

South of the border (occasional snippets from)

Nick Must

new

He's *not* the Messiah. . . he's a very naughty boy!

You'll have to forgive my twice using a Monty Python reference within this one issue's 'South of the Border', but it's the only sensible reaction to some recent communication¹ from 'God's own spy', David Shayler. I would encourage those who have not read my article 'David Shayler, "Tunworth" and the LIFG' in this issue² to do so before progressing any further with this follow-up,

After six months of non-communication, on 14 October @Gods_Spy, a.k.a 'Dave Shayler Christ', burst into full foghorn mode to denounce the aforementioned article (that had been published two and a half months previously) as 'wholly dishonest.'³ Further, it was declared that 'You defend terrorists in the intelligence services and fail to mention that a doc appeared on the internet after the attack was denied.'⁴

Included in that message, Shayler provided a link to a page on Cryptome.⁵ That page is in four parts. The second part (about one third of the way down) is a reproduction of the MI6 intelligence report CX 95/53452, which is central to the nexus of MI6, the LIFG and Tunworth. The third part of the page (about two thirds of the way down) is an analysis – written by Shayler himself – of CX 95/53452. Included in that analysis was this comment about the obscuring of Tunworth's identity:

'I have seen the original of this report. I can confirm that the deletions cover material which *might* have helped identify TUNWORTH.' [Added

¹ For which, read 'throwing of rattle out of pram on Twitter'.

² <<https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/free/lobster78/lob78-shayler-tunworth-lifg.pdf>>

³ <https://twitter.com/Gods_Spy/status/1183776460265402368>

⁴ <https://twitter.com/Gods_Spy/status/1183776556512174081>

⁵ 'David Shayler on MI6 Gaddafi Assassination Plot'
<<https://cryptome.org/shayler-gaddafi.htm>>

emphasis]

So, no clear declaration that Tunworth's real name was on the report, merely that there had been information that might have identified him. This is reinforced by additional information hosted by Cryptome (Press Release, 16 February 2000 - 'David Shayler vindicated over existence of Qadhafi Plot'), wherein Shayler states:

'The name of the agent and the fact that he was involved in the plot were not made clear in the CX report as is usual in such cases.'⁶

More recently, however, Mr Shayler has been claiming something quite different. In the interview he did for the Richie Allen show of Thursday 22 June 2017, Shayler said:

'His name's actually redacted from that document but, if you were to remove the redaction, I can tell you within 99% degree of certainty that that is Ramadan Abedi, basically.'⁷

Later in that same interview, he went even further and claimed:

' . . . I put that MI6 document on the internet in 1999. It's a strange story how I got hold of it, again, but I was the one that redacted it. That's why I can tell you it's Ramadan Abedi on it, basically.'⁸

If he was the person who redacted the document, why is he only 99% certain? He may well claim, in his defence, that due to the passage of time he can't be completely certain – but that is my entire argument in a nutshell. On the one hand Shayler claims it's absolutely, definitely Ramadan Abedi; on the other hand he allows for an amount of uncertainty – even though he says that he has seen the unredacted document and was the one who originally censored it. It simply does not add up.⁹

I should also point out that, in accusing me of 'defend[ing] terrorists in the intelligence services', Shayler is chastising me for something I quite plainly

⁶ The quote specifically comes from the third section of the press release, which has the subheading 'How I was briefed on the Qadhafi plot'. See <http://cryptome.org/shayler021600.htm>.

⁷ https://www.podomatic.com/podcasts/richieallen/episodes/2017-06-22T13_08_27-07_00> He says what I have quoted at 54 minutes and 24 seconds into the recording.

⁸ See footnote 7. This statement is at 59 minutes and 3 seconds into the recording.

⁹ Additionally, in a Twitter direct message to me on 9 April 2019, he said: 'The name of the agent, ramadan abeidi, is obscured by the words "removed to protect tunworth's identity".' That's yet another statement in complete contradiction to the February 2000 press release, mentioned above. The old mantra, 'If you stick to the truth you won't have to remember whatever lie you've told' comes to mind.

have not done. My disagreement with him is that I don't believe he could possibly now remember an unredacted name on an MI6 intelligence document from over 20 years ago – but that is very different from denying that the plot between MI6 and the LIFG ever existed.

His reaction to this disagreement has been an intriguing mix of aggressive, passive aggressive and straight-up hippy – e.g. 'People who try to cover up murder will be murdered under karma. Judgement Day is 22 August 2021. Love Dave.'¹⁰ As a kindly friend mentioned to me, 'Obviously no-one could possibly have a good-faith disagreement with God's Anointed, could they?'

Shayler's explanation for the six-month long lack of communication was:

'I live in a field and don't have much[sic] time for these finer points.

