrading things – lie, grovel – yet they appear not to feel degraded. Perhaps they simply do not see a plausible

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<sup>19</sup> A detailed account of the Carter-UFO thing is at <[www.checktheevidence.com/Disclosure/Web%20Pages/www.presidentialufo.com/jimmy.htm](http://www.checktheevidence.com/Disclosure/Web%20Pages/www.presidentialufo.com/jimmy.htm)>. The first half of that is straightish reporting. The second half is loaded down with the MJ-12 nonsense.

The MJ-12 material was a classic disinformation operation of the type described by former MOD psy-ops officer Colin Wallace as 'the double bubble', in which people – usually journalists – are led away from the subject they are pursuing and off down another direction, at the end of which they discover the trail they have been on is false. In the case of MJ-12, however, despite being told by one its proponents, Bill Moore, that it was a disinformation project, belief in it has continued in some quarters.

<sup>20</sup> Hugo Young, *The Hugo Young Papers* (London: Penguin, 2008) p. 737

alternative.

Item: the Chinook apology. After seventeen years of blaming the two pilots of the RAF Chinook which crashed in 1994, killing all 29 people (senior police and secret police), the MOD changed its mind and announced that it wasn't their fault at all: it was the helicopter. Even to a casual reader like me this was obvious almost immediately after the official lies were issued. But the RAF as an institution went along with the lie. Why? Because they did not want to blame the helicopter. Criticising Sikorsky, its maker, is criticising America.<sup>21</sup>

The kinds of things people in this situation tell themselves is obvious enough: the good of the service/nation required it. Sacrifices have to be made. (Maybe even: the state has to play rough sometimes. Omelettes and eggs and all that.) Why should they feel bad?

In 2010 when the MOD was preparing the ground for their recent formal apology by acknowledging faults with the Chinook, inching towards their *mea culpa*, trying to inoculate us and the media with little doses, Mike Tapper, the father of one of the pilots, said that the correction of this wrong was 'a matter of honour'. Fred Holroyd's book about his time in Army intelligence in Northern Ireland, was called *War without Honour*. I don't think the concept of honour would rank highly among today's senior military and civil servants.

Item: 'Britain was forced to plead with the US to take part in the flotilla challenging Iranian power in the Gulf after American commanders decided the Royal Navy had nothing to contribute to the mission.'

So said a subheadline in the *Telegraph* on 6 February. The story reported that no-one in the UK military minded being excluded until they heard that a French vessel was being included.

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<sup>21</sup> The Wiki entry on this details the problems with the computer software experienced by the British pilots flying Chinooks. <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1994\\_Scotland \\_ RAF\\_Chinook\\_crash](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1994_Scotland_-_RAF_Chinook_crash)> Google <Sikorsky + Chinook + crashes> and you will see by glancing down the first screen that a Chinook crash cannot have been a surprise.

'Failing to take part when the French were doing so might have raised questions about the Special Relationship, which has come under doubt during Barrack Obama's presidency. Mr Obama last year described France as America's closest ally.'<sup>22</sup>

Reading this, I was reminded of the comment of Thatcher era Foreign Secretary, Lord Carrington, in the early 1980s that, 'Failure to acquire Trident would have left the French as the only nuclear power in Europe. This would be intolerable.'<sup>23</sup>

Why?

Item: the one-sided extradition treaty which ships UK citizens off to the US without any requirement of evidence.

Item: the government's proposals in the Justice and Security green paper to allow ministers to have secret legal proceedings solely on their declaration that the public interest will be damaged by public justice. These are being pushed with the argument that we have to do this or the Americans will cut off access to their intelligence. In fact there is no such danger; but this is being used by those behind the drive towards judicial secrecy – i.e. the intelligence and security services, who can see a way of covering-up their screw-ups (and their subservience to America) – to try and get the legislation through.<sup>24</sup>

## **Briefly**

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<sup>22</sup> James Kirkup, 'Britain had to plead with US to take part in Iran flotilla', *Daily Telegraph* 06 Feb 2012.

<sup>23</sup> Alan Travis, 'Thatcher went behind cabinet's back with Trident purchase' *The Guardian*, 30 December 2011.

