

South of the border (occasional snippets from)

Nick Must

new

From the dim and distant past

Reading British spy Greville Wynne's *The Man From Moscow*,¹ I noticed that MI6 had set him up as a potential traitor. This was presumably done to ensure there was a fall-back position if it were deemed necessary that he should be disowned.

On page 80 of the book, we learn that the Soviets tasked Wynne's Soviet contact, Alex Penkofsky, with obtaining 'a piece of computer equipment that was on the Soviet "wanted" list'. By arrangement with MI6, Wynne provided 'an out-of-date model of the type required' and is paid £50. The exchange takes place in 'the yard outside the Soviet Embassy' in London. Later, Wynne tries to give the £50 to his controllers but they tell him to keep it for himself.

It can be safely assumed that British intelligence had the environs of the Soviet Embassy under photographic surveillance and MI6 could have used that as evidence to show Wynne taking money from the Russians.

new

Slating Slate

'We Cracked the Redactions in the Ghislaine Maxwell Deposition' ran the self-congratulatory headline to a 22 October piece on Slate.com.² This claim, though, was complete hogwash. All they had succeeded in doing was to exploit the poor methodology used by a law firm, who had attempted to redact information from the recently unsealed transcript of a videotaped deposition Maxwell had given in 2016. The lawyers slapdash work, as the Slate hacks themselves confessed, meant that words redacted in the index had, at places,

¹ London: Hutchinson, 1967

² For the Slate article, see <<https://tinyurl.com/y66htexw>> or <<https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2020/10/ghislaine-maxwell-deposition-redactions-epstein-how-to-crack.html>>. For the Maxwell deposition, see <<https://assets.documentcloud.org/documents/7274479/Maxwell-Deposition-2016.pdf>>.

not been redacted in the main text. Likewise, words that were redacted in main text were sometimes not redacted in the index. So, what it had taken *three* bylined writers at Slate to do was far too easy!

Regular *Lobster* readers will be aware of my previous efforts to properly deduce redacted information³ and it was fellow scribe Garrick Alder, who threw down the gauntlet for me to fully put Slate in their place. Cross referencing the Maxwell deposition with other documents related to the Epstein case,⁴ I have now worked my way through the document and can say that the vast majority of the other names Slate couldn't deduce are the young women whom Jeffrey Epstein and Ghislaine Maxwell are alleged to have exploited. I will not be detailing any of those names, even if they have already self-identified themselves to the media. However, two of the males whose names Slate missed are Gary Roxburgh⁵ and Jojo Fontanilla⁶ – both of whom were in the employ of Epstein.

Most hilariously, the Slate piece ends with: 'Want to help us crack some more redactions? Email us what you find'. Considering their boastful headline, one can rest assured that I have no interest in helping them whatsoever.

new

Rory Stewart's pre-emptive manoeuvre

It was interesting to see Rory Stewart using the *Times Literary Supplement* (TLS) as a way of continuing his pre-emptive manoeuvres against any Prime

³ For a good example, see my 'Using the UK FOIA, part II' in *Lobster* 75 (Summer 2018) at <<https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/free/lobster75/lob75-uk-foia.pdf>>

⁴ Such as the flight logs for Epstein's planes and his now infamous 'Black Book' of names, addresses and phone numbers

⁵ Page 132, lines 15-16 of Maxwell's deposition. He was one of the pilots who flew Epstein's small fleet of jets. The redaction for his surname is mis-transcribed in the index because it is placed between 'Robson' and 'Rodriguez'. However, travel writer Christine Negrone identifies one 'Robert Gary Roxburgh' as an Epstein pilot at <<https://tinyurl.com/yxd6jue6>> or <<https://christinenegrone.com/should-epsteins-pilots-have-foiled-his-child-sex-trafficking-ring/>> and he is also listed as a pilot/instructor at <<http://www.city-data.com/pilots/palm-bch-garden-florida.html>>.

⁶ Pages 260/1 of Maxwell's deposition. He was the male half of a Filipino couple who worked as housekeepers for Jeffrey Epstein. See 'Who Are Jojo and Jun-Lyn Fontanilla, Jeffrey Epstein's Housekeepers?' at <<https://tinyurl.com/yxqq76h6>> or <<https://www.esquiremag.ph/long-reads/features/jeffrey-epstein-criminal-case-filipino-a00297-20200708>>

Minister not named Rory Stewart.⁷ Reviewing the recent biography by Tom Bower of Stewart's fellow ex-Etonian, *Boris Johnson: The Gambler*,⁸ Stewart amusingly pointed out that Johnson's hero from ancient Greece, Pericles, 'had built the Parthenon, not the Emirates Cable Car'. He also neatly summed up the otherwise blindingly obvious by describing Johnson as 'an amoral figure operating in a much bleaker and coarser culture'.

Previous to this, in December of 2018, Stewart had been interviewed by James O'Brien on radio station LBC.⁹ Refusing to toe the party line almost throughout the discussion, Stewart was cautiously frank about what he saw as the root cause of Brexit, saying: 'Britain has had a difficult, ambivalent, relationship with Europe for 50 years'. It would have been more honest of him to have said it was mostly the *Tory Party* that had been having the ambivalent relationship, but perhaps we shouldn't expect anything more than baby steps.

