

## **Holding pattern**

**Garrick Alder**

### **UKIP and the spooks**

**F**urther to earlier entries (see below) concerning the mysterious car accident that befell UKIP leader Nigel Farage in October 2015, and the apparent background to the incident, I received a very interesting e-mail from David Challice, party administrator at UKIP head office. Mr Challice wrote:

'I can assure you that for years we have been aware of the story concerning UKIP having some members of the Security Services in its ranks. The short answer is that the story was probably true and that it would be surprising if SIS (or whoever) had not put some of their people into the Party in order to monitor and report back.

Although I cannot prove it, I am reasonably certain that every phone call made from Head Office is subject to "eavesdropping" from GCHQ. Whether they still bother, I couldn't say.

But when this office opened in 2006, we always assumed that this would be the case. It was no great hardship because if the spooks didn't like [what they heard] then it was their problem, not ours.

I also recall once getting an anonymous e-mail with words to the effect: "I work for GCHQ and you'll understand that I'm not giving my name. You probably know already that our office has ways of monitoring your communications but most of my colleagues agree with you so all power to your elbow. You will not be able to reply to this e-mail." Whether it was a hoax or not I couldn't say, but it certainly had a smack of authenticity.'

When I checked with Mr Challice that this was on the record, he indicated that he was happy with that and added:

'When we hear of undercover Police having long-term relationships with animal rights activists (and even Harold Wilson being bugged by MI5 lest he was a Soviet mole) it is quite clear that the State reserves the right to monitor pressure groups or political parties.

One could even argue that that is part of the State's role, of protecting the British People by gathering information so as not to be caught unawares.'

A fortnight after this exchange with Mr Challice, the Green Party's sole MP, Caroline Lucas, revealed that she and London mayoral candidate Sian Berry had been subject to comprehensive secret surveillance by a police anti-extremism task force, the The National Counter Terrorism Police Operations Centre.<sup>1</sup>

That stalwart friend of the spooks, Professor Anthony Glee, was on hand to defend such activity but observed: 'There is no evidence that Caroline Lucas or Sian Berry have been involved in anything that could cause a threat to national security.'

My own conclusion is that Mr Challice's concerns about state surveillance and penetration of his own party – whose *raison d'être* is procuring Britain's exit from the European Union – seem pragmatic and realistic. I wonder if we have heard the last of this?

## **The van load of votes that vanished**

**J**ust before the General Election of 2015, there was much speculation over a news story about the disappearance of a transit van containing nearly a quarter of a million blank ballot papers.<sup>2</sup> This led almost inevitably to a rash of public

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1 <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-sussex-36171778>> This may be a new name for the National Domestic Extremism and Disorder Intelligence Unit. About which see <<http://www.npcc.police.uk/NationalPolicing/NDEDIU/AboutNDEDIU.aspx>>.

The text of a request to the Met to explain the relationship between the two organisations is at <[https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/national\\_counter\\_terrorism\\_polic](https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/national_counter_terrorism_polic)>

2 <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/election-2015-england-32517842>>

scepticism (given full wind on social media) when post-election stories about anomalous results started to trickle in. The example that is foremost in my mind is the constituency of Bedford Borough, my place of birth and a key Tory-Labour marginal. Here it was reported that a sack containing 5,000 extra votes had appeared, as if out of nowhere, when the count was nearing completion. When this was reported by a local newspaper, it hardly needs adding that scepticism was expressed via social media.<sup>3</sup>

Were the two incidents connected, or related? This seems unlikely, even at first glance.

The ballot papers in the disappearing van were for the Hastings and Eastbourne constituency, and would have carried the names and parties of local candidates, rather than being generic documents that could be used anywhere.

A Freedom of Information Act request submitted to the Electoral Commission soon revealed the prosaic facts. The van was recovered abandoned down a country lane shortly after being reported stolen. The cargo had been opened and examined by the thieves and left at the scene (presumably with considerable disappointment on the part of the malefactors). New ballot papers were produced anyway, in an easily distinguishable design, rendering useless any of the 'tampered' ballots that might have slipped through the net. This information was obviously not significant enough to be reported by the same media who had made such a drama out of the theft.

As for the Bedford Borough story about 'votes suddenly appearing', the mystery was similarly solved by the simple expedient of approaching a press officer; and again the outcome does not match up to the sinister imaginings of credulous readers. A Bedford Borough Council spokesperson said:

'The reporting referred to is not recognised by those managing the count. The safeguards we had in place worked, as it was the count staff themselves that

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<sup>3</sup> <<http://www.bedfordshire-news.co.uk/Misplaced-Bedford-Parliamentary-ballots-create/story-26464136-detail/story.html>>

realised there were further ballots from their allocated batch still to be counted.

The ballots were at all times on the count floor awaiting counting.

The media present at the count were immediately briefed, they understood the situation, and did not think it significant to report.'

As shown by the current investigations into Tory expenses fraud during the 2015 election campaign,<sup>4</sup> there are legitimate reasons to be sceptical about the results. The stories discussed above, however, are not legitimate reasons for scepticism. But no doubt, that van-full of votes will be trundling along the highways and byways of conspiratorial legend for years to come.

## **Mind games of the rich and famous**

The recent excursions of US President Obama had some interesting symbolism. On visiting the UK, Mr Obama presented David Cameron with a leather duffel-bag, an eye-wateringly expensive designer watch, and some tennis gear, including a tube of three tennis balls. Why choose these specific items? It's tempting to see the duffel-bag and watch as jokey references to Mr Cameron's impending retirement from Number 10 ('Pack your bags, it's time to quit') but the tennis equipment is obviously more personal. Mr Cameron is known to be a player but the three balls, however, seem odd as a gift from a President to a Prime Minister – it's not like either man would find tennis balls hard to obtain.

*Lobster* Twitter follower Derek Bryant had the answer: it's a reference to England's King Henry V, who supposedly felt insulted by the French Dauphin's gift of tennis balls and eventually fought him at Agincourt.<sup>5</sup> The anecdote was immortalised by Shakespeare's history of Henry:

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4 See, for example, <<http://www.channel4.com/news/conservative-election-expenses-police-announce-investigation>>.

5 <<http://www.learningtonrealtennis.co.uk/history-of-the-game/the-art-of-tennis/shakespeare-on-tennis.html>>

'We are glad the Dauphin is so pleasant with us;  
His present and your pains we thank you for:  
When we have march'd our rackets to these balls,  
We will, in France, by God's grace, play a set  
Shall strike his father's crown into the hazard.'<sup>6</sup>

The overtones of European discord and British triumph are pretty clear, and this appears to be an instance of what the pre-megalomania Christopher Hitchens astutely identified as 'Anglo-American ironies'.

Moreover, after spending private time with the Royal Family and dining with the Queen, Mr Obama's next destination was a speaking engagement in Hanover, Germany, where he became the first US President to address Hanover's annual technology trade fair.<sup>7</sup>

Again, this choice does not seem a coincidence, considering that the Queen has been dragged into the referendum debate by the Murdoch press, and that the current dynasty is descended from King George I who had been Elector of Hanover until fate put him on the British throne.

Without words, Obama was underlining his expressed desire to see Britain's continued membership of the European Union by playing on a vast cultural repertoire of historical symbolism.

## **The march of IDS: onward, Christian soldiers**

**I**t's worth considering the nexus around the recently-exited Secretary of State at the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), the despicable Iain Duncan Smith ('A Quiet Man, with much to keep quiet about' to adapt an apocryphal

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<sup>6</sup> A Henry V ballad published a century or so after the Shakespeare play specifies that the Dauphin's gift was precisely three tennis balls. See <<http://ebba.english.ucsb.edu/ballad/31071/> transcription>. The ballad's title says 'a ton of tennis balls', despite the three balls being described in the text so presumably that's 'ton' meaning 'tun' as in 'barrel' and a play on the 'tons' of gold that are also mentioned.

<sup>7</sup> <<http://www.dw.com/en/barack-obama-goes-to-hanover-how-they-made-it-happen/a-19211475>>

Churchillism). A political Walter Mitty, Mr Smith embellished his CV, claimed to be able to live on £52 a week, and leaves behind him a magnificent record of poverty, punishment and suicide among social security claimants – to say nothing of a flagship IT program, optimistically referred to as 'Universal Credit', which has passed deadline after deadline with the enthusiasm of a Grand National winner leaping hurdles but with no finishing post in sight.

He also leaves behind him an apparent intra-departmental legacy of hard-line Christians who took root within the DWP during his tenure, whose intertwined careers make for interesting reading.

In office, Mr Smith was either ignorant of the 'groupthink' phenomenon<sup>8</sup> or very shrewdly aware of it. A devout Catholic, he got a fellow Catholic, Steve Webb (Lib Dem), as Pensions Minister during the Coalition. In 2013 Mr Webb boldly announced that the Good Lord himself would vote Lib Dem,<sup>9</sup> although as it turned out practically no other bugger would. He was supported in this extravagant claim by the party president at the time, who sang: 'Liberal Democrats stand alone as the defender of the rights of all human beings.' (This was Tim Farron – where is he now?)

Mr Smith was also buttressed in his DWP hatchetman role by ideas from the Centre for Social Justice, the think tank he founded in 2004, which was stuffed with fellow-believers, notable among whom are Philippa Stroud (Protestant, evangelical), Tim Montgomerie (ditto) and the aptly named Christian Guy (a Protestant of the very niche 'Anglo-Catholic' variety). Ms Stroud ran as an MP in 2010 and didn't get elected, but that didn't stop Mr Smith making her his SpAd for the next five years (she is now back at CSJ). Mr Guy wrote Mr Smith's DWP speeches for him (and now writes David Cameron's), and Mr Montgomerie was Mr Smith's speechwriter for the last two months of his party leadership in 2003.

This is plainly quite a cosy little set-up, and was a

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<sup>8</sup> See, for example, <[http://www.psysr.org/about/pubs\\_resources/groupthink%20overview.htm](http://www.psysr.org/about/pubs_resources/groupthink%20overview.htm)>.

