

The view from the bridge

Robin Ramsay

Kincora, Blunt and.....JFK?

Because it is difficult to distinguish the shit from the shinola among the allegations and rumours, thus far I have avoided trying to make sense of the Kincora scandal's place in the Elm House-Savile-paedos-in-high-places thicket. However one story caught my eye. In the *Daily Express* (12 April) James Fielding began his story, headlined 'MI6 covered up historic child sex abuse ring discovered during surveillance operation', with this: 'MI6 infiltrated the Kincora boys' home in east Belfast to spy on William McGrath'.¹ He continued:

'The ex-intelligence officer said MI6 was ordered to watch the Kincora care home in Belfast in the 1970s because one of its housemasters, William McGrath, was the leader of paramilitary group Tara.

Spies witnessed terror-related arms deals but also found evidence of an international paedophile gang trafficking victims to Brighton, London, Amsterdam and Vienna.

Our source, who was involved in the operation but has asked to remain anonymous, said the intelligence services did not act on the abuse because it could have blown their cover and because they could not afford to "tread on the toes" of the Royal Ulster Constabulary.'

Fielding quotes this 'ex-intelligence officer' as saying:

' "Certainly there was abuse inside Kincora but most of the boys were sent to various hotels around the province to be abused. Some were taken to Brighton and London and then further afield, as far as Holland and even Vienna."

He said he was visited by MP Humphrey Berkeley

¹ <www.express.co.uk/news/uk/569866/Child-sex-abuse-ring-kept-secret-British-spies-MI6>

and author Robin Bryans who told him paedophile parties were taking place in the south of England. "Both said exactly the same thing, that boys from Northern Ireland had ended up in Brighton as well as London."

.....The source said: "Blunt used to come to Northern Ireland and at that stage he was under immunity, and I think there was a fear that if action had been taken against McGrath and Tara then the whole thing might have unravelled.

I think that's why the authorities shut down the investigation into Kincora and covered up much of the abuse, because of the links to the Cambridge spy ring and, through them, the connections to the British establishment."

Where to begin with this? First, the 'ex-intelligence officer' moves from things he claims he knows at the beginning to '*I think there was a fear....*' and '*I think that's why the authorities...'*. He's guessing. Colin Wallace was working for the British Army in Northern Ireland at the time in a press officer/psy-ops capacity. About this Fielding story he e-mailed me:

'Yes, there are several things that are incorrect. We (the Army) knew nothing at all about Blunt – at least by the time I left NI in February 1975. We did know about Peter Montgomery, but I was not allowed to refer to him in my briefing material.....Also, to the best of my knowledge, MI6 did not block investigations in Kincora. Indeed, Craig Smellie supported the press briefings about Tara that I did in 1973.'

Smellie was the chief SIS officer in Northern Ireland and it does seem unlikely (at best) that Smellie would encourage press interest in Tara if SIS had an operational interest in its leader, William McGrath. And did SIS do 'infiltration'? And what would 'infiltration' of Kincora mean? Planting an agent in the home?

The two men said to have visited the source for the *Express* story and told him of paedophile parties in the south of England, former Conservative MP Humphrey Berkeley and

Robin Bryans, are dead. Robin Bryans used to send me long, barely intelligible letters and did not mention any of this, even though he knew of my connection to Colin Wallace, then at the centre of the Kincora story.² Wallace met Humphrey Berkeley several times in 1987 when Channel Four News and Berkeley were interested in Wallace's story and while Berkeley did mention the sex parties with boys from Northern Ireland, he did not link this to Kincora, even though he had read Wallace's documents, some of which were about it.³

Hitherto the agency linked with Kincora in media stories has been MI5. It is MI5 – who had replaced SIS as lead intelligence agency in Northern Ireland – who refused to take action when informed about McGrath's activities there by Colin Wallace and a military intelligence officer named Brian Gemmell.⁴ This piece by Fielding shifts the focus of attention onto SIS (MI6), as well as adding Anthony Blunt and the Cambridge spies to the story. I think that shifting the focus onto SIS was the point of the article. We're back to the old 5 versus 6 game.

Who is James Fielding? In the 430 articles written for the *Express* by Fielding⁵ there is only one other with intelligence content: 'MI5 lead hunt for IRA arms dumps' in 2011 which began 'Irish terrorists are feared to be planning an attack on mainland Britain using explosives hidden in Wales and the South-west', which has no stated sources and may have come from MI5.⁶ With no apparent interest in intelligence stories Fielding has uncritically reported what he was told.

2 An example of a Bryans letter, rambling and tantalising is at <<https://theneedleblog.wordpress.com/2013/04/08/robin-bryans-letter/>>.

3 Information from Colin Wallace.

4 On Gemmell see, for example, <<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/kincora-intelligence-officer-brian-gemmell-sorry-for-failing-to-pursue-richard-kerrs-case-31122595.html>>.

5 Listed at <<http://journalisted.com/james-fielding?allarticles=yes>>.

6 <<http://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/239741/MI5-lead-hunt-for-IRA-arms-dumps>> Fielding also wrote 'Jimmy Savile was part of satanic ring' in 2013 <<http://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/370439/Jimmy-Savile-was-part-of-satanic-ring>> reporting Valerie Sinason's account of claims allegedly made to her by one of her patients. On Sinason and this story see <<http://www.saff.ukhq.co.uk/savilemonster.htm>> and <<http://www.saff.ukhq.co.uk/dohjunk.htm>>.

Finally, the (notional) JFK connection. In his e-mail to me Colin Wallace wrote: 'We did know about Peter Montgomery, but I was not allowed to refer to him in my briefing material. There could be several reasons for that. Montgomery also had an interesting link with a guy (Clay?) who was at one time a suspect in the Kennedy assassination.'

Peter Montgomery had been a lover of Anthony Blunt and they remained friends.⁷ Montgomery's name was in the address book of Clay Shaw, a gay New Orleans businessman who had been a contact of the CIA,⁸ who was tried for – and acquitted of – conspiracy to assassinate JFK by New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison.

This is from the essay on Shaw's address book by Anthony Edward Weeks which appeared in *Lobster* 20:

Peter Montgomery
Blessingbourne
Fivemiletown, NI Ireland
Phone Fivemiletown 221

[T]

Captain Peter Stephen Montgomery of Blessingbourne, to use the styling favoured by the subject, was born on 13th August 1909. He was educated at Wellington College School and Trinity College, Cambridge. Montgomery was the son of Major-General Hugh Maude de Fellenberg Montgomery. His uncle became Chief of the Imperial General Staff, and his second cousin was Bernard Montgomery, that is Field Marshall Montgomery of Alamein, the commander of the Eighth Army during the Second World War. From 1931 to 1947 he was employed by the BBC in Northern Ireland in various capacities, including Assistant Musical Director and Conductor of the BBC Northern Ireland Symphony Orchestra (1933-38).

⁷ See for example <<https://spotlightonabuse.wordpress.com/2013/08/04/anthony-blunt-and-the-kincora-cover-up/>>.

⁸ A declassified 1967 internal CIA memo on the Garrison case said: 'Clay Shaw was an innocuous DCS [Domestic Contact Service] contact between 1948 and 1956'. (At <www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=3231#relPageId=2>). Some of Garrison's defenders think there is more to Shaw than this and there is a lot on the Net about this if you wish to pursue it.

From 1952-71 he was a member of the BBC Northern Ireland Advisory Council, and from 1963-71 on the BBC General Advisory Council. He was the Honorary ADC to the Governor of Northern Ireland, Lord Wakehurst, from 1954-64, and later Vice-Lieutenant of County Tyrone in Ulster where the family estate, Blessingbourne, was situated.