While he was a candidate for the Tory leadership. Stewart told Katy Balls in *The Spectator* that he was 'really enthusiastic' about the prospect of being Prime Minister.¹⁰ Since Boris Johnson won the contest Rory Stewart has, quite wisely, sat on his hands and let our current PM make a predictable hash of things. I am distinctly reminded of Tony Blair and his position in the Labour Party – at least during the idyllic, pre-war criminal days. Blair was seen as a soft-right (within Labour) and Stewart espouses many soft-left (for a Conservative) ideas. Many within his own party would probably see Rory Stewart as a neater fit within Labour, just as many within Labour saw Blair's more natural home as being in the Conservatives.

So, Rory Stewart has to be in it for the long-game. I think we can expect a reserved drip feed of actions like the *TLS* book review, as he continues his attempt to reinforce himself in the position of leader-in-waiting for the period that must surely follow Boris Johnson's inevitable fall. But what, perchance, if Boris Johnson survives these choppiest of choppy waters and/or Rory Stewart were unable to save the Tories from themselves? Fear not. There will always be a future because, apparently, Orlando Bloom is on stand-by for the 'Rory

⁷ 'Lord of misrule - Boris Johnson: an amoral figure for a bleak, coarse culture', *TLS* 6 November 2020 at <<https://www.the-tls.co.uk/articles/boris-johnson-tom-bower-book-review-rory-stewart/>>.

⁸ London: W H Allen, 2020

⁹ James O'Brien's Brexit Interview With Tory Minister – In Full - at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8D3hX_J9trk> This was actually the stand-out in a series of interviews conducted with otherwise groan-inducing 'luminaries' such as Jacob Rees-Mogg and Nigel Farage.

¹⁰ "'I'm not stupid" Does the Prisons Minister have what it takes to succeed Theresa May?' 27 April 2019 at <<https://www.spectator.co.uk/article/-i-m-not-stupid->>.

Stewart as action-man' biopic.¹¹

new

Banana Republic U.S.

The Nairobi-based 'Cartoonist, writer, columnist, student and commentator on Kenya and international affairs' who goes by the Twitter handle of @gathara has posted the most hilarious series of messages, describing the American election process through the lens that the Western media usually applies to the democratic processes of African countries.¹² Gems from the over 150 messages in the thread, include:

[1st November] 'Polls are set to open in 48 hours across the US as the authoritarian regime of Donald Trump attempts to consolidate its hold over the troubled, oil-rich, nuclear-armed, north American nation. Analysts are sceptical the election will end months of political violence.'

[5th November] 'Report from Bonoko Institute for Electoral Democracy blames poor numeracy for delayed vote count in chaotic US presidential elections, notes that in the last two decades, the country's math scores had stagnated in international assessments of national education systems.'

[7th November] 'Ageing opposition leader and former vice-president, Joe Biden, is set to be declared winner of disputed elections in the north American nation of USA, which has abundant natural resources but is sadly plagued by deep ethnic animosities and a rapacious, corrupt elite.'

[11th November] 'After days in barricaded presidential palace, US dictator, Donald Trump, hesitantly emerges to attend ceremony for fallen troops in coastal capital, Washington DC. Race is now on to get back to the palace before President-elect Joe Biden can sneak in and depose him.'

Spare a thought

As the U.S. Presidential election draws near, let us spare a thought for those candidates of whom the one thing that it is guaranteed is that we'll have never heard of them. I'm talking about the more than twelve hundred other

¹¹ 'Rory Stewart: New DFID chief with a colourful career' by Sophie Edwards for Devex (The media platform for the global development community.) 2 May 2019
<<https://www.devex.com/news/rory-stewart-new-dfid-chief-with-a-colorful-career-94833>>.

¹² <<https://twitter.com/gathara/status/1322999903753220099>>

presidential candidates whose names aren't Trump, Pence, Biden or Harris.¹³ Although there are several comedic, non-serious, candidates – e.g. 'The Almost Famous Gipperman', 'Big Chungus' and 'Brandy Gump' – the vast majority are real people with seemingly serious intent.

However, it is difficult to tell if the one 'other' candidate that is widely known is of serious intent or not. The candidacy of musician Kanye West has drawn a fair amount of publicity but is widely viewed as a deliberate spoiler to draw black voters away from the Democrats. Mr. West has somehow managed to spend approximately \$6 Million of his own money¹⁴ on a largely non-existent campaign.¹⁵ (Although it has been reported that West has released his first campaign ad,¹⁶ it is impossible that such a last minute activity could actually propel him into the White House.)

It should also be noted that even Mr. West is suffering from his own comedy spoiler candidates, one of which is a 'Gay Kanye West Fish'¹⁷ (apparently a reference to a joke from the puerile cartoon show *South Park*, *m' lud*).¹⁸

What must they think of us?