There is a document supporting the conspiracy between Mi6 and Tunworth who admits contacts with Islamic terrorists.'¹¹

Now, if you've read the original article, you'll know that the main thrust of it was that Shayler's claim to be able to identify Tunworth today was complete bunkum. The fact that I also noted that the LIFG, the 'Islamic terrorist group' to which Tunworth belonged, was not actually classified as a terrorist group until much later was entirely ancillary to my main point: i.e. that Tunworth can not be Ramadan Abedi.

In addition to all of the above, I should point out to David Shayler (who will no doubt get around to noticing this response sometime in the middle of next year) that if, as he claims, he genuinely is the Second Coming of Christ 'with an ability to see the future'¹² then he would have known of the article before its publication – even if he is living in a field with a crap 4G mobile connection.¹³

More recently, I have been in receipt of messages such as:

'As I've explained I haven't disappeared from Twitter. Because I risked my life to expose MI6 murder I live in a field and cannot get on Twitter, you inhuman scum.'¹⁴

¹⁰ <https://twitter.com/Gods_Spy/status/1183776631745372170>

¹¹ Twitter direct message from @Gods_Spy, 14 October 2019.

¹² See Shayler's Twitter profile: <https://twitter.com/Gods_Spy>.

¹³ An examination of Shayler's Twitter feed reveals that he had posted messages there on 31 different days between 10 April and 14 October, the period when I received no communication from him.

¹⁴ Twitter direct message from @Gods_Spy, 25 November 2019.

This (rather nasty) message thus confirms that he can use a mobile internet connection to send me a message on Twitter . . . telling me that he can't get on Twitter!

The editor has offered David Shayler the opportunity to reply to my original article directly via *Lobster*. Apart from an initial email, which was in need of clarification (which was requested), the editor has informed me that he has had no communication from Shayler. The offer of a right to reply still stands.

new

Facial Recognition systems, Project Servator and a lack of results.

I expect that most members of the public are aware of facial recognition – although that awareness will likely have been driven by fictional, and inaccurate, portrayals of the technology in mainstream films and television programmes. More on that later. I think it's less likely you will have heard of Project Servator before now, even though it's been running since February of 2014.¹⁵ According to the City of London Police:

'Project Servator is the name given to unpredictable, highly visible police deployments, designed to disrupt a range of criminal activity, including terrorism. [....]

They involve officers, both uniformed and plain clothed, who are specially trained to spot the tell-tale signs that an individual may have criminal intent. They are supported by other resources, such as police dogs, armed officers, CCTV operators, Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) and vehicle checkpoints.¹⁶

In the same year that Servator was launched, 'the biggest security magazine in the UK' quoted data from the 'London terrorism survey' which showed that, 'Nearly three quarters (73 per cent) of people who live or work in the City of London are concerned about terrorism.'¹⁷ It should be noted that, in this

¹⁵ See the City of London Police's 'Frequently Asked Questions' on Project Servator at <<https://tinyurl.com/u8lsdc6>> or <<https://www.cityoflondon.police.uk/community-policing/project-servator/Pages/Frequently-asked-questions.aspx>>.

¹⁶ See <<https://tinyurl.com/quyfft2>> or <<https://cityoflondon.police.uk/community-policing/project-servator/Pages/Project-Servator.aspx>>.

¹⁷ See <<https://www.professionalsecurity.co.uk/news/case-studies/london-terrorism-survey/>>

instance at least, the increased visual presence of police officers provided by Project Servator are not being used to actually fight crime but *to manage the public's perception of their susceptibility to crime* – something which may not be anywhere near accurate. That perception of vulnerability to crime for residents of the City of London might be linked to their average residential property price being nearly 2.75 times the national average.¹⁸

Although the *prima facie* crime statistics show a ratio of 5,901 crimes reported¹⁹ for a residential population of about 7,400,²⁰ it is obvious that the huge numbers of people who do not live in the city but commute in daily for work (more than half a million people work in the City²¹) makes the actual crime ratio per physically present person much, much lower than the national average. That level of reported crime, for a *daytime* population of 500,000, equals 1 offence for every 84.7 persons. The total number of criminal offences for England and Wales, year to June 2019, was 11,100,000 offences²² per 59,000,000 of population²³ or 1 offence for every 5.3 persons.

Although it was City of London Police that initially launched Servator, it has progressively been adopted by forces nationwide.²⁴ Two years on from that initial commencement, in 2016, Essex police announced that their use of Servator tactics at the V-Festival in Chelmsford meant that they had 'arrested

¹⁸ At time of writing, the average UK house price is £316,131 <<https://www.zoopla.co.uk/house-prices/uk/>> whereas the average City of London house price is £879,071 <<https://www.zoopla.co.uk/house-prices/city-of-london/>>.

¹⁹ City of London police crime data 2017/18 <<https://www.colp.uk/crime-data/>>

²⁰ City of London Resident Population, Census 2011 at <<https://tinyurl.com/vzvzpb>> or <<https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/services/environment-and-planning/planning/development-and-population-information/Documents/census-information-reports-introduction-november-2012.pdf>>.