These bare biographical facts on Montgomery do not betray the keen interest he has for students of 20th century intelligence and espionage. While a student at Trinity College, Cambridge, he became the lover of Anthony Blunt, the Soviet spy, aka 'The Fourth Man'. In the words of Barrie Penrose and Simon Freeman, 'Most of their mutual gay friends assumed that they had begun as lovers and then, in the parlance of the homosexual world, become sisters.' (*Conspiracy of Silence*, London, Grafton, 1986 p. 48). At the end of 1940 the lease that Lord Rothschild had on a three-story maisonette in Bentinck Street in London expired: Blunt moved in with Tessa Mayor (then Lord Rothschild's secretary in MI5, later his wife), Patrician Rawdon-Smith (who later married a friend of Blunt's) and Guy Burgess. They were soon joined by Jack Hewitt, a sailor boyfriend of Burgess, who very quickly switched his allegiance to Blunt. Hewitt told John Costello that during the time at the flat Blunt had only one visitor come to stay with him: Peter Montgomery. (See Costello's *Mask of Treachery* New York, William Morrow, 1988, p. 391) This was a kindness that was reciprocated in 1942 when, after exhausting intelligence duties in London and Germany, Blunt went to recuperate at Montgomery's estate at Blessingbourne. Robert Harbinson, who knew Montgomery and Blunt well after the war, has said that 'Anthony had an uncanny hold over Peter. They were in love, at least for a time.' (Penrose and Freeman, *op cit* p. 48) The secret of Montgomery's relationship with Blunt never came out during their lifetime. Had it done so Montgomery would have been ruined in Northern Ireland

where many of his friends and relatives were in the Protestant Orange Order. Ulster would not have been as tolerant as Cambridge or London.

At the beginning of the war Montgomery joined the Intelligence Corps and rose to the rank of Captain. After 1945 he remained in the army and later went to to become ADC to the Viceroy of India, Lord Wavell.

Blunt was insistent that Montgomery knew nothing of his espionage activities and he went to great lengths right up until the end of his life to protect his friend. Until his death Blunt had a bedroom reserved for Montgomery in his London apartment. In 1980 the London *Sunday Times* interviewed Montgomery in connection with the unmasking of Blunt and he said that "I knew Anthony had been interrogated in 1964 by the Security Service and I feared that my name would come up. There were other occasions when I thought it would come out and I would get the chop."

Montgomery died in February 1988.

Clay Shaw, in other words, had one-stop access to Blunt, Philby, Burgess and their milieu. Though there is no information that he met any of them, we know from Olwen Janson and others that he spent a considerable time in London during the war . (According to her "he made all his major contacts during those years".) Montgomery is the one parapolitically significant name in the address book worthy of more research.'

Those career-killing Christmas trees

Frances Stonor Saunders, who wrote about the CIA's cultural operations during the Cold War,⁹ returned to the subject of the state and anti-communism again in the *London Review of Books*, after perusing the MI5 files on the historian Eric

⁹ *Who Paid the Piper?*, reviewed everywhere and briefly noted in *Lobster* 38 at <<http://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/online/issue38/lob38-21.htm>>.

Hobsbawm.¹⁰ She recapped MI5's subversion-screening operation at the BBC.

'This programme, whose existence was officially denied until late last year, was co-ordinated by MI5 and the BBC's chief assistant to the director of personnel, later retitled manager special duties. Working out of Room 105 (the numeral "5" always denotes the mothership) this assistant, in liaison with a designated MI5 handler, arranged for the top jobs and those that involved access to classified material to be given the full sheep dip. All other positions – current staff as well as new applicants – were processed through "normal vetting", of which the subjects were unaware. Here there was no pass or fail, but if MI5 (cryptically referred to in Room 105 as the College) uncovered anything in the subject's background to suggest unreliability, a red symbol resembling a Christmas tree was stamped on the subject's file. Only in exceptional cases was the BBC required to submit to MI5's veto; generally, the corporation was allowed to use its own discretion, but many employees have testified over the years that their careers were unexpectedly interrupted or impeded by the Christmas tree.'

About this essay occasional *Lobster* contributor Professor Bernard Porter e-mailed me:

'I found it extraordinarily interesting. For a short time in the 1960s I worked in Ford Motor Company's Recruitment Dept. After accepting applicants, but before writing to them, we had to send their forms to a mysterious office for approval. If they weren't approved, we had to tell the applicant that the position had "already been filled". The symbol used by the secret office to indicate that was a red stamped Xmas tree, just like here..... Long afterwards, when researching in this area.....I came to think it was the EL [Economic League], whom I hadn't heard of, of course, at the time.

¹⁰ <<http://www.lrb.co.uk/v37/n07/frances-stonorsanders/stuck-on-the-flypaper>>

It's the Xmas tree that made me think just now of MI5. Funny that they should use the same symbol in all these areas.'

Ford was a Special Branch/MI5 operation. The 2013 BBC documentary *True Spies* interviewed a former Special Branch officer, Tony Robinson, who spoke of it. This is from the programme's script:¹¹

Tony Robinson:

'My senior officer said "One of your responsibilities, Tony, is to make certain that the Ford's factory is kept clean of subversives."..... Part of the plan drawn up was to make certain that working would carry on smoothly at Ford's without the expected Merseyside disease of strikes and layoffs and God knows what, that the workforce would be vetted. The arrangement was thus drawn up, unofficially of course, that the Special Branch would do this.'

Voiceover:

'Every week, Ford would submit the names of the latest job applicants to the local Special Branch.'

Tony Robinson:

'...we were expected to check these lists against our known subversives, and if any were seen on the list then strike a line through it, go and see our contact and say "So and so, so and so has been....is a member of the CP or has been a member of the CP, didn't renew his membership last year" or something like that.'

And Robinson would be liaising with MI5 to access its files.

In the same essay, Saunders wrote of the Communist Party of Great Britain:

'In the international communist movement, the British party was a laughing stock, correctly assumed to be so

¹¹ Script at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/nol/shared/spl/hi/programmes/true_spies/transcripts/truespies_prog1.txt>.

thoroughly penetrated that it was virtually a branch of the Security Service. As [MI5 Director General] Roger Hollis told the home secretary in 1959, "we [have] the British Communist Party pretty well buttoned up.' It was more than mere containment, says [David] Cornwell, who ran agents into the party. "We kept it afloat. In fact, we *owned* it."

Since MI5 had known about the Soviet subsidies to the CPGB since the 1930s and not exposed them, 'We kept it afloat' is literally true.

Reading this I was reminded of a comment by the former BOSS agent Gordon Winter, who said in an interview for the first BBC TV documentary about the British security and intelligence services, made by Tom Mangold for Panorama in 1981:

'British intelligence has a saying that if there is a left-wing movement in Britain bigger than a football team our man is the captain or the vice captain, and if not, he is the referee and he can send any man off the field and call our man on at any time he likes.'

Winter's comment was the only piece of the programme which the spooks insisted be cut before transmission.¹²

How seriously should we take this claim attributed to MI5? Is it possible that they had this degree of penetration of the entire British Marxist left? Penetration, yes; but the implied control, I doubt.

Reining in the bankers

A brief flip back through this country's recent economic history – from the so-called secondary banking crisis of 1973/4 onwards – shows that unless the banks are prevented from doing so they will always create too much credit (because it makes them rich); and some people are unable to resist the temptation to borrow too much. Regulation of credit formation

¹² Quoted in *Leveller* 51, March 1981, cited in *Lobster* 28.

is necessary if you want financial stability and the prevention of debt slavery. Since self-regulation manifestly isn't going to work, this leaves the state. But is there an example of successful state regulation of credit-formation anywhere in the so-called free world? As it happens there may soon be one. Iceland, which had its own financial crisis in 2008-10 when three of its banks collapsed, is considering the removal of the power to create 'money' – chiefly by making loans – from its commercial banks.