<sup>9</sup> <<http://www.exacteditions.com/read/theuniverse/1-september-2013-36592/2/3/>>

guaranteed feedback loop for ensuring that the 'right' ideas percolated through the DWP. You have to wonder, though, what particular part of the Good News Mr Smith felt he was imparting to the world: I can't recall anything about Jesus causing more suffering to the halt and lame than they already experienced. On the other hand, perhaps it was an unshakeable belief in miracles that inspired Mr Smith to declare that claimants suffering from incurable conditions including Multiple Sclerosis, Parkinson's Disease, and Cystic Fibrosis would soon be fit to return to work and could have their benefits stopped.<sup>10</sup>

But perhaps we need look no further than Matthew 25:29 for Mr Smith's inspiration, and indeed that of the Tory Party at large: 'For to everyone who has will be given, and he will have more: but from him who has not, even what he has will be taken away.' If so, it is to be hoped that Mr Smith's successor at the DWP, Stephen Crabb, is not quite so literal-minded.

Mr Crabb is another devout Christian and has a number of curious links to an evangelical outfit called Christian Action Research and Education (CARE). CARE was originally the Nationwide Festival of Light, founded in 1971 to stem the tide of permissive wickedness and sordid lust supposedly flooding post-60s Britain. Major figures included Mary Whitehouse, Malcolm Muggeridge and Cliff Richard, which tells you everything you need to know. Since then, CARE has managed to carry the torch while at the same time hiding it under a bushel: the body was a major behind-the-scenes force in the introduction of Mrs Thatcher's infamous 'Section 28',<sup>11</sup> and in 2014 was caught privately counselling abortion-seeking women that they risk breast cancer or becoming paedophiles

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<sup>10</sup> <<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/thousands-with-degenerative-conditions-classified-as-fit-to-work-in-future-despite-no-possibility-of-9811910.html>>

<sup>11</sup> An amendment to the Local Government Act 1986, which stated that a local authority 'shall not intentionally promote homosexuality or publish material with the intention of promoting homosexuality' or 'promote the teaching in any maintained school of the acceptability of homosexuality as a pretended family relationship.'

from such terminations.<sup>12</sup>

Mr Crabb was an MP's intern from a CARE scheme during the 1990s and, when his Parliamentary career began, he brought CARE interns into his own office.<sup>13</sup>

Ironically, during the expenses scandal it emerged that Mr Crabb had saved a bob or two by declaring his main place of residence to be the London flat of a Tory backbencher.<sup>14</sup> That backbencher, Daniel Kawczynski, is also a devout Christian and has since come out as bisexual and in a same-sex partnership.<sup>15</sup> At the time of this brave step, Mr Kawczynski was PPS to Welsh Secretary David Jones; and in a further ironic twist, his quondam flatmate Stephen Crabb directly succeeded Mr Jones as Welsh Secretary, before being catapulted into the DWP by Iain Duncan Smith's resignation.<sup>16</sup> It will come as no surprise to learn that Mr Jones is also a devout Christian and has made his feelings on LGBT people abundantly clear.<sup>17</sup>

Is all this happenstance within the ken of mere mortals, or is there some divine plan unfolding? One thing is for sure: there is no suggestion of any impropriety in all of this.

## **More tales from the riverbank**

**O**n 24 March, Associated Press – the body that provides most of the Anglosphere's 'wire' stories – put out a piece that was picked up by several British newspapers (notably the

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12 <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/women/womens-health/10622815/Abortion-scandal-women-told-terminations-increase-chance-of-child-abuse.html>>

13 <<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/stephen-crabb-new-dwp-secretary-criticised-for-links-to-gay-cure-group-a6941281.html>>

14 <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstopics/mps-expenses/5318954/Stephen-Crabb-nominates-fellow-MPs-flat-as-main-home-MPs-expenses.html>>

15 <<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/tory-mp-daniel-kawczynski-comes-out-as-bisexual-8680343.html>>

16 <<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/tory-mp-daniel-kawczynski-comes-out-as-bisexual-8680343.html>>

17 <<http://www.itv.com/news/wales/2013-02-14/face-to-face-david-jones/>>

*Independent* and the *Mail*), quoting a veritable choir of spook panjandrums on the implications of the Brussels bombings.

'The officials,' we learned, included 'European and Iraqi intelligence officials and a French lawmaker' who variously 'described [jihadi training] camps in Syria, Iraq and possibly the former Soviet bloc where attackers are trained to target the West.' <sup>18</sup>

'And possibly' seems a very generous way of putting an insinuation that is not backed up anywhere in the remaining text of the piece; and the fingering of 'the former Soviet bloc' gives the game away nicely.

Scanning through the roll-call of sources cited by AP, the credits come to a screeching halt when we reach mention of 'a European security official who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to discuss briefing material.'

This sounds like MI5 at its usual work, the infinite predictability of which custom cannot make stale. But AP has plainly got this wrong: the officer didn't speak anonymously *because* he couldn't discuss briefing material; he spoke anonymously *and* he couldn't discuss briefing material. As it was capably put by someone with long experience of receiving such briefings: 'By definition, a reporter cannot publicly question information from a deniable briefing. They must swallow it whole, or not at all.' <sup>19</sup>

Any doubt as to the provenance of the briefing is surely dispelled by the officer's reflections on where the West's priorities must lie, which are worth quoting in full.

'The difference is that in 2014, some of these [Islamic State] fighters were only being given a couple weeks of training. Now the strategy has changed. Special units have been set up. The training is longer. And the objective appears to no longer be killing as many people as possible but rather to have as many terror operations as possible, *so the enemy is forced to spend more money*

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<sup>18</sup> <[http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/E/EU\\_BRUSSELS\\_ATTACKS\\_CELLS?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT&CTIME=2016-03-23-15-15-46](http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/E/EU_BRUSSELS_ATTACKS_CELLS?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT&CTIME=2016-03-23-15-15-46)>

<sup>19</sup> <<http://www.newstatesman.com/politics/2007/09/mi6-mi5-intelligence-briefings>>

*or more in manpower.'* (Emphasis in the original.)

Could it merely be coincidence that this was published exactly one week before the start of the new financial year? On the other hand, one might consider that MI5's strategic use of AP to get its propaganda broadcast into as many newsrooms as possible represents shrewd economic thinking, only having to pay for one journalistic lunch instead of several.

More serious than MI5's rattling of the collection box is the question of AP's behaviour as a conduit for propaganda. As Nick Davies put it:

'When the Queen wants to talk to the world, she gives a statement to the Press Association. When the Poet Laureate wants to publish a poem, he files it to the Press Association. Every government department, every major corporation, every police service and health trust and education authority delivers its official announcements to the Press Association. It is the primary conveyor belt along which information reaches national media in Britain.'<sup>20</sup>

As I was putting this latest batch of Holding Pattern together, *The Guardian* ran a serendipitous feature on how Nazi Germany hijacked AP's Berlin offices and stuffed their news desk with Nazi party members in order to exert indirect influence on Allied media sources. This also allowed Hitler's regime to stifle any actual reporting of the darker side of the National Socialist agenda.<sup>21</sup> While it would be outrageous to compare MI5 to the Gestapo, it would be true to observe that if British media have learned nothing since Davies published his book in 2008, they had plainly learned nothing about the use of AP as a propaganda outlet in the 63 preceding years either.

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<sup>20</sup> Nick Davies, *Flat Earth News* (London: Chatto and Windus, 2008) p. 74

<sup>21</sup> <<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/mar/30/associated-press-cooperation-nazis-revealed-germany-harriet-scharnberg>. The German-language source publication for *The Guardian's* piece is provided.

## Farage sabotage II

Further to the earlier entry (below) about UKIP leader Nigel Farage's brush with death on a Dunkirk motorway last autumn, it has since occurred to me that there was a significant amount of context to the accident, which might be considered to shed a rather unpleasant light on events.

In 2001 Norman (Lord) Tebbit wrote in *The Spectator* that he had learned that British spooks had infiltrated UKIP, and called for an official inquiry to establish whether anything untoward had been going on.<sup>22</sup> Lord Tebbit explained his reasoning thus:

'Since Attlee's Labour government helped to create Nato, all three major parties have agreed that membership of that alliance is in the British national interest. Through the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s those opposing membership were regarded as certainly misguided and possibly subversive.

It is possible to draw a parallel with the present agreement of the three major parties that Britain should remain within the European Union – in, of course, our national interest. A party whose sole *raison d'être* is British withdrawal might be regarded as subversive.'

Lord Tebbit had been drawn to think about this subject by a contact who named what he believed were two spies in UKIP's midst who had migrated there from another eurosceptic outfit:

'The conspiracy theory was given a boost when I discovered [...] that during the 1997 election both individuals worked for Jimmy Goldsmith's Referendum party. The first to be employed promptly recruited the other.'

No names, no pack drill, but Lord Tebbit dropped enough clues for shrewd readers to be able to figure out who he had in mind. Likewise, he was canny enough not to refer to any specific incidents of political plotting, but it is easy to unearth

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<sup>22</sup> Lord Tebbit's column was republished online by *Spectator* blogger Douglas Murray in 2013 at <<http://blogs.spectator.co.uk/2013/04/did-mi6-plot-against-ukip/>>.

old on-line news stories that might relate to what he was driving at.

The other significant detail that adds context to Mr Farage's unsettling experience is that of timing. The near-calamity in Dunkirk happened on 21 October 2015, which was one week after the European Union Referendum Bill completed its second reading in the House of Lords (13 October) and one week before it moved into the Committee stage (28 October), which is the 'all over, bar the shouting' point of a law's passage through Parliament.<sup>23</sup>

Lord Tebbit hoped that his suggested inquiry into UKIP-related spookery would find nothing except 'a string of coincidences and some bad political judgements'. I'm sure we can all agree with that sentiment.

## **Self-debunking debunker debunked**

Recently, a doctor of physics called David Grimes got his fifteen minutes of fame by providing the more complacent of the mainstream media with another one of those trendy articles poo-pooing the idea of conspiracies actually existing.

Dr Grimes claimed to have proved with maths that no conspiracy could possibly be kept quiet for long, because – all together now! – Someone Would Talk.<sup>24</sup> He managed this conjectural feat by selecting alleged conspiracies where none has been proven, then calculating how many people would have been in on the secret, then working out how long it would be before a whistleblower broke silence. In effect he takes examples where conspiracies have been suggested – for example moon landings, cancer cures – but not proven, and uses the absence of whistleblowers to 'prove' there was no conspiracy. The divines who conducted surveys of angelic populations upon pinheads did not die in vain.

However, one of the examples Dr Grimes cited in his

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<sup>23</sup> <<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2015-16/europeanunionreferendum/stages.html>>

<sup>24</sup> <<http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0147905>>

smug little refutation was the Tuskegee Experiment, in which African-American syphilis patients were left untreated to record the progress of the disease, which he used as an exemplar of how long a real-life conspiracy would take to unravel.