²¹ See the 'Number of people employed in the City' tab at <<https://tinyurl.com/tts5llh>> or <<https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/BUSINESS/ECONOMIC-RESEARCH-AND-INFORMATION/Pages/economic-statistics.aspx>>.

²² <<https://tinyurl.com/yydkok6h>> or <<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/crimeinenglandandwales/yearendingjune2019>>

²³ <<https://tinyurl.com/uwvn3zd>> or <<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/bulletins/annualmidyearpopulationestimates/mid2018>>

²⁴ This includes not only significant regional forces like the Metropolitan Police and Police Scotland but also forces with a national remit and/or centralised command, such as British Transport Police, Counter Terrorism Policing and the Civil Nuclear Constabulary.

27 people for drug-related offences'.²⁵ On closer examination, however, this claim would seem to deflate somewhat when it is compared to the figure reported for the same festival four years previously when (without any input from Project Servator) a total of 51 arrests for drug offences had been made.²⁶

Innocent people can be caught up in a Servator operation. One such person was Conor Sullivan of the *Financial Times*, who was stopped and questioned by an armed police officer when he was seen 'acting suspiciously' on Blackfriars Bridge. What had he been doing? Writing down some notes while waiting to meet City of London officials who were due to brief him on Project Servator.²⁷

What of the facial recognition systems that will obviously be playing some part in Project Servator? An informative series of articles have appeared on technology news website *The Register* – and they paint a very poor picture indeed. On 17 August 2017 they reported how the 'UK govt steams ahead with £5m facial recog system amid furore over innocents' mugshots' – detailing a five year tender of a 'contract for facial recognition software' which was priced at £920,000 a year.²⁸ Later that same day a further article stated: 'London cops urged to scrap use of "biased" facial recognition at Notting Hill Carnival'. The previous year the Met Police had used facial recognition to monitor the crowd at the West London street festival but their system – designed to 'alert cops to people who are banned from the festival or are wanted by the police' – had 'failed to identify anyone'.²⁹

Nine months later, the situation was hardly any better:

²⁵ <<https://tinyurl.com/ufyl9aw>> or <<https://www.gazette-news.co.uk/news/14696736.police-make-43-arrests-and-evict-133-people-from-v-festival>>.

²⁶ <<https://tinyurl.com/spjwhaj>> or <<https://www.itv.com/news/anglia/2012-08-19/drugs-arrests-rise-to-51-at-v-festival-in-chelmsford/>>

²⁷ <<https://www.ft.com/content/23e02e12-ba06-11e5-b151-8e15c9a029fb>>
Seeing as the City of London officials knew what Sullivan looked like – and where he was likely to be and what he would probably be doing – this was very likely a stunt by the police, eager to show the FT an example of 'Servator in action'.

²⁸ Over two and a half grand a day for such a system when '[b]oth the former and current Biometrics Commissioners have published reports on the Home Office's approach to facial recognition and biometrics more generally and have pointed to significant problems and flaws.' <<https://tinyurl.com/uh3chfo>> or <https://www.theregister.co.uk/2017/08/17/home_office_pushes_ahead_with_facial_recognition_system_despite_furore_over_innocent_mugshots/>

²⁹ See <<https://tinyurl.com/ua6m2qm>> or <https://www.theregister.co.uk/2017/08/17/concerns_over_facial_recognition_at_notting_hill_carnival/>.

'London cops' facial recognition kit has only correctly identified two people to date – neither of whom were criminals – and the UK capital's police force has made no arrests using it, figures published today revealed.

According to information released under Freedom of Information laws, the Metropolitan Police's automated facial recognition (AFR) technology has a *98 per cent false positive rate.*³⁰ [Added emphasis.]

Let's take a moment to fully absorb that fact: a ninety-eight percent false positive rate. I think it's quite possible you'd get a better performance by having a human select people at random. Roll on another nine months, though, and an arrest had been made as a result of an AFR test run earlier this year.³¹ Yes, one arrest. . . after a stint from 10am to 6pm on two consecutive days outside Romford train station.³²

Another accidental tourist?

Paul Nicholas Whelan is an American citizen currently incarcerated in Moscow, having been arrested in late December 2018 on suspicion of being in possession of classified data (viz. a list of employees at a Soviet security agency).

Mr Whelan denies those charges and has appeared multiple times in court. At one of those appearances in May he denounced Russian justice and his treatment in general, saying, 'I have not had a shower in two weeks.'³³ In spite of this claim, he was clean shaven (which he also was at his more recent court appearance) so he must be allowed some form of personal hygiene regimen.

As has been established by various news outlets that have enquired into Mr Whelan's circumstances, he is an ex-Marine reservist and ex-law

³⁰ 'Zero arrests, 2 correct matches, no criminals: London cops' facial recog tech slammed' at <<https://tinyurl.com/vwgda97>> or <https://www.theregister.co.uk/2018/05/15/met_police_slammed_inaccurate_facial_recognition/>.