A report on this subject, endorsed by Iceland's prime minister, contains a forward by Adair Turner, former chairman of the UK Financial Services Authority and chair of the policy development committee of the international Financial Stability Board, who says that efforts to make the existing financial system more stable

'.....have still failed to address the fundamental issue – the ability of banks to create credit, money and purchasing power, and the instability which inevitably follows. As a result, the reforms agreed to date still leave the world dangerously vulnerable to future financial and economic instability.'¹³

Chances of state regulation of credit creation in the UK? At present, nil. But after the next big crash – bound to happen as the banks are doing more or less what they did before 2007/8 – who knows?

Money talking

A study of the influences on American policy-making published in September 2014 found that America is an oligarchy. Or, as the abstract put it:

'Multivariate analysis indicates that economic elites and organized groups representing business interests have substantial independent impacts on U.S. government

¹³ <<http://eng.forsaetisraduneyti.is/news-and-articles/reform-of-the-monetary-system>> The report is at <<http://eng.forsaetisraduneyti.is/media/Skyrslur/monetary-reform.pdf>>.

policy, while average citizens and mass-based interest groups have little or no independent influence. The results provide substantial support for theories of Economic-Elite Domination and for theories of Biased Pluralism, but not for theories of Majoritarian Electoral Democracy or Majoritarian Pluralism.¹⁴

I noticed a report on this on 30 March, the first official day of the general election campaign here, which was begun by Labour leader Ed Miliband making nice in the City of London, promising not to increase their taxes and, centrally, to keep UK corporation tax the lowest in the G7.

It's been nearly 30 years since the policies of the Labour Party could be said to reflect the views of its members; which explains its lack of members, the rise of the SNP and the Greens on the left, and, to some extent, UKIP on the right.

Fluoridation

More cracks are appearing in the pro-fluoridation consensus. A recently published study found that '[GP] practices located in the West Midlands (a wholly fluoridated area) are nearly twice as likely to report high hypothyroidism prevalence in comparison to Greater Manchester (non-fluoridated area).'¹⁵

At tabloid level the *Daily Mail* asked:

'Is your tap water poisoning you? The troubling question on everyone's lips as scientists warn fluoride put in water to protect teeth could spark depression

- Researchers have said the mineral could cause depression and weight gain
- Brain impairment, kidney disease, bone disorders

14 Abstract at <<http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayAbstract?fromPage=online&aid=9354310>>.

15 'Are fluoride levels in drinking water associated with hypothyroidism prevalence in England? A large observational study of GP practice data and fluoride levels in drinking water' By S Peckham, D Lowery, S Spencer at <<https://static.kent.ac.uk/media/news/2015/02/Fluoride-research.pdf>>.

are possible side-effects.¹⁶

Meanwhile in Hull, where I live, the city council is planning to add fluoride to the water to try and improve the teeth of children. As if a quick chemical fix can compensate for poverty, the consequent search for cheap calories, and the ingestion of too much sugar (and fat and salt) which is in cheap food.

It's that old left-meets-right thing again

'Though "Bibi" Netanyahu won re-election last week, the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations will still look into whether the State Department financed a clandestine effort to defeat him.

Reportedly, State funnelled \$350,000 to an American NGO called OneVoice, which has an Israeli subsidiary, Victory 15, that collaborated with U.S. operatives to bring Bibi down.

If we are now secretly pumping cash into the free elections of friendly countries, to dump leaders President Obama dislikes, Americans have a right to know why we are using Cold War tactics against democracies.....

Hopefully, after looking into OneVoice and V15, the Senate will expand its investigation into a larger question: Is the U.S. using NGOs to subvert regimes around the world? And, if so, who decides which regimes may be subverted?

What gives these questions urgency is the current crisis that has Moscow moving missiles toward Europe and sending submarines and bombers to probe NATO defenses.

America contends that Vladimir Putin's annexation of Crimea and backing for pro-Russian rebels in Ukraine is the cause of the gathering storm in Russian-NATO relations.

¹⁶ 25 February 2015 at <<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2967791/Is-tap-water-poisoning-troubling-question-s-lips-scientists-war-fluoride-water-protect-teeth-spark-depression.html>>

Yet Putin's actions in Ukraine were not taken until the overthrow of a democratically elected pro-Russian regime in Kiev, in a coup d'état in which, Moscow contends, an American hand was clearly visible.

Not only was John McCain in Kiev's Maidan Square egging on the crowds that drove the regime from power, so, too, was U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Victoria Nuland.

In an intercepted phone call with our ambassador in Kiev, Nuland identified the man we preferred when President Viktor Yanukovich was ousted. 'Yats,' she called him. And when Yanukovich fled after the Maidan massacre, sure enough, Arseniy Yatsenyuk was in power.

Nuland also revealed that the U.S. had spent \$5 billion since 1991 to bring about the reorientation of Ukraine toward the West.

Now, bringing Ukraine into the EU and NATO may appear to Nuland & Co. a great leap forward for freedom and progress.

But to Russia it looks like the subversion of a Slavic nation with which she has had intimate ties for centuries, to bring Ukraine into an economic union and military alliance directed against Moscow.

And if NATO stumbles into a military clash with Russia, the roots of that conflict will be traceable to the coup in Kiev that Russians believe was the dirty work of the Americans.'

No, that wasn't written by William Blum, Chris Floyd or Robert Parry (though they have written something similar), or any of the other commentators on the American left, but by sometime Nixon speechwriter Patrick J. Buchanan, whom I suppose we might describe as bearing the torch of American isolationism.¹⁷

Telling it like it is (sort of)

17 <<http://original.antiwar.com/buchanan/2015/03/23/are-ngos-agents-of-subversion/>>

David Davis, the Conservative MP who lost to David Cameron in the contest for leader of the Tory Party, is one of the more interesting mainstream politicians today. He is a prominent defender of civil liberties, a free marketeer, a sometime member of a territorial SAS regiment and – this is what made me take notice – was a close friend of the late Tony Benn. Surprising? Yes, a bit: but both are/were passionate British nationalists. Were he alive, Benn would deny being a nationalist, of course; but you don't acquire 'national treasure' status the way Benn did in his last decade without the 'national' bit being rather prominent.

Davis made an interesting interjection into the intelligence debate, albeit by stating the very obvious, that the House of Commons Intelligence and Security Committee (ISC) isn't up to much. Davis said that 'members of the security services had told him privately that they "have never taken the ISC seriously," saying "well they only know what we tell them"; that its members had been 'captured by the agencies they are supposed to be overseeing'; and that 'to date the [ISC] chairman has acted almost invariably as a spokesman for the spooks rather than as a critical friend.'¹⁸

But ISC was set up to be this way. It has not taken evidence from the crop of ex-intelligence whistle-blowers since its creation; none of the MPs who know something about the secret state and have been critical of it have been appointed to the committee; and it was never provided with enough staff to do even a half-assed job of 'oversight'.

At one point its staff consisted of one researcher, John Morrison, a former senior Defence Intelligence officer (it now has three). Morrison gave an interview to the BBC in 2004 in which he said that when he heard Tony Blair claiming in 2002 that Iraq posed a 'serious and current' threat, he 'could almost hear the collective raspberry going up around Whitehall.'¹⁹ That comment got him fired after the committee was informed

¹⁸ <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/election-2015-31665312>>.

¹⁹ <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1467863/Anger-over-sacking-of-adviser-who-criticised-Blair-on-Iraq-intelligence.html?mobile=basic>> See also <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Morrison_\(intelligence_officer\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Morrison_(intelligence_officer))>.

that the intelligence and security services would no longer work with him.²⁰ It would never have occurred to the ISC members to respond to the spooks that Morrison had their support and they would have to lump it.

Morrison is one of the authors of a book-length study of the ISC which discusses all the tricky, not to say absurd issues involved in having 'oversight' over organisations when the only sources you are allowed to use are the organisations themselves.²¹

Drawing back the veil

Elsewhere in this issue of *Lobster* I have reviewed Peter Dale Scott's latest book and I quote his 1970s conception of parapolitics:

'a system or practice of politics in which accountability is consciously diminished.....generally, covert politics, the conduct of public affairs not by rational debate and responsible decision-making but by indirection, collusion, and deceit.'