What Dr Grimes overlooked is the fact that the Tuskegee Experimenters blew the whistle on themselves, by writing up and publishing their research in medical journals in 1964. Despite national exposure, only one medical researcher who noticed it the following year, seemed to be concerned. He spent the next few years trying to attract attention to the scandal and got nowhere. It wasn't until 1972 that an insider blew the whistle and the scandal was 'revealed' in *the Wall Street Journal*.<sup>25</sup>

So, in trying to illustrate the leakiness of conspiracies, Dr Grimes based his arguments on a conspiracy that was actively publicised by the conspirators, and that was noticed and highlighted by a reader almost immediately, but which the media simply refused to touch for nearly a decade.

The phrase 'hoist on your own petard' is woefully inadequate to describe Dr Grimes' mathematical 'triumph'.

## **A question of Trust**

Out there on the internet, a tale about a massive corruption scandal is gathering. But although it glowers on the horizon, it has yet to make landfall. It consists of a string of interlinked websites, the readership of which can be estimated by the fact that the anonymous author's Twitter account covering the scandal has over two million followers, broadcasting regular sensational updates on the latest developments.

This is the Carroll Foundation Maryland Trust. Or it might be another name similar to that, as it does not appear to remain constant. You can google it for yourself. It is a matter of corruption. Maybe embezzlement. Possibly bribery. In any event, the sum linked to this ever-shifting claim is some five

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<sup>25</sup> <<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2015/04/20/dr-irwin-schatz-the-first-lonely-voice-against-infamous-tuskegee-study-dies-at-83/>>

billion dollars, allegedly making it 'the world's biggest' case of tax evasion. Maybe fraud. Perhaps something else.

I've been watching this puzzle grow and grow for over a year, without ever getting close to understanding what it is all about. All we can say with any certainty is that it is a conspiratorial black hole, absorbing new names at a steady rate with an insatiable appetite. Some of those supposedly implicated include high-level politicians, directors of intelligence agencies, top-ranking police officers and an individual called Anthony Clarke, who, to judge by his alleged connections, is the kingpin of a global empire of.....something.

One of the few named individuals in all this is Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe, who is supposedly suppressing dynamite evidence (again, it's not clear why). So I went to the Met press office and asked them what they could tell me about the mysterious Carroll Trust case. Back came the response: 'There is no knowledge of any involvement by the Met in any such investigation.' That seemed to me an oddly-phrased denial, but when I asked for clarification I got the same response word for word.

Another named body is Knight Frank, property assessors of London, who are purportedly conducting an estimation of the assets involved in the phantom scandal. When I approached Knight Frank's press office with a set of questions, I received the reply: 'Sorry, but this is a no comment from us.'

So, is this all some weird kind of hoax? Eventually, I contacted Companies House, figuring that if corporate entities in the UK were involved – as one would infer if (stress 'if') the police and Knight Frank were involved – the official register of British businesses might be able to shed light on the matter. A search of the Companies House website however returned no results that might relate to a 'Carroll Trust' or the enigmatic Anthony Clarke.

But when I contacted the Companies House press office, I got a remarkable-looking response from a very helpful officer.

'I've run a register check for you via our Companies House Direct system and can confirm that Anthony Richard Clarke has 174 company appointments, either

as a director or secretary – including associations with “Carroll” companies. I’m not sure why these weren’t showing up in your initial search.’

The list she sent comprised dozens of companies including The Carroll Holding Corporation Ltd, Carroll Securities and Investments Ltd, the Carroll Breeding Company Ltd, The Carroll Aircraft Corporation Ltd and The Carroll Art Collection Ltd. The names alone give the impression of what one might call with considerable understatement a ‘diversified portfolio’. Mr Clarke resigned all his positions at ‘Carroll’ companies in 1995 and most of them were dissolved in 1997.

Most intriguing in the response from Companies House was the final line in their e-mail: ‘Unfortunately at this time we’re unable to provide an attributable comment in relation to the ongoing investigation.’

Is this, as it appears, an inadvertent confirmation that there is indeed some kind of active investigation into the bewildering Carroll ‘scandal’? Answer came there none.

Finally I approached Anthony Clarke himself, and, as expected, received no reply at all.

So, to sum up: I started out with the basic objective of finding out whether there was any substance to the online claims of an earth-bestriving criminal enterprise and ended up with the answer ‘Your guess is as good as mine’.

## **Coincidence theories**

**W**hat would you think if it were discovered that one man had been on the scene at the Brussels bombings, the Boston Marathon bombings and the 13 November 2015 attacks in Paris? Surely, he would be a prime suspect. Well, no. Nineteen year-old Mormon missionary Mason Wells is that man and he had nothing to do with any of them. He was taking friends to Brussels airport and was injured in the explosions; his mother was running in the Boston Marathon and he was there to cheer her on; and he just happened to be in Paris (but

nowhere near the action) when the city was attacked.<sup>26</sup> A startling coincidence, you might think, but it's not as unusual as all that.

On 14 April 1865 Abraham Lincoln's son, Robert, was invited to the Ford Theatre in Washington DC, to attend a performance with his father, but decided to stay nearby at the White House instead. His father was assassinated at the theatre. In 1881, Robert Lincoln was serving as Secretary of War under president James Garfield. While the two men were talking in a public place, Charles Guiteau shot and mortally wounded Garfield, who collapsed into Lincoln's arms. In 1901, president William McKinley was visiting Buffalo, New York, to see the Pan-American Exposition. He invited Robert Lincoln to attend and Leon Czolgosz shot and killed McKinley, Lincoln was about 100 metres away.<sup>27</sup> There is a further delicious little twist to this mind-boggling set of coincidences in that Edwin Booth – the brother of John Wilkes Booth, Abraham Lincoln's assassin – saved Robert Lincoln's life in 1864 when Lincoln nearly fell under a moving train.<sup>28</sup> You can imagine what the internet would make of all this if it had happened recently rather than a century ago.

In terms of sheer misfortune, however, the all-time prize must go to Tsutomu Yamaguchi, who, in 1945, was visiting Hiroshima on the day the atom bomb was dropped, survived and immediately travelled home to Nagasaki, where he was explaining to a disbelieving colleague how one bomb had destroyed the whole of Hiroshima, when at that precise moment....<sup>29</sup>

With all this in mind, perhaps we ought to be more generous to journalist Hugh Aynesworth, often accused of being a CIA agent involved somehow in the JFK assassination. Mr Aynesworth was a direct eyewitness to Kennedy's murder; immediately found and interviewed Howard Brennan, who was

26 <<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/mar/23/brussels-explosions-mormon-missionary-injured-after-surviving-boston-and-paris-attacks>>

27 <<http://www.biography.com/people/robert-todd-lincoln-20989843#personal-life>>

28 <<http://www.historynet.com/edwin-booth>>

29 <[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9\\_VsNZl6LGU&t=1m6s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_VsNZl6LGU&t=1m6s)>

the sole eyewitness to any alleged gunman; commandeered a police radio and learned that patrolman J .D. Tippit had been shot; rushed to the scene and eventually ended up outside the downtown cinema where Lee Harvey Oswald was arrested, in time to witness him being brought out.<sup>30</sup> Mr Aynesworth's experiences took place within a few square miles over the course of 90 minutes; and, furthermore, it was actually his job to go looking for the action and follow the story. How much less incredible does his experience therefore seem in comparison to the examples cited above?

### **A forgotten chapter in US vote fraud?**

The US Presidential election is still way over the horizon, but already the speculation and concern about vote-rigging is building.

An interesting piece has surfaced on the web, connecting George Bush Snr to a pioneering attempt to fix a presidential election. In 1988 the then Vice-President Bush was running against Bob Dole in the New Hampshire Primary. All the polls said Dole would win, but Bush surged ahead and ultimately took the nomination. The allegation put out by the *Columbus Free Press* is that this was done deliberately by pro-Bush computer engineering.<sup>31</sup>

The allegation that Bush Snr. stole the election with rigged computer balloting has spread far and wide across the internet in the month or so since this piece appeared, with each site repeating (and occasionally embellishing) the original claims.

What's the truth of the matter? At this distance it is hard to tell, but New Hampshire definitely did use electronic voting in that election<sup>32</sup>but 1988 is so long ago that the original rigging claims effectively pre-date the World Wide Web and

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30 <<http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/real-life-stories/journalist-hugh-aynesworth-only-man-2785278>>

31 <<http://columbusfreepress.com/article/new-hampshire-birthplace-electronic-election-theft-0>>

32 Allegations about the reliability of the software have been covered in *Lobster*. See Alfred Mendez, 'Vote-rigging USA' in issue 47.

are impossible to trace online.

What we can say with certainty is that there are some serious and stupid errors in the new batch of allegations. We are told:

'[I]n 1984, Bush's rival President Reagan signed National Security Directive Decision NSDD245. A year later, the *New York Times* explained the details of Reagan's secret directive: "A branch of the National Security Agency is investigating whether a computer program that counted more than one-third of all the votes cast in the United States in 1984 is vulnerable to fraudulent manipulation.'"

Casting Reagan as Bush's rival is a bit of a liberty (although Bush had run against Reagan in the '80 election, he was chosen by the victor to be his Vice-President; in the 1984 election, Bush Snr was still on the same ticket, as Reagan's VP). Further, the claim that the *New York Times* 'explained the details of Reagan's secret directive' looks decidedly dodgy when you discover that 'NSDD 245' was actually a preparatory document created in 1986 and related to the forthcoming Reagan-Gorbachev summit in Reykjavik that October.<sup>33</sup>

There were more than a dozen National Security Directive Decisions from the Reagan White House in 1984, the year specified in the article, but none of them concerned electronic voting in the USA or anywhere else. Further, none of the Reagan NSDDs mentions anything that appears to relate to electronic voting (although to be charitable, three titles are still classified, so it's not possible to be 100 per cent certain).<sup>34</sup>

On the other hand, the report prepared for the National Standards Board by Roy Saltman, referred to in the *Columbus Free Press* story, definitely exists. However, as it was published in March of 1975 it, therefore, can't possibly have made any reference to the New Hampshire Primary of 1988. This fact makes it hard to understand why the story in the

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33 <<http://fas.org/irp/offdocs/nsdd/23-2850a.gif>>

34 <<http://fas.org/irp/offdocs/nsdd/>>

*Columbus Free Press* mentioned it.<sup>35</sup>

Since the authors of the *Columbus Free Press* have behaved in such a cavalier fashion with the few facts that are readily checkable, the reliability of their research has to remain in considerable doubt. We are surely due much, much more of the same as the 2016 presidential draws nigh, and on current form it will take time and effort to sort truth from fiction.