³¹ <<https://tinyurl.com/qv9zqog>> or <https://www.theregister.co.uk/2019/02/06/met_police_cop_to_just_one_successful_arrest_during_latest_facial_recog_trial/>

³² The Office of Rail and Road (ORR) estimates that Romford station serves over 8.5 million passenger a year and is just within the top 50 busiest stations in Great Britain. (Data from an ORR spreadsheet available for download via the 'Station usage 2017-18 data' link at <<https://dataportal.orr.gov.uk/statistics/usage/estimates-of-station-usage/>>.)

³³ See 'Paul Whelan: Ex-US marine alleges abuse in Russia spy case' at <<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-48398074>>.

enforcement employee (although his precise role within law enforcement is uncertain, due to his own obscuring of the facts).³⁴

Having been born to British and Canadian parents on United States soil, he is directly entitled to nationality of all three of those countries and he does have Canadian, UK and US passports. More unusually, he also has a passport from the Irish Republic, which he had obtained via ancestral (grandparent) rights. The benefits of a politically neutral Irish passport would seem obvious. Multiple passports – even if they are in the same name – would also aid in the avoidance of surveillance of flight data and passenger manifests. For instance, if one were to fly from the United States to Paris on a U.S. passport you could then connect to a flight from Paris to Moscow that was booked with an Irish passport and the U.S. passport holder would not seem to have left Paris.

Whelan's current employer is the automotive parts manufacturer, BorgWarner. Following the announcement of his arrest, they released a statement which in part said:

'BorgWarner has been in contact with the relevant U.S. Government authorities in order to help our employee *and the U.S. government*. We ask that any further inquiries regarding this issue *be directed to the U.S. State Department*.' ³⁵ [emphasis added]

Prince Andrew and Jeffrey Epstein

During the recent furore over Prince Andrew's association with Jeffrey Epstein, the *Mail on Sunday* revealed that they had obtained video footage from 2010³⁶ that showed Prince Andrew at the front door of Epstein's Manhattan mansion, the Herbert N. Straus House at 9 East 71st Street in Manhattan.³⁷ In what was presented as the first segment of the video, Epstein is seen leaving in the company of a young blonde woman (who I would guess is in her twenties).

³⁴ See, for instance, 'American charged with espionage in Russia has an unlikely background for a spy' in *The Chicago Tribune* 3 January 2019 at <<https://tinyurl.com/y6sl5j2k>> or <<https://www.chicagotribune.com/nation-world/ct-paul-whelan-russia-espionage-20190103-story.html>> N.B. how that headline states 'unlikely', not 'impossible'.

³⁵ <<https://tinyurl.com/y5e2oajr>> or <<https://www.borgwarner.com/docs/default-source/press-release-downloads/statement-regarding-paul-n-whelan-010119.pdf>>

³⁶ <<https://tinyurl.com/y36taxps>> or <<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/video/news/video-1987812/Video-Jeffrey-Epstein-seen-leaving-place-New-York-girl.html>>

³⁷ For the history of the property, see <<https://tinyurl.com/y2cqrpy5>> or <<https://www.townandcountrymag.com/society/a28340797/jeffrey-epstein-townhouse-upper-east-side/>>.

They walk to a car parked a few metres away; Epstein gets into the car and the woman returns to the house.

What is immediately clear from this footage is that the camera was being operated manually, from inside a parked vehicle: the picture moves up and down across the front of the building as people leave and zooms in on the face of the blonde woman who leaves with Epstein. This indicates an interest less in Epstein himself and more in the visitors – and likely the female visitors – to his home.

The other part of the *Mail on Sunday* clip showed Prince Andrew bidding farewell to a brunette woman.³⁸ That undoubtedly confirms that he was at the building at a time when surveillance was taking place – possibly at the same time as the first clip. Regardless of all that, nothing seems to have been discussed in the media about who had been behind the camera.

One possibility is that it was the New York police, wary following Epstein's release from the lenient 13 month jail sentence he received in Florida.³⁹ Secondly, it could have been a private investigator, perhaps in the employ of an Epstein victim. A third possibility is that British security were those responsible, aware of the risk of entrapment to Prince Andrew. And it could have been either the Florida police (with the understanding of the NY cops) or the F.B.I. – both of whom might also have had good reason to keep tabs on Epstein following his release.

What I can not fathom, however, is how Prince Andrew's protection detail did not spot the manned video surveillance of Epstein's home taking place from a static vehicle parked in the street, virtually opposite the building's front door.⁴⁰

The huge cost of Betsy DeVos

Making a repeat appearance in *South of the Border* is United States Secretary of Education, Betsy DeVos. Over the past 12 months, Ms DeVos has been

³⁸ I believe that this was New York based art gallery owner Amalia Dayan, a known associate of Ghislaine Maxwell, who was photographed with her in Miami, Florida, in December 2009. See <<https://tinyurl.com/y5nb2jzn>> or <<https://www.gettyimages.co.uk/detail/news-photo/ghislaine-maxwell-and-amalia-dayan-attend-aby-rosen-peter-news-photo/659932450>>.