When I encountered Scott's writing, parapolitics also seemed to me to be a research method: namely, that if we read widely enough and collect the fragments which leak from the covert world into the surface world of politics and history, we can recreate some – maybe only a fraction – of that covert world. And thus – hopefully – by dragging the secret world into the light we can diminish its influence on the surface world of politics. Thirty years later with the collapse of the Labour Party in the UK and the Democrats in the US into neocon vacuity, has anybody got a plan B?

The problem with these naive notions of 'drawing back the veil', as it were, was how then to persuade the politicians

²⁰ The media's response to Morrison's sacking was discussed that year for the BBC by John Ware. See <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/programmes/panorama/3555880.stm>>.

²¹ Anthony Glees, Philips H J Davies and John N L Morrison, *The Open Side of Secrecy* (London: the Social Affairs Unit, 2006) – available on-line for a few pounds.

to take a peek. Merlyn Rees was Secretary of State for Northern Ireland from 1974-76 when the spooks and the British Army were pretty much running things themselves there with the barest accountability to, let alone direction by, the politicians. In the late 1980s after the Colin Wallace and Fred Holroyd stories were publicised, it must have dawned on him that he hadn't known what was going on while he had been the Minister. Rees's papers are now in the London School of Economics and one of the files is 'Holroyd and Wallace: correspondence and miscellaneous';²² and listed is some of the Wallace/Holroyd material: articles, pamphlets, letters. He kept it, he may even have read some of it, but to my knowledge he did nothing with it. He never got in touch with any of the people involved to check who they were and if they were reliable.

Pentagonism ²³

During the fiscal year that ended on 30 September 2014, U.S. Special Operations forces were in 133 countries.²⁴ It is pretty safe to assume that in all of those countries the Americans will be killing the poor and the dispossessed or helping others do so; and in many, as a result, 'terrorists' will emerge to oppose them. Given that the US military-industrial complex needs enemies to justify its existence, we might call this investing in enemies.

In early January the House of Commons defence committee commented that the British military lacked 'a clear military strategy for Iraq or a clear definition of the UK's role in the operations.'²⁵ This is unfair. The British military strategy,

²² <<http://archives.lse.ac.uk/Record.aspx?src=CalmView.Catalog&id=MERLYN-REES%2F18%2F4>>

²³ Term coined by Juan Bosch, president of the Dominican Republic, victim of a coup by the US in 1965, in his book *Pentagonism: a substitute for Imperialism* (New York: Grove Press, 1968).

²⁴ <http://www.blacklistednews.com/The_Golden_Age_of_Black_Ops_-_In_Fiscal_2015_U.S._Special_Forces_Have_Already_Deployed_to_105_Nations/41451/0/38/38/Y/M.html>

²⁵ <<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/feb/05/britain-greater-role-fighting-islamic-state-iraq-mps>>

in almost all circumstances, is to do what the Americans tell them to. But this, apparently, is unsayable, even with the rather bright Rory Stewart MP in the chair.

Stoned

Roger Stone is a former Republican political strategist cum dirty trickster who has written a book with the same LBJ's-people-killed-JFK thesis as mine.²⁶ On his Website in January was this:

'Robert Caro wrote a four-volume biography of Lyndon Johnson but if you check the index there's no mention of Sol Estes, he's missing. I went and checked and in terms of coverage the Billie Sol Estes got twice the coverage at the time than the [Bobby] Baker scandal did, but it's been airbrushed out of history by Caro. Why? I'll tell you why: because Sol Estes, after he comes out of prison, has nothing to gain and informs the Justice Department of Johnson's involvement in the death of John F. Kennedy. Therefore, I presume, if Caro introduced the character he would have to tell the whole story, so it's better just to airbrush Billie Sol out of the picture. Caro lies by omission; he should be stripped of his Pulitzer. He is intellectually dishonest, but he's more interested in going to the right Upper East Side cocktail party than he is in historical truth.'²⁷

Holt and Dallas

Elsewhere in this issue ²⁸ I have argued that Chauncey Holt

²⁶ Stone's book is reviewed in *Lobster* 66 at <<http://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/free/lobster66/lob66-man-who-killed-jfk.pdf>>.

²⁷ 'Roger Stone vs. the world: inside the conspiracy-filled mind of legendary GOP trickster' at <<http://stonezone.com/>>

I pointed out Caro's omission of Estes in *Lobster* 65 at the end of <<http://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/free/lobster65/lob65-estes.pdf>>

²⁸ <<http://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/free/lobster69/lob69-chauncey-holt.pdf>>

probably wasn't the 'third tramp' on Dealey Plaza as he claimed. We could then simply dismiss the two chapters on the JFK assassination in his memoir as simply an invention. But when you read them they don't feel like an invention.

Take the section in which Holt recounts how he was overseeing a weapons modification plant in Goleta in California (part of Santa Barbara) as part of the CIA's anti-Castro activities. In 1963, just after the incident in New Orleans in which Oswald (and Holt, by Holt's telling) distributed pro-Castro leaflets, which resulted in Oswald being arrested and getting in the local media as a result, Holt says his machine shop was tasked with acquiring and modifying some Mannlicher-Carcano rifles and ammunition for them. They received several hundred rounds which appeared to be:

'....pristine 163 grains bullets that had never been fired. On closer examination it was apparent that these bullets had been fired, although there has not been the slightest deformation. The master reloader, working for us, theorized that these bullets had been fired in what is called a "cold shot"; that is fired using only a very strong primer, without powder.

We then loaded the pristine 6.5 bullets, in Wetherby .263 cases.

Furthermore, we machined out the lands and grooves in a Wetherby rifle chambered for the .263 which is equivalent to the 6.5. It was apparent to us that if the pristine 6.5 bullet, which had previously been fired from a Carcano, was fired from a Wetherby .263 rifle, without lands and grooves, the bullet upon examination would appear to have been fired from a Carcano. I can think of no other reason for making these modifications. Of course the Wetherby would not be terribly accurate and the velocity would be reduced considerably.' (p. 160)

Holt speculates that the notorious virtually pristine bullet, CE399, 'the magic bullet', which was found at the Parkland Hospital, was fired in this way, causing JFK's shallow back wound and then simply falling out as the body was

moved/manipulated.²⁹

But, of course, Holt made all this up, didn't he?

Holt also offers us a theory about the event, with the assassination conspiracy piggybacking on a CIA plan to create an event, a protest of some kind in Dallas against Cuba. The beauty of which is that the CIA is embroiled, whether it was part of the assassination conspiracy or not, and will go into cover-up mode to conceal the stunt it was apparently planning. This rang faint bells of recognition with me and I eventually remembered I had suggested something similar:

'My hunch – and that's all it is – is that some creative individual within the intelligence community had the bright idea that one way of sticking it to Castro *and* aborting Kennedy's peace feelers, would be to *fake* an attempt on Kennedy's life which could be attributed to Cuba. But the scheme involved a large number of people and someone in, or close to, the plan realised that the perfect conditions were going to be created for a real hit to take place. Security would be lax: the existence of the phoney set-up would ensure that no-one would want to examine the mess: and, most of all, there is Oswald, with some minor role in the "phoney", ripe for the part of patsy.'³⁰

The higher strangeness

In the course of the last 30+ years of producing *Lobster I* have had a few strange/striking communications. This, from Francine Kelly, is the best so far.

Dear Robin Ramsay,

Please interview me and/or post my story on your

²⁹ The current consensus on CE399 among the JFK researchers would be that the bullet was planted. There is a considerable literature on CE399 and how it came to be found at Parkland. See for example <<http://www.ctka.net/2010/journeyCE399.html>>.