## **Fleet Street declares war on the Labour Party**

'In a desperate attempt to prove that the Labour Party has been taken over by militant elements, the press itself has abandoned all pretence to fairness and has itself now been taken over by obsessively McCarthyite manipulators. Fleet Street has abandoned honest analysis and just invent the stuff as they go along.

Yes, the Labour Party has been taken over. But not by militants. The Labour Party has been taken over by the charlatans of Fleet Street. Unfortunately the press are winning. Collectively the press have never been so dedicated, so single-minded, so determined to bust-up the Labour Party, so determined to manufacture synthetic justification for the creation of a new political party – the SDP.'

Admit it: till the last few words of that quote, you thought it was published recently and were nodding along. The above is from the late Norman Atkinson MP in an October 1982 pamphlet, whose title forms the heading to this section.

Mr Atkinson's broadside is chiefly concerned with the then ongoing character assassination by media of Tony Benn. Even then, though, it must have been clear that this was a lost battle. The fixation upon the SDP is also quixotic, as Atkinson must have been at least privately semi-aware of the SDP's use of the media rather than vice-versa in their attempt to bump off an already staggering Labour Party.

The pamphlet has a certain lavender-scented charm,  
35 <[https://archive.org/stream/effectiveuseofc7568salt\\_0/effectiveuseofc7568salt\\_0\\_djvu.txt](https://archive.org/stream/effectiveuseofc7568salt_0/effectiveuseofc7568salt_0_djvu.txt)>

representing a naïve primer in decoding the propaganda onslaught of the pre-miners' strike 1980s.<sup>36</sup> It includes deconstructions of cartoons by the artistically accomplished but morally rabid Cummings of the *Daily Express*, and curious titbits about how papers supposedly imply criminality by using full names (such as Anthony Wedgwood Benn, of course) in what Atkinson refers to as 'courtroom psychology'.

Two surprising things, however, leaped out at me after I acquired Atkinson's obscure booklet from eBay. The first is the following assertion (p. 14):

'Because Fleet Street expressed pre-Falklands doubts<sup>37</sup> as to whether Margaret Thatcher could deliver a second Tory Government, the possibility of a new pro-European Democratic Alliance was explored immediately following Labour's defeat in 1979 – indeed talks did in fact take place whilst Callaghan was still Prime Minister.'

Is this new? We know that the SDP began with the formation of the Social Democratic Alliance in 1975. And we know that there were coalition talks in 1976 involving Labour MPs Reg Prentice, Brian Walden and John McIntosh and Conservative MPs Julian Amery and Maurice Macmillan.<sup>38</sup> But the extant reports of these talks say that the plan was for a coalition led by Margaret Thatcher. Does Atkinson's reference to a 'pro-European Democratic Alliance' mean that there were other talks? If so, one wonders where Atkinson picked up this information and why it hasn't received more attention.

The second thing that struck me may be mundane but it illuminated a possibility that had never occurred to me. This is the assertion (p. 8) that:

'Newspapers also reflect the direct influence of the various advertising pressure groups. The motor

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<sup>36</sup> The cover of the pamphlet depicts a pipe-smoking figure on horseback carrying a flag emblazoned with the name of the Labour Party. This figure stands face to face with the gun barrel of a tank, similarly emblazoned with the mastheads of every Fleet Street daily.

<sup>37</sup> This is the only mention of Mrs Thatcher's South Atlantic victory in the entire pamphlet!

<sup>38</sup> Discussed in Stephen Haseler, *The Battle for Britain* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1989) p. 60.

manufacturers for instance purchase acres of newspaper space. Motoring correspondents seldom, if ever, report critically on their test-run experience. They will however always report the employer's side on industrial relations.'

Do we detect here the zygote that would eventually blossom into the inexplicable career of the obnoxious Jeremy Clarkson, close associate of David Cameron in the Chipping Norton Set?

### **Tramp the dirt down**

**A** cancer has finally been officially declared free of Cecil Parkinson, darling of Mrs Thatcher. Architect of our wonderful privatised electricity providers, his lasting monument will be the modern London overground station Surrey Quays, a black pun on the name of his unfortunate lover Sarah Keays, that was slipped past him by civil servants during his role as Transport Secretary.

He also leaves behind him an adult daughter by Ms Keays, Flora, whose existence he successfully obscured for the first 18 years of her life with the connivance of the judicial system.

Parkinson's untimely demise (in as much as it happened several decades too late) also robs us of the chance to understand a mysterious chain of events on the periphery of the ongoing Paedogate saga.

In early December 1983, Ms Keays's temporary home with her sister was the target of one of those burglaries, where nothing of value is taken but the intruders exhibit a great deal of interest in private documents. Ms Keays told reporters that during the subsequent police investigation, she was told that Number 10 had ordered a news blackout on the break-in and that the Director of Public Prosecutions had been kept abreast of developments.<sup>39</sup>

Later, Tam Dalyell would raise the matter in Parliament, asking:

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<sup>39</sup> *Daily Mail* 3 December 1983. Thanks to Matthew Black for digging out this clipping.

'How come Downing street was informed immediately about what is purported to be an ordinary burglary in Battersea? I suggest to the DPP that this bizarre burglary was an attempt to snatch back some of the papers of the right hon. Member for Hertsmere which incriminated the Prime Minister for her behaviour over the Falklands.'<sup>40</sup>

The member for Hertsmere was of course Parkinson, and Mr Dalyell obviously had in mind a scenario in which Parkinson, a member of Mrs Thatcher's 1982 'war cabinet', had communicated to Ms Keays documentation related to another of Dalyell's bugbears, thus making this (as matters stood) a conspiracy theory about a conspiracy theory.<sup>41</sup> But things may not have been that simple, as developments a matter of weeks after the Keays burglary suggest.

In March 1984, a 37-year-old called Kenneth O'Dowd was sent down for nine months for assault. He had told the Old Bailey that he had owned pornographic photographs featuring former PM Edward Heath with a woman and a small child and had been framed by the Home Office and maliciously prosecuted as a consequence.

The Court dismissed all this as lies, along with his claim that the incriminating photographs had been stolen from a prison safe while he was in custody. The relevance to current events is striking, as is O'Dowd's suggestion that the police were willing to countenance the disappearance of evidence relating to such events.<sup>42</sup> Strikingly, also in view of current events, the Home Secretary implicated in Mr O'Dowd's allegations of Home Office persecution was none other than Leon Brittan (incumbent 1983-85).

The really eerie part, in view of the alleged burglary of the prison safe, is that while Court proceedings were ongoing,

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40 <<http://www.theyworkforyou.com/debates/?id=1985-11->

41 It is not clear whether Mr Dalyell had in mind the sinking of the Belgrano or the thwarted Peruvian Peace Plan. It may even have been both.

42 <<https://news.google.com/newspapers?id=-MBAAAAAIBAJ&sjid=2qUMAAAAIBAJ&pg=2500,3320418&dq=edward+heath+with+man+and+woman+pictures&hl=en>>

Cecil Parkinson decided to turn up and sit in the public gallery to oversee proceedings.<sup>43</sup> Parkinson had no role in events inside or outside the courtroom and as a devout Thatcherite had little or no time for Heath. It's difficult to resist the inference that some obscure silent signalling was taking place and that the two burglaries (one real, one alleged) were connected. What was going on here, exactly?

## **Told you so**

January 2016 saw the publication of a scientific paper supporting my hypothesis (floated in *Lobster* 69) that carbon emissions are staving off the advent of the next ice age (or rather prolonging the current interstadial within an ongoing ice age). This will not have gone unnoticed by Big Oil, and we can confidently expect them to capitalise on it in the not-too-distant future.<sup>44</sup>

## **Blissful ignorance**

Also in *Lobster* 69 I scornfully commented on a CIA historian's apparent ignorance of Operation Mockingbird and asked: 'Who was meant to be taken in by this baloney?'

Now we know. Turns out that the CIA practises something it calls 'eyewash', which in plain language is disinformation propagated to its own employees to assist in internal compartmentalisation. This drives a coach and horses through the notion that any internal CIA documentation should be taken at face value. The apparent answer to my question is that it was wide-eyed and well-intentioned CIA employees of the post-Mockingbird era who were taken in. They were kept in the dark about media manipulation....for the good of themselves, the public and (of course) National

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43 <<https://youtu.be/bYRbF46FJOo>>

44 <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-35307800>>

Security.<sup>45</sup>

## **The Toynbee Prize**

'By nature, Labour people are optimists, believing in progress, often against the odds, trusting in the human ability to improve our condition and shape society well, and not just for the sharp-elbowed. *Optimism is in our DNA. I have always found some political project I can believe will work.*' (Emphasis supplied)

Thus wrote Polly Toynbee, Limehouse Declaration signatory and failed SDP parliamentary candidate in the class of '83 that sank the Foot incarnation of the Labour Party. She composed these words for a December 2015 column in *The Guardian*, a paper that has endorsed the Liberals, then SDP, then Liberal Democrats at five of the last 10 General Elections (including both of the 1974 elections and the election in which Ms Toynbee stood). It is a harshly critical column, written with the unmistakable aim of undermining Jeremy Corbyn's leadership of the Labour Party on the occasion of his 100th day in the role.

Has there been a more nakedly cynical piece of journalistic misrepresentation at *The Guardian* during the last decade than that represented by her drawing a veil over trying to scupper the Labour Party by joining the SDP and the calculated juxtaposition of the two sentences italicised in the above quote?

## ***L'Assassinat de Farage?***

The media recently made fun of UKIP leader Nigel Farage, who claimed he had nearly fallen victim to an apparent instance of vehicle sabotage in which a wheel fell off his Volvo while travelling on a road in Dunkirk, France, in October 2015. But all

<sup>45</sup> <[https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/eyewash-how-the-cia-deceives-its-own-workforce-about-operations/2016/01/31/c00f5a78-c53d-11e5-9693-933a4d31bcc8\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/eyewash-how-the-cia-deceives-its-own-workforce-about-operations/2016/01/31/c00f5a78-c53d-11e5-9693-933a4d31bcc8_story.html)>

was not as it might seem.

Mr Farage told the *Mail on Sunday* (3 January 2016) that a subsequent examination showed that the nuts on all four wheels were loose:

'The French police and mechanics looked at it but I have made no formal complaint. The mechanics were absolutely certain of [foul play] but I have decided to take no further action.'