³⁹ See, for instance <<https://tinyurl.com/y45yozqn>> or <<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-people-jeffrey-epstein/jeffrey-epstein-accusers-cannot-recoup-damages-over-lenient-plea-deal-u-s-judge-idUSKBN1W12HI>>.

⁴⁰ Of course, they would likely have been made aware of the situation if the surveillance were conducted by a U.K. government team.

under the full-time safeguarding of the United States Marshall service. This is in spite of the fact that, as Politico pointed out, in the past such duties were carried out by the Education Department itself.⁴¹ The price for this round the clock armed protection? A mere \$6.24 million – actually down from a final cost for the previous year of \$6.79 million, a figure that had been deemed a ‘high watermark’ that should not be exceeded.

Now, however, the projected cost for fiscal year 2020 has been set at \$7.87 million. Bizarrely, considering the gigantic amounts of public money that is being spent, it was stated that, ‘For reasons of operational security, we will not disclose the number of employees providing protection or the nature of threats against the secretary.’

Amazingly, these costings could have been higher but for the fact that Ms DeVos allows her protection detail to travel with her on her private plane. Betsy DeVos is undoubtedly a grifter (© everyone who has ever been a member of Trump’s cabinet) because she could have actually paid for the entire shebang herself – she and her husband ‘Earned At Least \$45 Million’ in the last year alone.⁴² She even has the connections to organise a protection detail herself as she is the sister of the world's most infamous mercenary, Erik ‘Blackwater’ Prince.⁴³

Himmler’s daughter in post-war German spy agency shock

As I have previously discussed in *Lobster*,⁴⁴ post WWII, ex-Nazis became the new best friend of the Western Alliance – ‘my enemy's enemy is my friend’. It was relatively unshocking, then, to learn that SS-chief Heinrich Himmler's daughter, Gudrun Burwitz (an unrepentant Nazi), had worked for the West German BND (in a relatively minor administrative role) for two years between 1961 and 1963.⁴⁵

⁴¹ <<https://www.politico.com/news/2019/10/01/betsy-devos-security-detail-cost-015986>>

⁴² <<https://tinyurl.com/y5cuvo3w>> or <<https://www.forbes.com/sites/chasewithorn/2019/06/08/betsy-devos-earned-at-least-45-million-while-in-office-last-year/>>

⁴³ See <<https://tinyurl.com/yaf46ylz>> or <<https://www.vanityfair.com/news/2018/09/the-strange-ascent-of-betsy-devos-and-erik-prince>>

⁴⁴ See the section ‘All is forgiven (pp. 4-5) in my winter 2016 article ‘The Western Union Clandestine Committee: Britain and the “Gladio” networks’ at <<https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/free/lobster72/lob72-western-union.pdf>>.

⁴⁵ <<https://tinyurl.com/y5zc2ycj>> or <<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/himmler-daughter-germany-bnd-foreign-intelligence-ss-nazi-hitler-war-criminals-evaded-justice-a8422726.html>>

Interesting sources

Back in the mid 1990s, when the internet was more generally referred to as 'the world wide web', Jane Affleck had a column in *Lobster* that provided a guide to interesting online sources.⁴⁶ Even then, as she noted, there was a distinct possibility of information overload:

'Here is a selection of sites on the Internet that I have found interesting. However, it is only a very small selection, and is not intended to be in any way comprehensive, but only to give some indication of the type of information available (with some bias towards those areas that may interest *Lobster* readers). Other points worth making: using the internet can be very time consuming – and expensive – if you don't know what you're looking for'

Although the obvious difference between the mid-90s and today is that the cost of a connection to the internet has dropped dramatically, much of that quote is still applicable. I would even argue that using the internet is more time consuming today: we're quite happy to allow ourselves to become completely immersed and lose track of time when surfing the web *precisely because of* that reduction in cost. Plus there's the fact that pretty much all information is now available online.

With that in mind, I thought it might be an idea to share with current *Lobster* readers a couple of interesting sources I have recently discovered.

The first is *The Friends of the Intelligence Corps Museum*, who produce a regular newsletter aimed at their alumni and associated members.⁴⁷ Additionally to the newsletter, there are 'Articles of interest' – mostly longer pieces that did not make it into the newsletter – and a smattering of book reviews.

Second is the Issuu 'feed' from Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) Historians.⁴⁸ *The Katyn Massacre: An SOE Perspective* details how S.O.E.

⁴⁶ See, for instance, her 'Surf's up! Internet sites of interest' at <<http://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/online/issue31/lob31-24.htm>>.