³⁰ In *Lobster 2*, in 1983.

website. I am a CIA MK-Ultra Project Monarch Intelligence Asset, alien hybrid and Milab (military alien abductee). I am married to Will P. Wilson, head of CIA Black Operations and a king in the Reptilian Draconian Vampire hierarchy. Please YouTube X Zone Radio and Francine Kelly; operation haystack agentfk; Francine Kelly and Higherside Chats; and Francine Kelly and WoB radio. Look at my forum at <http://www.network54.com/forum/535171>. Thank you.

It's all Greek

Occasionally we get access to unedited, unspun accounts of how the political economy game works at the highest levels. One example is the leak of comments made by then US Treasury Secretary, Timothy Geithner, at the time of the threatened financial meltdown caused by Greece in 2010, when its state debt was downgraded by ratings agencies to 'junk' status.

The Greek drama began in 2001 when those then in charge of the Greek state wanted their small economy, heavily reliant on tourism, to join the European single currency. To join, Greece had to meet so-called 'convergence criteria', which include the so-called 'Maastricht rules' which say that no EU state in the single currency can have a budget deficit more than 3% of GDP and that its total government debt must not exceed 60% of GDP. In 2010, as the Greek economy was sinking beneath the waves of its debt, it was 'discovered' that in 2001, to obey the 'Maastricht rules', the Greek state had faked its debt figures with statistical lies³¹ and a bit of derivatives jiggery-pokery by Goldman Sachs.³²

At a meeting about the Greek 'problem' in 2010, Geithner

31 See <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-16834815>> on 'disappearing' Greek debt.

32 See <<http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/greek-debt-crisis-how-goldman-sachs-helped-greece-to-mask-its-true-debt-a-676634.html>> where the subhead has it: 'Goldman Sachs helped the Greek government to mask the true extent of its deficit with the help

Continues at the foot of the next page.

recalled:

'..the Europeans came into that meeting basically saying: "We're going to teach the Greeks a lesson. They are really terrible. They lied to us. They suck and they were profligate and took advantage of the whole basic thing and we're going to crush them," was their basic attitude, all of them.....They were lied to by the Greeks. It was embarrassing to them because the Greeks had ended up like borrowing all this money and they were mad and angry and they were like: "Definitely get out the bats." They just wanted to take a bat to them. But in taking a bat to them, they were feeding a fire [presumably fire] that was in its early stages. There were a lot of dry tinders.' ³³

But this is nonsense. The Greek state's actions were not a secret;³⁴ and Germany (after reunification) and France had already themselves broken the Maastricht rules. The system knew the Greek debt figures were a fraud and, in pursuit of the political project of ever closer (and expanding) union, turned a blind eye, even while the EU's own statisticians were dealing with a series of fake figures from the Greek state.³⁵

On the wider revelations from Geithner the *Telegraph's* Ambrose Evans-Pritchard commented:

Note 32 continued

of a derivatives deal that legally circumvented the EU Maastricht deficit rules'. Notice: *legally* circumvented.....and the text beneath it tells us that Italy did the same thing with a different bank.

The derivative bet backfired on the Greek state – or they were conned by Goldman Sachs, depending on interpretation. I would favour the latter. At this level the game is the very smart people persuading the not quite as smart people to sign up to stupid deals. See <<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-03-06/goldman-secret-greece-loan-shows-two-sinners-as-client-unravels.html>>.

33 <<http://blogs.ft.com/brusselsblog/2014/11/11/draghis-ecb-management-the-leaked-geithner-files/>>

34 Alan Little quotes a Greek financial adviser working for Salomon Brothers at the time who knew it was all lies; and she can hardly have been alone. See <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-16834815>>.

35 Discussed at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_Financial_Audit,_2004>.

'So now we know: Europe's leaders did indeed attempt to smash Greece back into the Stone Age out of vindictive rage; conspired to withhold debt support for Italy unless the elected leader [Berlusconi] was forced out; and mismanaged the EMU crisis for three years with a level of stupidity that makes you want to weep.'³⁶

Torture news

When the CIA-torture story broke in early December I went to the *Telegraph* to see what MI6's man there, Con Coughlin, had to say. There was this:

'The real problem the CIA and other intelligence agencies face – British intelligence officers have also been accused of complicity in the CIA's interrogation programme – is dealing with the undisputed evidence that operatives systematically abused their Muslim captives in a manner most civilised people will view as torture.'

No shit, Sherlock! Which was followed by this:

'The CIA and its allies in the West must now persuade moderate Muslims that these mistakes are firmly confined to history, and to assure critics that their default position will always be to abide by the rule of law, rather than indulging in knee-jerk responses.'³⁷

Good luck with persuading moderate (sic) Muslims that the NATO intelligence people are all really decent chaps, and all that. As for the use of torture being a 'knee-jerk' response by the CIA and its allies (such as MI6), it was no such thing. It was a decision, taken by the politicians – Cheney, Rumsfeld, the neo-con gang round Bush – to generate bogus

³⁶ <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/economics/11226828/Tim-Geithner-reveals-in-the-raw-how-Europes-leaders-tried-to-commit-financial-suicide.html>> Amen to that; but this is the man who, while its American correspondent, ran into the *Telegraph* all the nonsense coming out of the Republican's anti-Clinton conspiracy. See <<http://www.publiceye.org/conspire/clinton/Clintonculwar8-07.html>>.

³⁷ Con Coughlin, 'Can we still trust the CIA?' at <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/islamic-state/11285948/Can-we-still-trust-the-CIA.html>>.

'intelligence' linking 9/11 to Iraq to provide the pretext for the invasion then being planned.³⁸

How this was experienced by America's 'allies' has been described by Jiri Ruzek, the head of Czech counterintelligence at the time. The CIA was trying to stand up the claim, from one Czech intelligence source, that Mohammed Atta, one of the 9/11 pilots, had met an Iraqi official in Prague. Ruzek wrote in a memoir:

'It was becoming more and more clear that we had not met expectations and did not provide the 'right' intelligence outputThe Americans showed me that anything can be violated, including the rules that they themselves taught us. Without any regard to us, they used our intelligence information for propaganda press leaks. They wanted to mine certainty from unconfirmed suspicion and use it as an excuse for military action. We were supposed to play the role of useful idiot thanks to whose initiative a war would be started.'³⁹

And the striking thing, which no-one seems to have commented on, is that the use of torture failed; no useable 'intelligence' linking Iraq to 9/11 was generated and thus they were forced back onto the 'weapons of mass destruction' line as the pretext.

From the horse's mouth

One Luke Akehurst has recently become the director of BICOM, the Britain Israel Communications & Research Centre, the leading PR outfit for Israel in the UK, and a profile of him⁴⁰ shows how a section of the Israeli lobby works:

³⁸ On this see Senator Carl Levin (Dem.) at <<http://www.levin.senate.gov/newsroom/press/release/levin-floor-statement-on-intelligence-committees-report-on-cia-detention-and-interrogation>> Levin argues – and has been arguing for years – that the torture programme was *designed* to get false confessions.

³⁹ From the always interesting *Washington's Blog* at <<http://www.washingtonsblog.com/2014/12/doesnt-mainstream-media-discuss-torture-issue.html>>.

⁴⁰ <http://www.jewishtelegraph.com/prof_247.html>

'After graduating in politics at Bristol University, Luke worked for two years as the National Union of Students' Bristol convenor and for a year as Labour Students national secretary.

His support for Israel became reinforced during the years he was involved in student politics.

He said:

"I had an extremely good working relationship with Bristol J-Soc when I was a student, then with the Union of Jewish Students at national level. I already had the gut instincts, but my understanding and deepening of support for Israel came through working alongside Jewish students in the NUS."

Luke is full of praise for the work of the UJS which has created a whole generation of non-Jewish pro-Israel political activists, some of whom he is working alongside at BICOM. He said:

"The younger MPs who prominently identify with the Labour Friends of Israel disproportionately come from the same background as me in student politics. That is the long-term benefit of all of the work that the UJS does."