Asked who he thought might have done such a thing, he said:

'I haven't got a clue. Quite frankly, the way my life's been over the past two and a half years, nothing surprises me.'

In what appeared to be an instance of poetic irony, the media soon decided that the wheels had fallen off his story when it was noticed that in October 2010 Volvo had issued a recall notice for some of its cars due to a manufacturing fault that meant wheel nuts could become loose.<sup>46</sup> Case closed, thought many in the media;<sup>47</sup> but within days Volvo announced that the registration of Mr Farage's car meant it was not in fact one of the models subject to recall.<sup>48</sup>

This was soon followed by an English-language story in French newspaper *Libération*, purporting to explode the whole story and accusing Mr Farage of dishonesty.<sup>49</sup> *Libération* spoke to the mechanic who attended Mr Farage's car, Philippe Marquis, who said he 'had never seen anything like it [and] found it weird'.

M. Marquis speaks no English and Mr Farage speaks no French, meaning the potential for misunderstanding was huge.

46 <<https://www.dft.gov.uk/vosa/apps/recalls/searches/expand.asp?uniqueID=F0E0D8B14EAE38C0802577C000465F45&freeText=Blank&tx>>

47 The normally straight-bat blog Zelo Street, for example, still carries a story accusing Mr Farage of a hoax over the recall notice, even though this debunking has now been itself debunked. See <<http://zelo-street.blogspot.co.uk/2016/01/farage-assassination-hoax-busted.html>>.

48 <[http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/jan/04/farages-car-was-not-among-those-recalled-says-volvo?CMP=tw\\_t\\_gu](http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/jan/04/farages-car-was-not-among-those-recalled-says-volvo?CMP=tw_t_gu)>

49 <[http://www.liberation.fr/desintox/2016/01/05/farage-s-assassination-plot-no-witnesses-vouch-for-it\\_1424522](http://www.liberation.fr/desintox/2016/01/05/farage-s-assassination-plot-no-witnesses-vouch-for-it_1424522)>

M. Marquis told *Libération* that he did not call the police and thought the nuts 'had been wrongly screwed after another repair'. Whether or not that accurately reflected his beliefs at the time, this means that the police were called by Mr Farage himself, a step which one does not make lightly. The gendarmes duly arrived but according to an anonymous source (the French police are not officially allowed to speak to the press) 'they did not examine the car, because no one was hurt'. Consequently, 'their intervention report only mentions a repair service: "if they had noticed a sabotage, they would have had to open an investigation".' From this *Libération* concludes:

'Maybe Nigel Farage suspects he has been the victim of a failed assassination attempt, but he's clearly dishonest when he says this assumption is based on what the mechanics and the police allegedly told him. Not only did they not say anything, but they did not even suspect a thing.'

This is clearly overstating the case against Mr Farage's version of events. We're left with a situation in which Mr Farage sought a mechanic's attention first of all, then something made him so concerned that he called the police, and when the police arrived they didn't even examine the vehicle, based on a procedural technicality, and simply filed a brief 'NFA' report. What the officers might have said to Mr Farage when they attended is another matter entirely.

Allowing for some inevitable blurring of Mr Farage's memory<sup>50</sup> the established facts actually tend to support his account, or at least gel with it, rather than undermine it. I approached Mr Farage via UKIP's press office to see whether he cared to comment, but evidently he now wishes to move on from his bruising encounter with a sceptical press and no comment was forthcoming.

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<sup>50</sup> Soon after publication, Mr Farage found himself tangled in a web of contradictions and inaccuracies, and some of those were media-engineered. For example, he was forced to deny that he had told the *Mail on Sunday* that this was an assassination attempt. This made it look like he was retracting his story, but he was stating quite correctly that he had never told the *Mail on Sunday* any such thing.

It could be coincidence, of course, but I cannot help but consider this incident in the light of Mr Farage's near-fatal crash in a light aircraft in 2010, following which his pilot Justin Adams was convicted of making threats to kill him. Mr Adams, who rejected the findings of the ensuing Air Accident Investigation,<sup>51</sup> was found dead at home in 2013. An Inquest was opened and adjourned immediately and to judge by the total absence of coverage on the internet, it appears never to have concluded.<sup>52</sup>

Meanwhile, the basic fact of the entire situation remains that someone loosened the nuts on the wheels of Mr Farage's car, and that someone has not been identified.

## **The Prince and the pretenders**

Following up a hunch sparked by my previous entry on the subject of doppelgangers (below), I contacted a well-known lookalikes agency to ask whether any of their doubles had ever been approached to do stand-in work for a politician or a government official. As I had feared, the agency responded: 'If any of our lookalikes had been employed in such a way then I am sure that we would have had to sign the Official Secrets Act so couldn't tell you!'

However, this was followed by a surprising admission:

'The only time this has happened to our knowledge is when four Prince Harry lookalikes were hired during summer 2014 to attend a music festival which HRH was also going to be at so ostensibly to keep the attention away from him.

When the booking was made we were told it was for a "moving art installation". We didn't find out until afterwards what the boys were actually there for!'

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51 <[https://assets.digital.cabinet-office.gov.uk/media/5422ec1ce5274a13140000e7/PZL-104\\_Wilga\\_35A\\_\\_G-BWDF\\_11-2010.pdf](https://assets.digital.cabinet-office.gov.uk/media/5422ec1ce5274a13140000e7/PZL-104_Wilga_35A__G-BWDF_11-2010.pdf)>

52 <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/nigel-farage/11470835/The-strange-sad-fate-of-Nigel-Farages-crash-pilot.html>>

If someone out there knows whether and how the Inquest concluded, please get in touch.

The event in question was the Secret Garden Party, an annual music festival that takes place on private land in Huntingdonshire, where Harry Wales would have mingled with some 20,000 partygoers.

The Prince's attendance at the festival somehow leaked to the press, as one might expect, and photographs were duly snatched showing the playboy Prince having, as the tabloids might have it, a 'Wales of a time'. But in view of the lookalikes agency's revelation, one has to wonder whether any of the photographs actually show Harry at all.

Sorting through the online coverage of the event, it appears to show the plainclothes Prince wearing three different hats, varying shirts and at least two different pairs of sunglasses.<sup>53</sup>

It's hard to believe that this decoying scheme was allowed to go ahead without clearance from Clarence House and the Metropolitan Police's Royalty Protection Branch, SO14, who have expressed concerns over Harry's security in the past.<sup>54</sup> But the Secret Garden Party's press agent told me:

'The reality is no-one liaised with Clarence House regarding the lookalikes. The idea was conceived by the Secret Garden Party art director and the term "moving art installation," is not how we would describe anything.'

Sensing something of a conflict in the accounts given by the lookalikes agency and the Garden Party organisers, I went to the Prince's household spokespeople to get clarification. I was told that since the party was not an official engagement, it was part of the Prince's private life and since it was also a security matter, no comment would be forthcoming.

I also approached the Metropolitan Police. At the time of

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<sup>53</sup> The best way to get these pictures side-by-side for comparison is to do a simple google image search on the words 'Prince Harry, Secret Garden Party.' My suspicion falls mainly upon the 'Harry' spotted doing a robot dance while wearing a hat emblazoned with a Union Jack.

I shall leave analysis of the 'Prince's' physical build and his nose and cheekbones to people with greater credentials than me in the field of forensic anthropology.

<sup>54</sup> <<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-94775/Our-dilemma-Harrys-minders.html>>

publication, no response had been received.

Nevertheless, there it is: it is now a historical fact that a member of the Royal Family has been replaced by doppelgangers in public and no-one noticed.

## **Tales from the riverbank**

**At *Daily Mail*** headquarters editor Paul Dacre's proud organ has spooks queuing up with tip-offs and leads. And boy, are Dacre's hacks pleased with themselves about the fact. However, they should remember that – even though it's all on expenses – supping with the Devil demands the use of a very long spoon.

Twice in as many months, an explicitly spook-sourced story has been published with all the evident thrill that workaday reporters get from being in the same room as a genuine spy. Most recently (18 December 2015), a story about the kidnapping of Colonel Gaddafi's son Hannibal appeared in the online edition with a house-style blue 'info box' near the end, in which we learned that a 'security source' had informed the *Mail* that a former Libyan MP had been arrested in connection with the offence.<sup>55</sup> But that's the only comprehensible point in a confusing muddle of information that bears all the marks of a 'stake' story, in which the author does not understand their own material but knows it needs to be published now in order to be followed-up and clarified if and when things become clearer.

The previous month, a far more alarming story had appeared while Europe was still reeling from the attacks on Paris. On 16 November the *Mail* breathlessly reported an exclusive concerning a 'decrypted message from ISIS' instructing British jihadis to lay low and await orders.<sup>56</sup> This is

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55 <<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3366208/From-prisoners-tortured-riding-pedalo-wife-kids-photographs-discovered-iPad-belonging-Colonel-Gaddafi-s-son-Hannibal-kidnapped-taken-Lebanon.html>>

56 <<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3327809/ISIS-s-chilling-new-tactic-Terror-group-tells-British-based-fanatics-stay-hidden-UK-wait-signal-attack.html#ixzz3umMSKc2Z>>

odd, because as far as anyone understands them at all, ISIS works on a 'franchise' basis similar to al-Qaeda. And in any case, why issue an order to lie low and await orders, if that's what British jihadis supposedly do every day anyway? Why not just, well, let them wait?

And then, halfway through the *Mail's* yarn, the following sentence casts doubt upon all previous assertions:

'The Mail Investigations Unit has been shown messages sent to a radicalised individual in the UK over the past two weeks encouraging would-be fighters to launch terror attacks in Britain.'

'Shown'. Not 'provided with'. Not 'handed'. 'Shown'.

This is, of course, the standard MO with the dissemination of disinformation: dummy up a document containing the material you want circulated, and show it to an eager reporter – but never let it leave your hands.

*The Guardian's* inestimable Nick Davies warned about British media's increasing vulnerability to such skulduggery, in the age of 'churnalism', in his book *Flat Earth News*.

*Mail Online* has the greatest market penetration of any British newspaper and is an international phenomenon. It would appear that the paper's profile and reach is now of use for purposes other than telling readers whether it is coffee or red wine that can cure 'old knees' and 'cankles' in any given week.