⁴⁷ All web pages related to the Friends of the Intelligence Corps Museum can be found via the homepage at <<http://www.intelligencemuseum.org/index.html>>.

⁴⁸ See <<https://issuu.com/fcohistorians>>.

probably knew about Soviet responsibility for the war crime⁴⁹ but, rather than rocking the allied boat, remained silent as propaganda was dispersed that placed the blame on the Nazis. Even now, more than seventy-five years later, the historians of the FCO continue to make excuses for the allies not correctly placing the blame:

'Clearly a terrible crime had been committed, but the Second World War was at the height of its brutality, and terrible things happen in wartime. . .
'⁵⁰

Sure, as long as those 'terrible things' were committed by your allies – shades of 'there's nothing to see here!'

Also available from the FCO Historians is *Origins and Establishment of the Foreign Office Information Research Department, 1946-48*. This reveals that, as the Labour government of Clement Attlee was in power at the time:

'The need to keep the left wing of the Party on side became a factor in the conduct of government policy towards the Soviet Union. Combined with inhibitions over possible allegations of interference in the internal affairs of other countries, this was to contribute to the shift in information tactics towards the cloak of secrecy.'⁵¹

In contrast, however, any legitimate Communist hold on power in Western Europe was to be avoided at all costs because:

'Powerful Communist parties in France and Italy were capable of sharing, and possibly taking, power. Britain's colonial possessions were vulnerable to Communist influence.'⁵²

I think the biggest revelation is that IRD's work was not classified as secret for the first couple of years. That changed, however, when:

'The need to recruit specialist staff, free from the limitations of civil service pay and conditions, was one of the considerations which led Murray [the head of IRD at the time] to suggest, in September 1948, that part of the costs of the unit should be transferred to the secret vote. In addition, the move to the secret vote would enable a more flexible use of money, and

⁴⁹ For significant detail on the events surrounding the massacre, see <<https://warsawinstitute.org/katyn-massacre-way-truth/>>.

⁵⁰ 'The Katyn Massacre: An SOE Perspective' pages 11-12, at <<https://issuu.com/fcohistorians/docs/historynotes10>>.

⁵¹ Page 2 of 'Origins and Establishment of the Foreign Office Information Research Department, 1946-48', at <<https://issuu.com/fcohistorians/docs/historynote9>>.

⁵² See note 51, p. 3.

avoid the unwelcome scrutiny of operations which might require covert or semi-covert means of execution.’⁵³

That time *The Sun* tried to cash in on Acid House

Crazy as it may seem, Rupert Murdoch’s newspaper *The Sun* once tried to cash in on the Acid House craze that was – at the time – sweeping the nation. On Wednesday 12 October 1988, the *Bizarre* column (under the shared byline of Gary Bushell and Rick Sky) offered readers their version of an Acid House t-shirt at the price of £5.50 each: ‘It’s groovy and cool – it’s our Acid House T-shirt!’⁵⁴

The whole page of that *Bizarre* was dedicated to variously singing the praises of the music fad - ‘Everyone is talking about ACIEEED, as it is known in the clubs!’ – or generally thrashing the culture – ‘Sharp street kids love Acid music. . . . but they’re saying a resounding NO to the daft drugs that plague the scene.’ Bushell and Sky then proceeded to show exactly how out of touch they were with the phenomenon by providing a guide to ‘The lingo’. This included the confusing claim that the DJ was also known by the moniker of ‘AK (Acid King)’, that ‘Tubing’ apparently meant ‘porking’ (whatever that implied) and ‘Hang ten’ was a ‘hand slapping greeting’.

Their assessment of the drugs threat was also highly flawed as they were seemingly convinced that, as it was called Acid House, usage of LSD was involved:

‘Acid acts for up to 12 hours. . . . “Flashback” experiences can occur up to six months after taking LSD. . . . LSD users have died while hallucinating.’

Granted those are all *potential* side effects of dropping acid but use of that drug was not a major part of the Acid House scene – MDMA (a.k.a. Ecstasy) yes, but *not* LSD.⁵⁵

⁵³ See note 51, pp. 7-8.

⁵⁴ Those on a budget would have been relieved to know that the quoted price *did* include postage and packing. See the scanned image available at <<http://hardcorewillneverdie.com/eswe/pagez/flyerz/sun-shirt.jpg>>.

⁵⁵ The *Sun*’s resident medical rent-a-gob at the time, Dr. Dr Vernon Coleman, would also weigh in with a shoddy attempt to discredit the use of MDMA: ‘You will hallucinate. For instance, if you don’t like spiders you’ll start seeing giant ones.’ See the archived, undated, clipping at <<http://hardcorewillneverdie.com/eswe/pagez/flyerz/dontbeasucker.jpg>>.

On Dr. Coleman, see the amusing take down ‘Doctor on the make’ by Geraldine Bedell in the *Independent*, Sunday 7 April 1996 at <<https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/doctor-on-the-make-1303622.html>>.