Akehurst hopes to become a Labour MP.

Fluoridation of water

The belief that the fluoridation of water is bad for us seemed so comic in the early 1960s that Stanley Kubrick had the deranged US base commander, Jack D. Ripper, include it in a speech he made in *Dr. Strangelove*. Half a century later, while the fluoridation lobby is still secure in this country, two significant recent events suggest that the consensus on fluoride's efficacy may not last much longer. The first was a report which concluded that 'children in high-fluoride areas had significantly lower IQ scores than those who lived in low-

fluoride areas'.⁴¹ The second was the news that the fluoridation of water had been banned in Israel – as far as I know the first state to take this step.⁴² It's not that I am particularly interested in fluoridation as a subject, but I am interested in the way a false consensus can be created and maintained.⁴³

The men who rule the world

The news that Rory Stewart MP had been appointed chair of the House of Commons Defence Select Committee, plus Stewart's invitation to the 2011 Bilderberg meeting, led Tony Gosling, the UK's leading Bilderberg watcher, to write a piece for *Russia Today* headlined 'Bilderberg's silent takeover of Britain's £60bn defense budget'.⁴⁴ More interesting than this, surely, is Stewart's apparent but not quite acknowledged role as a former MI6 officer and the fact that he is a rather bright and impressive man.⁴⁵

Gosling and those like him believe that Bilderberg is something like the executive committee of Western capitalism when the evidence – such as it is – from those who have attended the meetings is that it is nothing more than busy executives chewing the fat with their peers, being briefed by experts in particular fields, doing a bit of networking and casting an eye over prospective political leaders.

Similar fantasies are held about the Trilateral Commission and its progenitor the Council on Foreign Relations. Recently one Patrick Wood, having noticed that the new head of the US Defense Department, Ashton Carter, is a Trilateralist, claimed that 'the Trilateral Commission and its

41 See <<http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/news/features/fluoride-childrens-health-grandjean-choi/>>. The report, from which the quotation comes, is at <<http://ehp.niehs.nih.gov/1104912/>>.

42 See <<http://www.newsweek.com/israel-has-officially-banned-fluoridation-its-drinking-water-267411>>.

43 How this consensus was created is described in Christopher Bryson, *The Fluoride Deception* (London:Palgrave Macmillan, 2004) which was reviewed in *Lobster* 48.

44 <<http://rt.com/op-edge/159384-uk-budget-defense-bilderberg/>>

45 On which see <<http://www.theguardian.com/politics/blog/2010/nov/08/rory-stewart-career-mi6>>.

members are executing a coup right under our noses and nobody says a word'.⁴⁶

What people like Wood and Gosling are prone to forget is that people like Ashton Carter wear many hats, of which Trilateral membership or Bilderberg attendance is only one, and maybe not even an important one.

The same river twice

On 21 October financial journalist, author and occasional *Lobster* contributor Dan Atkinson sent out an e-mail:

'Main story headline in yesterday's edition of *City AM*:
"The City is back: Number of people working in London's financial sector soars past its pre-crash peak"
So how's that "re-balanced economy" working out for you all?'

Indeed: it's the same old same old. The City is booming, so London and the southeast is booming and migrants flock to London to service the people with the money. The global gamblers are still gambling; debt and derivative volumes are still rising. We are heading for another big crash and this time the state will not be able to bail out the UK banks.

Russia

I do not pretend to understand what is happening in Russia; and given the current US-driven expansion of NATO right up to Russia's borders, I am sceptical of all Western MSM reporting on the country. Nonetheless, two striking pieces on the subject have appeared in English that are worth a look. The first is a series of big investigations by Reuters into aspects of Russia's economy⁴⁷ and the second is a long review of a new

⁴⁶ <http://www.augustforecast.com/trilateral_ashton_carter_to_head_defense_department>

⁴⁷ <<http://uk.reuters.com/article/2014/11/26/russia-capitalism-gas-special-report-pix-idUKL3N0TF4QD20141126>>

book on the rise of Putin and his associates.⁴⁸ The two articles are complimentary in many ways. Both show, for example, that the current Russian kleptocracy has been created with and is supported by the world's off-shore banking system.

Toby Sculthorp, who referred me to the book review, commented:

'the thesis [is] that a very small group of KGB officers have been able to rebuild the modern Russian state. So we have a political scientific model that posits that a powerful intelligence cabal – in cahoots with banks (domestic and international) and organised crime as the most influential forces in a "democracy".

Interesting that this is fine when talking about Russia. Any discussion about the above in the west is, of course, a "conspiracy theory".'

Special Branch

In this issue there is a review of a book on MI5 published by Boydell and Brewer. That company is reissuing Bernard Porter's *Origins of the Vigilant State: the London Metropolitan Police Special Branch before the First World War* (ISBN 085115283X).

Chomsky and JFK

Noam Chomsky is a great writer but he has one blind spot: he has no interest in or knowledge of practical politics. This leads him to make very black and white judgments. Take his view of JFK. In a recent piece of his, 'The leading terrorist state', he writes:

'In Cuba, after the failed Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961, President John F. Kennedy launched a murderous and destructive campaign to bring "the terrors of the earth" to Cuba – the words of Kennedy's close associate, the

48 <<http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2014/dec/18/how-he-and-his-cronies-stole-russia/?insrc=hpma>>

historian Arthur Schlesinger, in his semiofficial biography of Robert Kennedy, who was assigned responsibility for the terrorist war.’⁴⁹

This ignores – probably because Chomsky is unaware of it – the other things that Kennedy was doing vis-a-vis Cuba; namely, trying to find a diplomatic resolution. This had to be done secretly because the anti-Castro lobby in the US was bureaucratically and politically powerful. I do not believe that the CIA, the military and/or the anti-Castro Cubans did the dirty deed in Dallas but lots of them wanted to kill JFK – and precisely because they saw the Kennedy administration as dragging its feet where Fidel was concerned. Some of this secret diplomacy is discussed in Peter Kornbluth’s very good essay ‘Kennedy’s Last Act: Reaching Out to Cuba’.⁵⁰

Oor Broon

Gordon Brown’s announcement at the beginning of December that he was standing down as an MP evoked a predictable chorus of acclamation from Labour Party supporters and derision from its opponents. None of the comments I read portrayed Brown as an economically illiterate careerist who became leader of the Labour Party by sounding like a leftie to its members while cuddling up to the American embassy and international bankers.⁵¹ As for his economic record as Chancellor of the Exchequer, Robert Henderson clearly lays out some of the dismal details.⁵²

49 <<http://truth-out.org/opinion/item/27201-the-leading-terrorist-stateOpinion%20%3E%20Articles>>

50 <<https://nsarchive.wordpress.com/2013/11/20/kennedys-last-act-reaching-out-to-cuba/>>

51 For the comments of Robert Hopper of the American embassy in London on his use/promotion of Brown see p. 29 of my ‘View from the Bridge’ in *Lobster* 68, under the subhead ‘Quite accessible to the embassy’ at <<http://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/free/lobster68/lob68-view-from-the-bridge.pdf>>.

52 <<http://livinginamadhouse.wordpress.com/2011/10/02/labour-re-writes-the-past-their-economic-management/>>

Following trails

Roger Stone is a former Republican Party pol who, last year, published a book arguing the LBJ's-people-killed-JFK case.⁵³ In the *Daily Mail* recently there was a puff piece for his new book on Nixon, *Watergate et al, Nixon's Secrets*.⁵⁴ In that, this sentence about Gerry Hemming appears, complete with the brackets:

(For the conspiracy-minded, 'Nixon's Secrets' also notes that Hemming had been JFK assassin Lee Harvey Oswald's case officer at a naval air station in Japan, a point of origin for top-secret U-2 spy plane flights.)