## **Masonic boom**

**W**ho doesn't love a conspiracy theory starring the Freemasons? November 2015 saw the release of a large batch of Masonic material, covering two hundred years of British history, to the genealogy website ancestry.com. What it revealed was pretty startling and something that no-one had ever suggested before: what appears to have been a Masonic stitch-up of the inquiry into the 1912 sinking of the RMS Titanic. Inquiry chairman Lord Mersey exonerated the Board of Trade, which had been blamed for inadequate lifeboat

regulations. Lord Mersey was a Freemason, and so was Board of Trade president Sydney Buxton. Furthermore, two of the inquiry's engineering experts also happened to be on the square. As was Lord Pirrie, who was not only chairman of the Harland and Wolff shipyard in Belfast, where Titanic was built and launched, but a director of White Star shipping's parent company.

As the redoubtable Chris Mullin put it when the Masonic archive news emerged: 'Whatever the truth of the matter, it doesn't look good.'<sup>57</sup>

Indeed not. So why have the Masonic dimensions of the JFK assassination cover-up never attracted similar attention?

The Warren Commission's eponymous chief justice (Earl Warren) was a high-ranking Freemason (in charge of all Masonic Lodges in California),<sup>58</sup> as was Commission member and future US president Gerald Ford.<sup>59</sup> So was junior counsel Arlen Specter, who invented the infamous 'magic bullet' theory.<sup>60</sup> At the top of the tree were JFK's successor, Freemason Lyndon Johnson,<sup>61</sup> and his good friend and fellow Freemason J. Edgar Hoover,<sup>62</sup> who led the FBI's alleged 'investigation' into the killing.

Those with esoteric inclinations will be intrigued to learn that Dealey Plaza, the location of JFK's murder, was previously commemorated as being the site of the first Masonic temple raised in Dallas.<sup>63</sup>

## **Coincidence theories**

57 <<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/nov/25/freemasonry-titanic-heyday-bloody-sunday-duke-wellington-royalty>>

58 <<https://www.createspace.com/4251856>>

59 <[araratshrine.com/history/famous/ford/](http://araratshrine.com/history/famous/ford/)> Johnson had only met (the previously obscure) Ford once before appointing him to the Warren Commission. See <<http://millercenter.org/presidentialclassroom/exhibits/lbj-appoints-gerald-ford-to-the-warren-commission>>.

60 <[http://www.skirret.com/papers/behind\\_the\\_lodge\\_door.html](http://www.skirret.com/papers/behind_the_lodge_door.html)>

61 <<http://www.pagrandlodge.org/mlam/presidents/>>

62 <[http://freemasonry.bcy.ca/biography/hover\\_j/hover\\_j.html](http://freemasonry.bcy.ca/biography/hover_j/hover_j.html)>

63 On which see <[http://3.bp.blogspot.com/\\_ZfK8TTOxJzk/SjXMRujBU3I/AAAAAAAAAQw/6XIC3b1enK0/s320/dsign.jpg](http://3.bp.blogspot.com/_ZfK8TTOxJzk/SjXMRujBU3I/AAAAAAAAAQw/6XIC3b1enK0/s320/dsign.jpg)>

**A**fter the outbreak of attacks in Paris on 13 November, a few suspicious minds were focused on what, with hindsight, appeared to be two 'omens'.

The first was the fact that a video game entitled *Battlefield 3* had been released in 2011, the action in which occurs against the backdrop of a terrorist attack on Paris, taking place on 13 November.<sup>64</sup> Although the year in which the game is set was 2014, it is nevertheless a really remarkable coincidence. It is alarming to think that there are people out there who really believe the New World Order (or whoever) is leaking its plans in the form of mass-market computer software.

The other was perhaps even more remarkable. Two days before the attacks, a twitter account called @PZbooks broadcast the message: 'BREAKING: Death toll from Paris terror attack rises to at least 120 with 270 others injured.'

It looked incredibly accurate (the final toll was 130 dead and 368 injured) but it was a fluke, in the form of a randomly generated tweet created by a 'bot' that mashed together a headline dating from the Charlie Hebdo attack of January 2015 and another relating to an attack on a Nigerian mosque.<sup>65</sup>

Proof, yet again, of the adage that fiction is at a disadvantage compared to truth, because fiction has to be believable.

## **Monarchical manoeuvres**

**A**nd so to something that definitely isn't a coincidence. In early December the Commission on Religion and Belief in British Public Life issued its monumental slab of a report.<sup>66</sup> Chaired by Baroness Butler-Sloss and set up in 2013, the Commission panel included former Archbishop of Canterbury

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64 <<http://www.albawaba.com/loop/conspiracy-theorists-think-video-game-proves-paris-attack-was-hoax-768544>>

65 <<http://www.albawaba.com/loop/debunked-how-twitter-bot-predicted-paris-attacks-768624>>

66 <<https://corablivingwithdifference.files.wordpress.com/2015/12/living-with-difference-community-diversity-and-the-common-good.pdf>>

Rowan Williams.<sup>67</sup>

Among the Commission's conclusions was the recommendation that the Coronation Oath be altered to reflect the religious complexity of modern Britain.

At present, the Oath – set out in antiquity by the Coronation Oath Act (1688) and sworn by William and Mary after the Glorious Revolution deposed James II – binds the Monarch to upholding the Church of England as Supreme Governor.<sup>68</sup> The Commission's recommendation will require legislation to be introduced sooner rather than later, and probably under the current administration.

Thus it seems that Prince Charles is finally to get his way with a title equivalent to 'Defender of Faith' when he succeeds to the throne. (As opposed to 'Defender of *the* Faith' – that is the 'F.D.' on British coins, standing for *Fidei Defensor*.)<sup>69</sup>

All this is taking place against the backdrop of the Queen, who is nearly 90, ceding some of her public role to the heir apparent.

The Establishment is clearing the way for a major constitutional fix, which will be conducted at glacial pace and piecemeal so that no-one really notices. But it has to be done, not least because as a divorced man married to a divorced woman with a still-living former husband, Charles is currently in no fit state to take the Oath (a doctrinal problem which obviously promises that yet another amendment is to appear). And that's without considering the question of whether his current marriage is legally valid in the first place, which the Cameron administration pledged to address but has not yet done.<sup>70</sup>

Should we care? That's almost beside the point. The fact is that the Establishment cares very much and will gently

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67 It's interesting that Lady Butler-Sloss briefly became chair of the ongoing child abuse inquiry while this Commission was still sitting, a potential conflict of interest that no-one even noticed

68 <<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/aep/WillandMar/1/6/section/II>>

69 Given that the Archbishop of Canterbury is subordinate to the Monarch, and Rowan Williams had initially disapproved of Charles's hopes, one wonders what pressures were brought to bear on Williams.

70 See, for example, <<http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN03417/SN03417.pdf>>

rearrange the apples now rather than see the whole cart upset unexpectedly in the future. The Monarchy plays for keeps.

### **They're baaaaack...**

**B**y his own account, Tory Action was a network set-up by the late George Kennedy Young in 1974 in Conservative Party constituencies to support Margaret Thatcher's bid for the leadership of the Party.<sup>71</sup> Officially deceased as of the Labour victory in 1997, the group has reappeared under Cameron's second ministry (the first all-Tory government of the century). They have a thriving little Yahoo! Group, founded in 2005 in apparent readiness for the call to arms, and now vigorously active with (at the time of writing) some 260 new messages posted in just seven days.<sup>72</sup>

Thing is, the group is invitation only, so it's impossible to read what they're saying to each other. Which is a pity as George Kennedy Young is currently in the news in connection with the slowly unfolding Paedogate scandal, albeit in a thoroughly opaque and mysterious manner at present.<sup>73</sup>

### **The Prince, the Palace, and Paedogate**

**I**n early October Peter Ball was sent down for what appears to have been a lifelong career of sexual offending, conducted in his capacity as a Bishop in the Church of England.

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<sup>71</sup> 'The final testimony of George Kennedy Young' in *Lobster* 19. This is Young's self-penned obituary. Tory Action was more or less co-terminous with his Unison Group for Action, which was engaged in the anti-Labour 'private armies' episode of 1974.

<sup>72</sup> <[https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/Tory\\_Action/info](https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/Tory_Action/info)>

<sup>73</sup> <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/law-and-order/11975799/Former-MI6-deputy-director-George-Kennedy-Young-is-key-figure-in-missing-child-abuse-dossier-says-MP.html>>

Interestingly, or perhaps coincidentally, Kennedy Young was vice-chief of MI6, precisely the position that has been attributed to the late Sir Peter Hayman, whose role in Paedogate is well-known. But there is no evidence that Hayman actually was vice-chief (not deputy director, as the major media have it) of MI6.

At his trial it emerged that when he was first nicked in the 1990s a veritable cavalcade of the Great and the Good were willing to act as character witnesses for him, including a senior judge, cabinet ministers and a number of public school headmasters.

The result was that despite clear and convincing evidence of repeat sexual offending against young men (some underage even by today's benchmark), Ball was let off with a caution rather than a conviction.

The best summation of the nation's indignation at this state of affairs was produced by *the Guardian* (for all its faults, still a world-class paper when it bothers), which boldly called it 'A true conspiracy of silence'.<sup>74</sup>

This is, perhaps, slightly unfair. There's no suggestion (that I'm aware of) that any of those willing to attest to Ball's saintliness had any inkling of his guilt. Until the very last years of the last century, when the *News of the World's* watershed anti-paedophile campaign opened the floodgates to the ongoing torrents of misery and horror, the 1990s were as ignorant of the scale of child abuse as the decades before them. It was all too easy back then – and for some, is still now – to dismiss allegations of sex abuse as frivolous, delusional, or malicious. Ball's friends acted as your friends or mine might react in a similar situation: they rallied round to speak up for him in good faith.

The true scandal here was that the police allowed themselves to be swayed by completely extra-evidential matters in the form of the social standing and prestige of Ball's supporters. It is another vivid and telling example, if it were needed, of the way in which the police unwittingly function as a tool of class distinction: sordid crimes are for scum, not the High and Mighty. Or were at the time, at any rate.

Among Ball's cheerleaders, the court heard, was a member of the Royal Family. No names, no pack drill, but every scrap of circumstantial evidence indicated that it was Ball's old

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<sup>74</sup> <<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/oct/07/the-guardian-view-on-the-peter-ball-abuse-case-a-true-conspiracy-of-silence>>.

pal (and sometime landlord) the Prince of Wales.<sup>75</sup>

Embarrassing.