<sup>24</sup> See Martin Beckford, 'Lord Macdonald: Ministers wrong on CIA secret justice fears' in the *Telegraph* 13 March 2012, and Tim Shipman, 'No need for secret justice say CIA spies: U.S. "would never hold back terror intelligence from Britain"' in the *Mail*, 5 April 2012. David Rose describes the briefing process using this argument within Whitehall in 'Furtive briefings by MI5 and the Government's BIG LIE over secret justice' in the *Mail*, 17 March 2012: 'But the mere assertion, whispered so silkily by the plausible Mr Evans, is hard to rebut, especially by politicians who, understandably enough, are fearful of being blamed in the event of some future terrorist attack.'

**McKinsey and the NHS** An important piece about the role of the US management company, McKinsey in the NHS, 'The firm that hi-jacked the NHS' by David Rose in the *Mail on Sunday*.<sup>25</sup> McKinsey has bought its way into the NHS to get a share of the tax farming which is now beginning as what's left of the state is divvied-up among Conservative Party donors (perhaps that should now be 'investors'). I presume that the author is the David Rose who confessed a while back to having been an SIS asset.<sup>26</sup>

**Encounter and the CIA** A seminar on 'Encounter, the CIA, the IRD and the relationship of British intellectuals with the Establishment' was held in London in January. The speakers included Frances Stonor Saunders, author of *Who Paid the Piper?: CIA and the Cultural Cold War*, and the son of *Encounter* editor Stephen Spender, Matthew. The event was videoed and is on-line.<sup>27</sup> Matthew Spender sent an e-mail saying that the general conclusion of the seminar had been that Stephen Spender must have known more about the relationship with the CIA than he admitted to during his lifetime.

**Who was John Smith?** Amidst all the coverage of the death of Neil Heywood, the Hackluyt guy in China, none of the major media noted the curious sidebar that Elizabeth, the widow of the late John Smith, leader of the Labour Party, had been appointed to the Hackluyt advisory board in 1999. OK, 'advisory board' is a notepaper job: looks good, provides some money but means nothing. Even so, as Hackluyt is a kind of semi-detached extension of SIS, this appointment added some little credence to the notion that John Smith, like his Glasgow University contemporary Baroness 'Meta' Ramsay, had been recruited by MI6 while a student.<sup>28</sup> It might also help make intelligible Smith's role on the Bilderberg steering group.

**What is *The Guardian*?** An interesting piece on *The Guardian*

25 <[www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2099940/NHS-health-reforms-Extent-McKinsey--Companys-role-Andrew-Lansleys-proposals.html](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2099940/NHS-health-reforms-Extent-McKinsey--Companys-role-Andrew-Lansleys-proposals.html)>

26 See <[www.newstatesman.com/politics/2007/09/mi6-mi5-intelligence-briefings](http://www.newstatesman.com/politics/2007/09/mi6-mi5-intelligence-briefings)>.

27 <[www.sas.ac.uk/videos-and-podcasts/culture-language-literature/encounter-cia-ird-and-relationship-british-intellect](http://www.sas.ac.uk/videos-and-podcasts/culture-language-literature/encounter-cia-ird-and-relationship-british-intellect)>.

28 More details at <[www.powerbase.info/index.php/Elizabeth\\_Smith](http://www.powerbase.info/index.php/Elizabeth_Smith)>

by Jonathan Cook, 'A Thought Police for the Internet Age: The Dangerous Cult of *The Guardian*'.<sup>29</sup> Cook works through the treatment by *The Guardian* of some of the Anglo-American left's major (and essentially anti-American) figures – Chomsky, Herman, Assange etc. – and it is not an edifying story.

**The times they are a-changin'** The headline in the *Telegraph* said: 'Interest in women's clothing and sadomasochism would not have prevented Gareth Williams joining MI6, inquest hears.'

**CND's friends in the Conservative Cabinet** The report by Alan Travis in *The Guardian* of the latest Cabinet papers released under the 30 year rule included an account of how Mrs Thatcher, assisted by her Cabinet Secretary, by-passed her Cabinet colleagues when ordering Trident submarines.

'Disclosure of the scale of cabinet opposition is revealed in a note from a 10 February Downing Street meeting at which only John Nott, her defence secretary, and Lord Carrington, her foreign secretary, were present. Nott told Thatcher a full debate on nuclear defence policy was essential "since two-thirds of the party and two-thirds of the cabinet were opposed to the procurement of Trident. Even the chiefs of staff were not unanimous."'

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29 <[www.counterpunch.org/2011/09/28/the-dangerous-cult-of-the-guardian/](http://www.counterpunch.org/2011/09/28/the-dangerous-cult-of-the-guardian/)>