This seemed a new claim to me (not that I have taken much notice of Gerry Hemming) and unlikely to be true. I quickly found that the source of this claim was a 1977 article by Victor Marchetti, the fairly senior CIA officer who blew the whistle in 1974 in his much redacted *The Cult of Intelligence*.⁵⁵ With a little more searching I found the original 1977 article.⁵⁶ In fact Marchetti does *not* say that Hemming was Oswald's case officer, merely 'that Hemming was Oswald's Marine sergeant when he was stationed at CIA's U-2 base in Atsugi, Japan'. Stone has – let's be generous – misreported this.⁵⁷

But here's the magic of following these trails. During these searches I came across John Klein's 'The Gerry Patrick Hemming Panel', a transcript of a conversation Hemming had with a quartet of JFK researchers at the 1996 Lancer conference on the assassination.⁵⁸ This was the bit which stood out among Hemming's rambling, coded, at times

53 <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roger_Stone> His book is reviewed at <<http://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/free/lobster66/lob66-man-who-killed-jfk.pdf>>.

54 <<http://tinyurl.com/oavkogd>>

55 See <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_CIA_and_the_Cult_of_Intelligence>.

56 <<http://newcombat.net/Conversation/angleton-helms-memo-re-hunt/>>

57 See the discussion of Hemming at <<http://educationforum.ipbhost.com/index.php?showtopic=>>>. I need not have looked: had Hemming claimed to be LHO's case officer we would have heard about this *ad nauseam*.

58 <http://www.whokilledjfk.net/gerry_patrick_>

unintelligible contributions.

‘ “Why was he [Oswald] sent to the Soviet Union?” Hemming asked, in an apparent non-sequitur. “Did he ever discover that? No. He was sent there to be the fall guy when they dumped the U-2. So they’d get the financing for the satellites.....But he wouldn’t have known that.’

By which Hemming means that Oswald *qua* radar technician was sent to the Soviet Union to be there as the explanation *in Washington* of how the Soviets managed to down the U-2 when Soviet air defences were believed to be incapable of it: *viz.* defector Oswald obviously gave information which enabled them to do it.⁵⁹

The late Air Force Colonel L. Fletcher Prouty claimed that the Gary Powers-piloted U-2 which was apparently shot down by Soviet air defences was sabotaged, to damage President Eisenhower’s attempt to cool the Cold War with the Soviets.⁶⁰ Hemming’s explanation, that it was sabotaged for domestic political ends, to bolster the case for surveillance satellites replacing the U-2, will ring a big bell with anyone who has read a little about the American military-industrial complex: this is how that game is played. And while there is no evidence to support Hemming’s claim about Oswald’s purpose in ‘defecting’, it is an elegant explanation of why Oswald was sent and perhaps explains why so little interest was shown in him by the CIA when he returned; he was apparently never debriefed on his experiences, for example. His role was over.

Who pays this piper?

The *London Review of Books* is the only magazine I still buy. It never occurred to me wonder if it was what it looked like until

⁵⁹ This was argued by U2 pilot Gary Powers in a 1970 article. See <<http://tinyurl.com/nkhdd9r>>.

⁶⁰ On Prouty see <<http://www.prouty.org/>> and <<http://spartacus-educational.com/JFKprouty.htm>>. Even mainstream academics have commented on the ‘coincidence’ of the U2 coming down during the Eisenhower-Kruschev summit.

it ran Andrew O'Hagan's assault on Julian Assange.⁶¹ That was so OTT it felt weird. Then I read an article about the LRB which informed me that the magazine had been subsidized by a family trust of the editor's, thus far to the tune of £27 million.⁶² Despite losing all this money it is paying its contributors 30p a word – over £1000 for a longish article – at least twice what comparable publications are paying.

What was the last cultural/political magazine in this country to pay its writers handsomely, lose a lot of money and survive? *Encounter*, funded by the CIA.

Just saying.....

The USS Liberty story

The assault on the USS Liberty, an American spy ship in the Mediterranean, during the 1967 Six Days War, is another of the big items which the American political system cannot deal with. Nearly as much effort has been expended keeping that off the agenda as has been spent on obscuring JFK's death. The British author, documentary maker and producer, Richard Belfield,⁶³ has made a film about the attack for Al Jazeera which has new evidence showing that the Israelis knew the ship was American when it was attacked.⁶⁴

In the literature on the Liberty incident, one strand has it that US president Johnson authorised the Israeli attack on the Liberty, seeking to create a pretext for a US attack on Egypt. In his 2003 book, *Operation Cyanide*, Peter Hounam, sometime head of the *Sunday Times* 'Insight' team, argues that a nuclear attack was planned and was within minutes of being carried out before a recall order went out to the planes heading for Cairo. That book is now available free in PDF form.⁶⁵

61 <<http://www.lrb.co.uk/v36/n05/andrew-ohagan/ghosting>>

62 <<http://www.theguardian.com/books/2014/mar/09/london-review-books-lrb-best-magazines-world-mary-kay-wilmers>>

63 See <<http://www.imdb.com/name/nm1793763/>> and <<http://unitedagents.co.uk/richard-belfield>>.

64 See <<http://tinyurl.com/kz3c6la>>.

65 At <<https://app.box.com/s/8b408e6999f8799dfd0a/1/251450825/7850144550/1>>.

This is what *isn't* going to happen

'To prevent wholesale global ecological collapse we must radically retrench and close down swathes of unsustainable industries in the North, sustainably industrialize the South, and "converge and contract" around a sustainable mode of life within the framework of a global eco-socialist economy.'⁶⁶

And since this isn't going to happen, why is the eco-left discussing it?

Money talking

American academics Martin Gilens and Benjamin Page report in their essay 'Testing Theories of American Politics: Elites, Interest Groups, and Average Citizens':

'The central point that emerges from our research is that economic elites and organized groups representing business interests have substantial independent impacts on U.S. government policy, while mass-based interest groups and average citizens have little or no independent influence.'⁶⁷

In other words, to quote one of the congressmen filmed by the FBI during the so-called Abscam affair, in American politics 'Money talks and bullshit walks'.⁶⁸

Rarely mentioned these days in the discussions of the new global elite, the oligarchs, or the 1%, is William Domhoff, the American sociologist who, following in the footsteps of C. Wright Mills, was examining their power forty years ago in books such as the 1971 *The Higher Circles*. Mr Domhoff, I am happy to report, is still at it, with a lot of his material available

66 Richard Smith, 'Climate Crisis, the Deindustrialization Imperative and the Jobs vs. Environment Dilemma' at <www.truth-out.org> on 12 November.

67 *Perspectives on Politics*, Volume 12, Issue 03, September 2014, at <<http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayAbstract?fromPage=online&aid=9354310>>

68 See <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Myers_\(politician\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Myers_(politician))>.

on-line.⁶⁹

Uncle Sam and Broon

From somewhere I had acquired the idea that Gordon Brown was a Kennedy assassination buff; but the only source on this appears to be comments made by Sir Alex Ferguson, former manager of Manchester United. Ferguson is a collector of JFK assassination memorabilia. He said:

'I have a copy of JFK's autopsy report. I got a letter from the lad who runs the JFK assassination committee and he sent me the report. I also have a brand new copy of the Warren Report signed by the former president, Gerald Ford, which is the only one he signed, so it's one of a kind.'

'The lad who runs the JFK assassination committee' ???

Ferguson said that he and Brown had 'communicated' on the subject and that Brown had sent him '35 CDs on it'.⁷⁰

The only other item of any relevance is the comment of a school friend of Brown's.

'.....while most of Gordon's schoolfriends cared little about the assassination of JFK, he was devastated. Kenn McLeod, 57, who followed him from Kirkcaldy High to Edinburgh, said: "Gordon saw him as the future and could not believe the future had been so brutally snuffed out. He was shocked and stunned. He kept saying, 'I cannot believe that this has happened'.'" ⁷¹

This is interesting to me because if Brown is a JFK buff this means he has read about the CIA etc.; for as soon as you leave the Warren Commission and begin reading the literature, willy-nilly you begin learning about the Cold War and the role of the intelligence agencies. Which means that

69 <<http://www2.ucsc.edu/whorulesamerica/>> Related to which see Louis Trager, 'How the Government and Private Elites Have Teamed Up for Decades to Astroturf America' at <<http://historynewsnetwork.org/article/156791?>>.