What was clearly needed was something to take the heat off His Royal Highness. And before the week was out, it was forthcoming. Prince Charles's old friend (and former Equerry) Sir Nicholas Soames rose ponderously in the House of Commons to denounce deputy Labour leader Tom Watson for 'vilely traducing' Sir Nicholas's friend the late Lord Brittan (whom Watson had very prominently fingered earlier this year).<sup>76</sup> Immediately media attention switched to Mr Watson ('the beleaguered Tom Watson', as we should call him) without dropping the Paedogate 'ball' for an instant, and he was put through the media mangle for about a fortnight, by which time HRH's embarrassment was forgotten.

As Marcia Faulkender remarked to Barry Penrose and Roger Courtiour, when discussing the (for the Palace) convenient timing of Wilson's 1976 resignation announcement, the Palace 'really knows how to operate'.

Mr Watson should perhaps start checking over his shoulder. The fate of the last person publicly set upon by Sir Nicholas at the Palace's apparent bidding does not set a good precedent. In 2008 Princess Diana's inquest heard a witness testify that in 1997 the Prince of Wales's ex-wife received a private telephone call from her public critic, Sir Nicholas Soames, warning her darkly that 'accidents can happen'.

No doubt an unfortunate misunderstanding.

## **Profumo performer**

**A** recently declassified memo, recording a telephone call made from CIA Director John McCone to Secretary of State Dean Rusk in July 1963, gives us a hitherto unavailable glimpse of the web that surrounded the hapless Stephen Ward as the Profumo affair came to a head.<sup>77</sup>

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75 <<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3263475/Bishop-abused-young-priests-naked-prayers-got-away-two-decades.html>>

76 <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-QHT1pgtEUc>>

77 <<http://fas.org/irp/eprint/mccone-repro.pdf>>

This aspect of their discussion was a prelude to the main business, an extravagant-sounding claim that the CIA had reproductions of Soviet satellite spy photographs. The key word appears to be 'reproductions' as opposed to 'copies'. This is the only reason the memo has attracted any attention in the States.

The Profumo remarks begin:

'[Rusk] said we ought to keep our eyes on the Profumo business – has impression the full story is not available to us. [Rusk] said Fairbanks filed a report on this a while back so [McCone] might want to have his people check on this. Things will come out at the trial that will affect the govt.'

It's unclear whether the US or UK 'govt.' is being referred to here; but either way Rusk clearly underestimated the British capacity for cover-up. The affair's US dimension was successfully hidden for decades.

'Fairbanks' can only be Stephen Ward's good friend and fellow orgy enthusiast, actor Douglas Fairbanks Jr. A former Naval Intelligence officer, Fairbanks had filed a report with the FBI office in London just weeks before, who subsequently reported to FBI director J Edgar Hoover on 19 June 1963:<sup>78</sup>

'Fairbanks Jnr has advised he was patient [of] Dr Ward and met [Keeler] on several occasions. Fairbanks knows Ward as a procurer states Ward will be charged with abortion and blackmail. Profumo is blackmail victim. Fairbanks [said] Ward running sex den and [Keeler] involved. Characterized Ward as Left-wing fellow traveller. According to Fairbanks, [Redacted] has long list of "customers" which involves many members of the House of Lords.'

Navy suspects Fairbanks may be more closely involved with [Redacted] than he had indicated.'

We might reasonably infer that the redacted person with the long list of customers is hooker/madame Mariella Novotny,

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78 <<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1297378/KGB-did-bug-Profumo-Keeler-pillow-talk-steal-nuclear-secrets.html#ixzz3rJ8g1Zdt>>

who was a regular sexual partner of Fairbanks and kept another list of 'customers' (from the UN) that she claimed in 1978 she would publish in her autobiography, along with details of a 'plot to discredit Jack Kennedy'. If Novotny is the redacted person, it shows exactly how sensitive the whole business still is, even after 50 years. [Novotny was found dead in her bed in 1983, an apparent drugs overdose.]

So, Rusk passed the FBI's intelligence to the CIA director, who used it to do.....precisely nothing. The memo indicates that McCone's only reaction was to change the subject of the conversation to the then recently disappeared Kim Philby.

The CIA is the 'dog that didn't bark' in the Profumo affair, a scandal which sucked many other intelligence agencies into its festering orbit; but here we have a document showing that the CIA director himself was privy to intelligence from the highest sources and was actively urged to investigate by the Kennedy administration.

## **Patriarchy and its discontents**

**I**t was good to see that *the Guardian* continues to peddle the myth of Suffragette martyrs, the complete lack of evidence be damned.<sup>79</sup> This time, it was in the form of a headline to a column by Anne Perkins, demanding: 'Did the Suffragettes die for this?'<sup>80</sup> This is only a shade away from Tony Hancock's question about Magna Carta,<sup>81</sup> and since it was not a question raised by Ms Perkins' piece, it was obviously the work of a sub-editor who thought s/he (probably he) knew best. Again, it shows how easily propaganda becomes such accepted wisdom that regurgitating it without thought

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79 See this column in *Lobster* 69.

80 <<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/oct/07/female-tory-mps-cameron-arm-candy-suffragettes>>

81 'Does Magna Carta mean nothing to you? Did she die in vain? That brave Hungarian peasant girl who forced King John to sign the pledge at Runnymede and close the boozers at half past ten? Is all this to be forgotten?' From the Hancock's Half Hour episode titled 'Twelve Angry Men'.

becomes almost automatic.

## **The pre-statutory intelligence services**

**A** historian from Norfolk appears to have put together an impressive account of the rise of the British Secret Service under William Pitt in the 18th Century. Frustratingly, no footnotes and only a partial bibliography are given, but it appears to be lucid, reasoned and measured, and 'rings true'.

Part one briefly summarises the rise of the service under Elizabeth I, its augmentation and expansion under Cromwell's Protectorate and its subsequent decline. The narrative then widens greatly to embrace and detail its revival when Britain's historical rivalry with France began to take shape. (From somewhere the author has even managed to find the text of the Secret Service oath of the time.)<sup>82</sup>

Part two looks at the state's clampdown on radicals and sedition, with particular focus on the uneasy period covering the French and American revolutions. It also vindicates the CIA's in-house historian, cited in this column in *Lobster* 69, who claimed that George III was an active intriguer at the centre of the web. We can assume that this situation continued after his removal from the throne.<sup>83</sup>

Part three charts the rise of the Aliens Office, and how it developed a system of turning and exploiting foreign nationals as informers and agents provocateur. It also sheds light on how the ominous republican groundswell at home and the Napoleonic regime abroad were destabilised to differing degrees of effectiveness.<sup>84</sup>

Aficionados of spook financial finagling will derive grim pleasure from one passage in particular:

'It was up to ambassadors and other diplomats abroad, and a handful of civil servants at home, to recruit, pay

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82 Part 1 is at <<http://penandpension.com/2015/02/24/the-c18th-british-secret-service-under-pitt-1/>>.

83 Part 2 is at <<http://penandpension.com/2015/03/04/the-c18th-british-secret-service-under-pitt-2/>>.

84 Part three is at <<http://penandpension.com/2015/03/20/alien-office/>>.

and supervise such agents as they deemed necessary [...]. Huge sums might pass through their hands, but the accounting for how and where it was spent was rudimentary.'

*Plus, as they say, ça change.*

## **Let us now praise famous men**

The death of Ahmed Chalabi, the Iraqi politician, banker and fraudster, prompted thoughts on the much-derided 'great man' model of history.

Mr Chalabi has gone to that special part of Hell reserved for those whose moral compasses allowed them to tell George W Bush whatever nonsense he wanted to hear, without going through the time-consuming rigmarole of being tortured by the CIA first.

*The Guardian* editorialised:

'We tend to think of history as the product of impersonal forces and so to suppose a great catastrophe like the invasion of Iraq must have had great causes. But considered through the lens of Chalabi's career, it seems more like a bitter farce out of Graham Greene.'<sup>85</sup>

Do we really think that way about history?

To maintain this as an absolute and immovable stance when considering Chalabi's outrageous fantabulising is obviously to imply that some other chancer would have come along and done the same thing in his absence, and that Chalabi himself was merely the lightning conductor for those 'impersonal forces'.

But Chalabi's very success indicates precisely the opposite: the reason the Bush administration used his nonsense is because there was no-one else offering it. Bullshitters weren't queuing up along Pennsylvania Avenue with anti-Saddam 'insights' for sale. If they had been, the US would have chosen a far more credible individual than a

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85 <<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/nov/05/the-guardian-view-on-ahmed-chalabi-mission-incredible>>

known fraudster with a personal grudge against Hussein. If the US didn't need him, why bother using him at all?

It's often remarked that if Hitler hadn't been born, some other scheming despot would have risen in his place, with much the same results. This notion ignores the plain fact that if there had indeed been other such characters around at the time, we would know about them.

'Knowledge,' as someone once said, 'is information-soluble' and this historiological phenomenon of knowing more and more but understanding less and less is perhaps best exemplified in A.J.P. Taylor's essay 'War by Timetable', in which the First World War is described as starting almost automatically due to scheduled troop deployments by railway. Perhaps there's an element of truth in it, and perhaps the war couldn't have been avoided indefinitely;<sup>86</sup> but the real cause of the war was definitely a bullet fired by an unknown man into a famous one. It's hard to think of anything more personal than that.

More to the point, if our politicians are (as the 'impersonal forces' school of thought requires us to accept) reducible to the status of iron filings dancing to unseen magnets, what ultimate use is democracy to us at all? This is the barren theoretical ground from which the alarming Libertarian movement for a 'night-watchman state' – if that – has sprung.<sup>87</sup>

## **Doppelgangers**

**A** pet subject of mine has been in the news lately, that of identical-looking people. One incident in particular suggests that meeting your reflection is not as unlikely as one might

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<sup>86</sup> There's a decent roundup of other incidents that could have sparked the war, but didn't at <<http://io9.com/7-ways-that-world-war-i-could-have-started-before-1914-1725104055>>. What the 'inevitable war' proponents fail to see is that the imperial era's 'Mutually Assured Destruction' strategy obviously proved to have at least some merit on those occasions.