The final joke may be that the cut-out-and-mail-in order form on the bottom right hand corner of the page had a large black box heading that said 'BIZARRE T-SHIRT OFFER'.

I'll gladly kick a man when he's down. . .

. . . especially if that man is Boris Johnson. I have previously written of the similarities betwixt himself and the unlamented 'accident prone' George Brown, late of the 1960s Labour front bench. I have recently been taking advantage of the Netflix streaming service to work my way through the entire Monty Python television series. I have, thus, been struck by how well Mr Johnson would have succeeded in the *Upper Class Twit of the Year Competition*.⁵⁶

With the various elements of the competition including *walking along a straight line without falling over, kicking the beggar, waking up the neighbour* (which, for Johnson, would be Carrie Symonds' neighbours in Camberwell, south London, natch) and *taking the bra off the debutant from the front*, I think it is undeniable that the original competitors – Vivian Smith-Smythe-Smith, Simon-Zinc-Trumpet-Harris, Nigel Incubator-Jones, Gervaise Brook-Hampster and Oliver St John-Mollusc – would have had no chance against the giant Upper Class Twit-ism of Alexander Boris de Pfeffel Johnson.

Islington North and the IRD

Simon Matthews' piece in the previous issue, 'A tale of two Islington',⁵⁷ mentions Gerry Reynolds as being one of Jeremy Corbyn's predecessors as MP for that constituency. A BBC news report on the Information Research Department (IRD) and the transfer of thousands of its files to the National Archives mentions that Gerry Reynolds had contacted IRD for help in combating internal constituency opposition (a.k.a. "'Trotskyists" in Islington North').

'He feared his local Labour party was being taken over by "a well-organised group of extreme left-wing malcontents, probably Trotskyists",

⁵⁶ The sketch is currently 'archived for posterity' at <<https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x2hwqIn>>.

⁵⁷ <<https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/free/lobster77/lob77-tale-corbyn.pdf>>

and wanted the IRD to dig up any information on the individuals concerned.’⁵⁸

This was in the early 1960s – when Corbyn was barely out of short trousers. The resulting ‘dirt’ was extremely weak and was dated from ten to fifteen years before.

‘The IRD turned to the security services, which confirmed that Dorothy Hayward had been a member of the Revolutionary Communist Party *in 1947*; that Sidney Lubin had endorsed a Communist council candidate *in 1951*; and that Francis Dunne had distributed a Trotskyite newsletter.’⁵⁹
[Emphasis added]

An update on the ‘accidental tourist’

In *Lobster 74* I wrote about Danny Gratton, the greetings card salesman from the Midlands who ‘by chance’ shared a room with the late Otto Warmbier when the both of them were part of a group of tourists in North Korea.⁶⁰ In that article I pointed out that there were several ‘spook-like’ behaviours that Mr Gratton had indulged in during that stay.

Now, it would seem, Mr Gratton has abandoned his greetings card business (his LinkedIn page has disappeared⁶¹) and he has taken to ‘more dangerous tourism’. The November 2018 newsletter from Central Staffs Crossfit stated how they, ‘. . . wanted to recognise Danny Gratton who took part in the 12k run in Erbil Northern Iraq.’⁶² This brief mention in the fitness club’s newsletter included a couple of snaps of the intrepid Mr Gratton on location. A report from Kurdistan24 explains that the event that he participated

⁵⁸ See <<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-47571253>>

⁵⁹ See note 51.

⁶⁰ <<https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/free/lobster74/lob74-accidental-tourist.pdf>>

⁶¹ See footnote 14 of my ‘Accidental Tourist’ piece (Ibid). The LinkedIn page appeared to be the only online business promotion he undertook.

⁶² <<https://centralstaffscrossfit.com/newsletter/newsletter-november-2018>>

in is actually a part of the larger Erbil International Marathon,⁶³ which includes races of 42km (i.e. marathon) the 12km section and a 4km.⁶⁴

A right Royal spook.

There was a brief media orgasm at the end of the first week of April when it was announced that Prince William had been 'working' at MI6, MI5 and GCHQ respectively for the previous three weeks. The scale of excitement in the reporting ranged from the fairly sober BBC ('The Duke of Cambridge has spent a "humbling" three weeks on work placements with three of Britain's security and intelligence agencies'),⁶⁵ through the forelock tugging *Daily Mail* ('The future King insisted on being treated like an ordinary member of staff at all times and that he should simply be called William.')66 to the predictably bat-shit *Sun* ('[he] went on undercover surveillance jobs').⁶⁷

To be fair to the *Sun*, the *Mail* article also ridiculously claimed that he had 'even gone out on operations'. Which never happened, of course. Can you imagine the risk assessments that would have been required if it were true?!