70 <<http://educationforum.ipbhost.com/index.php?showtopic=20195>>

71 <<http://tinyurl.com/nkj8xh3>>

when the young MP Brown was first promoted by the US embassy in London⁷² he knew what he was getting into. He wasn't an innocent abroad.

Julian Assange

Newsweek's website ran a long extract from the new book by Julian Assange.⁷³ In it he meets a senior emissary from Google and then, researching him, discovers that he's also working for the US government's foreign policy apparatus (one of the original private-public partnerships). Assange comments at one point:

'The received wisdom in advanced capitalist societies is that there still exists an organic "civil society sector" in which institutions form autonomously and come together to manifest the interests and will of citizens. The fable has it that the boundaries of this sector are respected by actors from government and the "private sector," leaving a safe space for NGOs and nonprofits to advocate for things like human rights, free speech and accountable government.

This sounds like a great idea. But if it was ever true, it has not been for decades. Since at least the 1970s, authentic actors like unions and churches have folded under a sustained assault by free-market statism, transforming "civil society" into a buyer's market for political factions and corporate interests looking to exert influence at arm's length. The last forty years have seen a huge proliferation of think tanks and political NGOs whose purpose, beneath all the verbiage, is to execute political agendas by proxy.

It is not just obvious neocon front groups like Foreign Policy Initiative. It also includes fatuous Western NGOs like Freedom House, where naïve but well-

⁷² See the comments of embassy official, Robert Hopper, at <http://www.adst.org/Readers/United%20Kingdom.pdf>.

⁷³ <http://www.newsweek.com/assange-google-not-what-it-seems-279447>

meaning career nonprofit workers are twisted in knots by political funding streams, denouncing non-Western human rights violations while keeping local abuses firmly in their blind spots.

The civil society conference circuit — which flies developing-world activists across the globe hundreds of times a year to bless the unholy union between “government and private stakeholders” at geopoliticized events like the “Stockholm Internet Forum”— simply could not exist if it were not blasted with millions of dollars in political funding annually.’

Which tells us that Assange is smart and well informed; which, in turn, probably explains why he fell out with the *Guardian*: serious journalists like to think of themselves as the smartest people in the room and with Assange they wouldn’t have been.

But why is *Newsweek* running Assange’s detailed critique of Google’s work for American foreign policy?

Ben Bradlee and the mainstream media

And so the famous editor of the *Washington Post*, Ben Bradlee died, and the *Guardian*’s current editor, Alan Rusbridger, ran an appreciation of him headed ‘Stamina, bravery, brilliance – the great Ben Bradlee had it all’; with the subhead ‘Bradlee’s editorship of the Washington Post changed American history. The editor of the *Guardian* remembers a man “committed unshakably to principle”’.⁷⁴ Rusbridger then ran the standard left-liberal picture of Bradlee – the hero of Watergate, defender of the free press – and I wonder: is Rusbridger a fool or a knave? My guess would be fool, and that he is simply unaware of the research that has been done on Bradlee, his *milieu*, his work with the CIA, and the other dimensions to

74 <<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/oct/22/ben-bradlee-washington-post-alan-rusbridger>>

'Watergate' not discussed by the major media.⁷⁵

In the beginning

The death of Sir John Hoskyns was announced in October.⁷⁶ Hoskyns was an army officer who became a businessman. A clever alpha male, used to a command structure and intolerant of fools, he looked at Britain in the mid 1970s and saw chaos, stupidity and systems failure; and wanted to do something about it. He sold the business he had created and set about 'saving Britain'. In his memoir ⁷⁷ he offered this list from 1977 of the problems facing Britain:

'trade union obstruction, inflationary expectations, the tendency of the best talent to keep away from manufacturing industry, fiscal distortions, high interest rates, an over-valued pound, stop-go economic management, the low status of engineers, poor industrial design, the anti-enterprise culture, illiterate teenagers.' (p. 11)

Most of this list, viz:

'the tendency of the best talent to keep away from manufacturing industry, high interest rates, an over-valued pound, stop-go economic management, the low status of engineers, poor industrial design'

is a critique of the British economy from the industry side of the City-versus-industry divide, though Hoskyns never puts it like that.

Two years later he was the head of Mrs Thatcher's Policy Unit where he discovered that many of the Conservative politicians for whom he was devising policy were interested in only one item on his list – 'trade union obstruction' – and some

⁷⁵ Bradlee's 'other' biography has recently been pulled together by the excellent John Simkin at <<http://spartacus-educational.com/spartacus-blogURL43.htm>>

⁷⁶ <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/obituaries/11174772/Sir-John-Hoskyns-obituary.html>>

⁷⁷ *Just In Time: inside the Thatcher revolution* (London: Aurum Press, 2000)

were economically illiterate.

Just after the election in May 1979 which saw the first Thatcher government elected, he writes:

'I had been convinced since before the election that the pound was too high. Margaret seemed to be convinced that the "higher the pound, the better for the economy"; and that complaints from industry were invariably "just whingeing". This was to be a continuing and growing disagreement.' (p. 107)

On 18 February 1980 Hoskyns met Anthony Barber, Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Heath government, and at that time Chairman of the Standard Chartered Bank and noted in his diary:

'Barber v. nice indeed but seemed to think that it was the strong Deutschmark that had helped Germany to prosper, rather than the other way round. The more I see of people generally and especially those who run or have run the country, the more amazed I feel. He [Barber] seemed to think that the high pound was going to do the same for us.' (p. 159)

It would be difficult to overstate how striking this is. A prime minister and a former chancellor of the exchequer had simply not understood something almost as basic as increased demand for a good increasing its price. If Mrs Thatcher didn't understand something as simple as this, what could she understand of the economic advice she was getting? Nothing, in effect. And the result, says Hoskyns, was the Thatcher government's economic policies of 79-81: essentially very high interest rates which destroyed a chunk of British exporting manufacturers by driving up the value of the pound. Close to the centre of all this, Hoskyns writes in early 1980:

'We were now almost certain that the Government was getting its monetary policy badly wrong, Only ministers and civil servants devoid of business experience could think that the private sector could adjust to such ham-handed policy without suffering great damage.' (p. 162)

Eventually a leading 'monetarist' economist was brought in to

explain to Mrs Thatcher that they had got it wrong. In his Epilogue Hoskyns writes:

'.....the excessive monetary squeeze of 1979-81 had been an embarrassing error and.....the Government's most difficult and unpopular action in its first term, the 1981 Budget, had been designed to correct it'. (p. 391)

It never seemed to dawn on Hoskyns how curious it was that in British economic history these 'errors' always benefited the City side of the City-versus-industry equation.

There are quagmires and there are quagmires

Among the many subjects I have *not* tried to understand is the events in Central Africa in the mid 1990s, which in this country is generally shorthanded as the Rwanda genocide. Thus I didn't watch the 1 October BBC documentary 'Rwanda's Untold Story', but guessed it challenged the received view that in Rwanda a mass slaughter of one tribe was carried out by members of another. My guess was correct and the programme provoked outrage in some quarters. The programme is defended and the outraged response to it is picked to pieces in Edward Herman and David Petersen's 'The Kagame-Power Lobby's Dishonest Attack on the BBC's Documentary on Rwanda'.⁷⁸ Herman and Petersen have a new book on these events, *Enduring Lies: The Rwandan Genocide in the Propaganda System, 20 Years Later* (The Real News Books, 2014).⁷⁹

78 At <<http://mrzine.monthlyreview.org/2014/hp011114.html>>.

79 Available at <<http://tinyurl.com/lg2tt3m>>.