<sup>87</sup> See, for example, <[http://www.worldlibrary.org/articles/night-watchman\\_state](http://www.worldlibrary.org/articles/night-watchman_state)>.

imagine. In this case, it was a ginger-bearded and hipsterish gentleman who ended up sitting next to his exact double on a plane journey, purely by chance. One ginger-bearded and hipsterish gentleman looks much like another, some might argue, but I urge you to check out the pictures if you haven't seen them already. 'Resemblance' is an inadequate word to describe the match. Even the teeth look identical.<sup>88</sup> True, the two men are of different heights but if presented with a portrait photo of either, I would be unable to say which man it was. Artist Alison Jackson has been producing 'simulacra' of celebrity photographs using doppelgangers for years, some highly passable. Celebrity lookalikes, however, soon become aware of their resemblance and openly put themselves on the market as such.<sup>89</sup> What about the rest of us?

The increasingly interconnected world of social media is now letting people find doppelgangers that they might otherwise never meet in the flesh. A project has been launched to enable people to track down their doubles – for a small fee, of course. The site is [twinstrangers.net](http://twinstrangers.net) and is run by a pair of women who, yes, met by chance and resemble each other exactly.

Human nature being what it is, how long will it be before someone finds their doppelganger, enters into some kind of profitable private criminal agreement with them and successfully thwarts police investigators with irreconcilable witness and/or forensic evidence? My money would be on such

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<sup>88</sup> For lovers of the uncanny, the two men later found their paths crossed repeatedly after reaching their destination. See <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-34679496>.

<sup>89</sup> I am particularly impressed with Alex Salmond's doppelganger, pictured at <http://blogs.new.spectator.co.uk/2015/03/wanted-nigel-farage-lookalike/>. Given that Mr Salmond sometimes travels under a false identity, supposedly for security purposes, one has to wonder whether the thought of employing a 'decoy' has ever occurred to him. See <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-34442262>.

schemes being hatched even now.<sup>90</sup> The TV drama trope of 'The Evil Twin' could even step into the realms of reality.

This sort of deception is meat and drink to intelligence agencies (CIA director Allen Dulles is said to have collected reports on identical twins for his own purposes) but despite the obvious uses of doppelgangers, the entire subject of impersonation is still regarded uneasily by historians. The notion that someone has been replaced with an imposter is obviously just too crazy-sounding to address.

JFK conspiracy-debunker Professor John McAdams has a long paper on his site dedicated to unravelling the various claims of a Lee Harvey Oswald impersonator's involvement, denouncing them as mainly dependent upon unreliable eyewitness testimony. Dr McAdams asks: 'So is there nothing at all to the "two Oswalds" theories?' And answers: 'No, nothing at all.'

But this isn't quite true, even in the 'orthodox' history of the murder. There was an utterly real 'second Oswald' in the very Book Depository from which Kennedy was supposedly shot. He was Billy Lovelady, who was photographed on the Book Depository steps at the moment of the assassination, and whose presence there sparked a years-long debate over whether the photo depicted Oswald or not; since if Oswald was outside watching the assassination he couldn't also have been guilty of it. (Oswald himself stoutly maintained that he was eating his lunch elsewhere in the building at the time, so this theory doesn't even have Oswald's support.)

In fact, Lovelady looked so like Oswald that even Oswald's daughter was deceived into crying 'There's daddy!' when Lovelady appeared on TV news broadcasts, post-assassination.

What are the odds against two such similar-looking men ending up employed in the same building at the same time?

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<sup>90</sup> They wouldn't be anything new, as the Kray twins used to exploit their identical appearances for pleasure and profit in just this way. According to gangland lore, the ruse was used repeatedly to spring one or the other brother from prison by the pair swapping roles during prison visiting time and then gaining release by proving with fingerprints that the wrong brother had been jailed.

You could hardly hope to plan a more confusing scenario.....

## **Immigration, immigration, immigration**

**W**ell, now, here's a thing. Bombing the Middle East into peace and harmony hasn't worked – again – and now the recipients of the West's military-industrial free gifts are on our doorstep asking for actual help, rather than the geopolitical variety.

In Hungary, where it's still the early 1970s, Prime Minister Viktor Orban has erected border fences to keep out the hordes and denounced the situation as a plot cooked up by George Soros and a cabal of faceless lefties in order to force the EU into a semi-federal form, with uniform border controls and a single asylum policy.<sup>91</sup> Mr Orban's evidence consists of Mr Soros calling for those things in a recent op-ed, but, billionaire or not, Mr Soros calling for something is not quite the same thing as his actively seeking to bring it about.<sup>92</sup>

Is Mr Orban sincere, or cynically manipulating the Hungarian electorate? His solution – that European nationals must produce more children in order to preserve their cultures – has worryingly familiar overtones; but again, some blowhard demanding something is a long way from putting it into effect.

In Her Majesty's Britannic realms, there have also been ominous rumblings. If former BNP leader Nick Griffin accomplished anything at all during his farcical reign, it was to get the words 'indigenous' and 'white genocide' into popular currency in the immigration debate. 'White genocide' in particular has pretty much gone mainstream. It occasionally trends on Twitter and there are entire websites devoted to the notion, and evidently not all of them are maintained by knuckle-dragging thugs.<sup>93</sup> It sounds too ridiculous to be true.

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91 <[http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3305816/Hungarian-PM-says-Europe-build-future-immigration-instead-families-says-leaders-make-easier-parents-children-survival-civilization.html?ito=social-twitter\\_mailonline](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3305816/Hungarian-PM-says-Europe-build-future-immigration-instead-families-says-leaders-make-easier-parents-children-survival-civilization.html?ito=social-twitter_mailonline)>

92 <<http://www.project-syndicate.org/print/rebuilding-refugee-asylum-system-by-george-soros-2015-09>>

93 E.g. <<http://whitegenocideproject.com/>>.

And, since we – that is, me and the hypothetical European reader – know all too well the exact character and dimensions of the genocide historically associated with attempts to preserve a ‘white race’, it also sounds grotesquely inappropriate.

But hold that revulsion. ‘Genocide’ is precisely the label that the exiled Tibetan government has applied to China’s long-term program to subsume Tibetan culture into its own (politely referred to by diplomats as ‘Sinicization’). So this application of the word has a degree of credibility and precedent. But the absolutely crucial difference is that in the case of China and Tibet, the approach is deliberate, planned, and systematic with a clear outcome in sight. And everyone knows it.

This is where the ‘white genocide’ proponents founder and retreat into conspiratorial modes of thought. There is simply no such provable intent on Europe’s part, or indeed on the part of any member state.

A big villain in the ‘white genocide’ conspiracy theory, frequently discussed by far-right forums that I’ve snooped upon, is one of Europe’s conceptual founding fathers, a character almost unknown outside a very limited circle of research and study, Richard Nikolaus von Coudenhove-Kalergi.

Coudenhove-Kalergi, a diplomat who was born in Japan to an Austrian father and a Japanese mother, moved to what was then Austria-Hungary, adopted Czechoslovakian nationality and then became a natural French citizen, is a fascinatingly complex individual, who lived a life that a novelist would blush to invent.<sup>94</sup> He founded the Pan-European Movement, suggested Beethoven’s ninth symphony as the European Anthem (as it now indeed is) and moved effortlessly through a milieu of artists, thinkers, financiers, authors and politicians that practically constituted a Who’s Who of the

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<sup>94</sup> I would not normally refer the reader to Wikipedia for information, but Coudenhove-Kalergi’s biography is so bewildering that on this occasion Wikipedia provides the most accessible synthesis at <[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard\\_Nikolaus\\_von\\_Coudenhove-Kalergi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Nikolaus_von_Coudenhove-Kalergi)>.

western world's elite in the early 20th Century.<sup>95</sup>

It is even possible that he was the origin of Hitler's persecution of Freemasons. In 1925, Masonic newspaper *The Beacon* had described the Pan-European Movement in glowing terms: 'Brother Coudenhove-Kalergi's program is a Masonic work of the highest order, and to be able to work on it together is a lofty task for all brother Masons.'

Coudenhove-Kalergi himself was not backward about coming forward, writing in one of his many books:

'The man of the future will be of mixed race. Today's races and classes will gradually disappear owing to the vanishing of space, time, and prejudice. The Eurasian-Negroid race of the future, similar in its appearance to the Ancient Egyptians, will replace the diversity of peoples with a diversity of individuals.'<sup>96</sup>

But, despite far-right photoshop artists depicting Coudenhove-Kalergi with vampire fangs, as befits such a sinister life-sapping figure, all this is a very long way indeed from proving that the European Union, or any part of it, is actively trying to produce 'mixed race' populations.

Another rallying cry among the race separatists is Andrew Neather's infamous admission that the New Labour administration more or less threw Britain's doors open to mass immigration and then stood back and watched.<sup>97</sup>

This is true, but again the purpose was not to breed 'whiteness' out of Britain, or even to undermine British culture. The purpose that Mr Neather inferred, from the discussions he attended, was that the Blair administration wanted to 'rub the right's nose in diversity'. Of course, it could be possible that Mr Neather was himself being deceived about the government's real agenda, and they were just pretending to be idealistic

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95 Coudenhove-Kalergi worked with the CIA's Allen Dulles in the creation of the American Committee for a Free and United Europe in 1948. Hugh Wilford, *The CIA, the British left and the Cold War* (London: Frank Cass, 2003) p. 227.

96 Cited in his Wikipedia entry <[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard\\_Nikolaus\\_von\\_Coudenhove-Kalergi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Nikolaus_von_Coudenhove-Kalergi)>.

97 See <<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1222613/Labour-let-migrants-engineer-multicultural-UK.html>>.

incompetents, but that way lies madness.

There's also an (apocryphal?) quote from Jack Straw himself, who is alleged to have told a constituent that 'The English, as a race, are not worth saving.' Predictably, this quote is impossible to trace to a source (Mr Straw did not respond to an e-mail inquiring whether he said it or not).

But really, this is what the claims of 'white genocide' amount to. A starry-eyed Panglossian visionary, who is all but forgotten today, and a few rogue contemporary quotes. The rest is a giant cloud of sinister innuendo obscuring nearly a century of complex international evolution. So why does it continue to flourish?

Well, people like the UN's special representative on migration, Peter Sutherland, don't help. In 2012, Mr Sutherland – Goldman-Sachs non-executive chairman, former BP chairman and frequent Bilderberg attendee – told a committee of the House of Lords:

'The United States, or Australia and New Zealand, are migrant societies and therefore they accommodate more readily those from other backgrounds than we do ourselves, who still nurse a sense of our homogeneity and difference from others.

And that's precisely what the European Union, in my view, should be doing its best to undermine.'<sup>98</sup>

As the indigenous populations of the countries he mentioned could have told him, had he asked them, their situations developed in a way that was not necessarily to their advantage.

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98 <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-18519395>>