Espionage podcasts from the National Archives

⁶³ For the marathon's own website see <<http://www.erbilmrathon.org/>>. For the Kurdistan24 report see <<https://www.kurdistan24.net/en/news/6983f157-aa79-48d0-86c1-e026bffa8cfd>>

⁶⁴ Of course the race is a vast public relations exercise and the U.S. Department of State (Bureau of Diplomatic Security) *Iraq 2019 Crime & Safety Report: Erbil* advises against travel to the city: '[Assessing] Iraq at Level 4, indicating travelers should not travel to the country due to terrorism and armed conflict.'

<<https://www.osac.gov/Pages/ContentReportDetails.aspx?cid=25683>>

There was also a 'suspected Islamic State' attack on the 'Erbil governorate' in July of last year. See <<https://tinyurl.com/ybmuwraf>> or <<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/07/gunmen-storm-governorate-building-iraq-erbil-official-180723065501918.html>>

⁶⁵ 'Prince William works with security agencies on attachment' at <<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-47842097>>.

⁶⁶ 'On Granny's secret service!' at <<https://tinyurl.com/y3k2z6wo>> or <<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-6894635/On-Grannys-secret-service-Prince-William-does-work-experience-MI5-MI6-GCHQ.html>>

⁶⁷ 'Licence To Will' at <<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/8807206/prince-william-spy-undercover-jobs/>>.

A recent series of online audio podcasts from the National Archives have presented some analysis of the records relating to espionage.⁶⁸ The episodes have included details on three interesting female figures from the history of spying.

Firstly, there is Noor Inayat Khan, the 'pacifist children's author and musician turned spy' who served as a wireless operator for SOE in Paris during 1943-44. Second is Gertrude Bell – the precursor of T. E. Lawrence, who was stationed in Arabia two years before him (and who worked with St. John Philby – the father of Kim Philby). The third was, somewhat predictably – but still revelatory in the background detail⁶⁹ – Margaretha Zelle (a.k.a. Mata Hari).⁷⁰

Unnecessary punishment through secrecy

A report in the *Belfast Telegraph* of 15 April stated, 'Northern Ireland mum told file on police killing of child (15) will be sealed for 80 years'.⁷¹ The background being that teenager Paul Whitters died after he was hit by a plastic bullet on that same date thirty-eight years before. The very first sentence of the report said:

'In the late 1980s the RUC settled a civil action against them in relation to the killing of Paul Whitters but admitted no liability for his death.'

To me that kind of settlement always indicates that the party denying actual responsibility for the death are guilty, but know that the family of the deceased would rather not go through the rigmarole of continually dragging the case through the court system. More recently, in 2007, the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland said that, although

⁶⁸ For the overview, see <https://media.nationalarchives.gov.uk/index.php/category/on-the-record/>.

⁶⁹ This included the tragedy of her early married life, an abusive husband and the death of her child.

⁷⁰ There is more on hitherto relatively unsung female agents in WW2 in 'Female Spies and Their Secrets' at <https://tinyurl.com/yxvghst> or <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2019/06/female-spies-world-war-ii/588058/>.

⁷¹ <https://tinyurl.com/y4pv2g9z> or <https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/northern-ireland-mum-told-file-on-police-killing-of-child-15-will-be-sealed-for-80-years-38015825.html>

This should be “note 4”.

'We have found no new evidence that the police officer who fired the gun intended to kill Paul. In my view, the firing of the baton gun on that occasion was wrong and unjustifiable.'⁷²

I can see why you have moved this from the main text but it seems a little long for a footnote now.

I'd suggest trimming it so that it reads:

That the government are continuing to deny the family the information that they clearly and morally deserve, is surely unnecessary punishment through secrecy.⁷²

⁷²Of course the more is a vast public relations exercise and the U.S. Department of State (Bureau of Diplomatic Security) *Iraq 2019 Crime & Safety Report: Erbil* advises against travel to the city: [Assessing] Iraq at Level 4, indicating travelers should not travel to the country due to terrorism and armed conflict.' <<https://www.osac.gov/Pages/ContentReportDetails.aspx?cid=25683>>

There was also a 'suspected Islamic State' attack on the 'Erbil governorate' in July of last year. See <<https://tinyurl.com/ybmuwraf>> or <<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/07/gunmen-storm-governorate-building-iraq-erbil-official-180723065501918.html>>”

'Killer' art

[N.B. that this also corrects the spelling of “travelers” in the first part to reflect the non-standard

While Irish on the subject of Northern Ireland, infamous Loyalist killer Michael Stone had an art show during his jail release last summer.⁷³ His oeuvre would seem to mix the modern 'pop-art' styles of Damien Hirst and Banksy with the more traditional themes of Loyalist murals, as seen in Belfast. Yes . . . it's that bad.

⁷² <<https://tinyurl.com/yy2yzdt9>> or <<https://www.policeombudsman.org/Media-Releases/2000-2010/2007/No-new-evidence-killing-was-deliberate-but-use-of>>

⁷³ <<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-45121694>>