Many thanks to fellow *Lobster* contributor, Scott Newton, for pointing me in the direction of the recent *Guardian* story, 'Confidence in UK's global role plunges after Brexit, poll finds'.¹⁹ This made reference to a survey which has revealed that 49% of respondents 'believe that Britain is a force for good in the world, down 10 points from April 2019'. Meanwhile, 41% said 'the UK should

¹³ 'US election 2020: The other 1,214 candidates running for president' from the BBC News website at <<https://www.bbc.com/news/election-us-2020-54334173>>.

¹⁴ See the financial details for the 'Kanye 2020 Committee' on the Federal Election Commission website at <<https://www.fec.gov/data/candidate/P00016741/>>.

¹⁵ See, e.g., 'Talked Up as Spoiler, Kanye West's 2020 Bid Draws Mostly Shrugs' at <<https://tinyurl.com/y4gdbome>> or <<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-10-11/talked-up-as-spoiler-kanye-west-s-2020-bid-draws-mostly-shrugs>>.

¹⁶ See, e.g., 'Kanye West calls for write-in campaign in his first 2020 ad' at <<https://tinyurl.com/y5vbyevb>> or <<https://thehill.com/blogs/in-the-know/in-the-know/520655-kanye-west-calls-for-write-in-campaign-in-his-first-2020-ad>>

¹⁷ See <<https://www.fec.gov/data/candidate/P00016691/>>.

¹⁸ If you truly feel you need more information, see <[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fishsticks_\(South_Park\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fishsticks_(South_Park))>.

¹⁹ <<https://tinyurl.com/y36tyskh>> or <<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2020/sep/28/confidence-in-uks-global-role-plunges-after-brexit-poll-finds>>

punch above its weight in world affairs' and 'the proportion who believe Britain should stop pretending it is an important power is up five points from last year to 38%'. The kicker here is that this was a survey of the UK population. Just imagine what the French or Germans think of us after more than four years of jingoistic Brexit twaddle from the likes of the dynamic European Research Group duo of Jacob Rees-Mogg and Mark Francois!

Irony free zone

While recently researching the bonkers Q-Anon theory, I discovered that the BBC has a 'Specialist disinformation reporter'.²⁰ I'm fairly sure that the actual job is not what it might appear to be at first glance.

It's what they don't say.

For an almost perfect example of obfuscation, check out MI5's favourite historian, Christopher Andrew, and a podcast produced by the National Archives detailing the releases in September 2019 of MI5 files related to (amongst other things) the Portland Spy Ring.²¹

The first point that stands out is how we are told that the Soviet deep-cover controller Konon Molody (a.k.a. Gordon Lonsdale) had been eventually 'exchanged for a British citizen accused of espionage in Moscow'. Why so coy? This 'British citizen accused' was none other than Greville Wynne. In his 1967 book *The Man from Moscow*, Wynne is more candid almost right from the start. On the sixth page of the first chapter he admits: 'I was an agent and my training had been thorough and explicit.'²²

Another instance of Christopher Andrew being somewhat economical with the *actualité* comes when he discusses MI5's interrogation of Molody. The main interrogator, Charles Elwell, is painted as being an exemplary officer but his later career is not mentioned. That included being a part of the right-wing

²⁰ Wags amongst readers will be disappointed to see <<https://uk.linkedin.com/in/marianna-spring-279439b6>> that, sadly, it is not Laura Kuenssberg.

²¹ See <<https://tinyurl.com/y26duz7s>> or <<https://media.nationalarchives.gov.uk/index.php/security-service-file-release-september-2019/>>.

²² Greville Wynne, *The Man From Moscow* (London: Hutchinson, 1967) p. 16. (The first five pages of chapter one describe Wynne's arrest and transportation to the Lubyanka prison.)

loony faction of MI5 that were convinced there were communist sympathisers in the Harold Wilson's Cabinet.²³

Protecting the Trumps

Donald Trump has many enemies and, in most cases, he would seem to be the one responsible for creating the animus. Whether it's his ex-wives, girlfriends and the odd porn star or two,²⁴ ex-world heavyweight boxing champion Mike Tyson,²⁵ anyone else with the name Trump who he came across in the world of business,²⁶ or the numerous small businesses (including his own lawyers!) he has stiffed on payments for their services,²⁷ Donald J. Trump was undoubtedly the party that caused the problem. He therefore needs the best protection money can buy and, indeed, he used to have that. Nowadays, however, he and his family have the best protection money can't buy – courtesy of the U.S. Secret Service.²⁸

Dawn Butler MP and the Met Police

In reply to the recent controversy that followed black MP Dawn Butler being in

²³ See, e.g., the obituary for Elwell in the *Guardian*, Monday 21 January 2008 at <<https://www.theguardian.com/news/2008/jan/21/mainsection.richardnortontaylor>>.

There remains an unexplored link between Ewell and Paul Staines, of Guido Fawkes infamy, who spent a year and a half compiling the smear sheet *British Briefing* for Elwell and David Hart. See the 'Paul Staines and the "cheesy quavers"' section in an earlier *South of the Border* at <<https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/free/lobster75/lob75-south-of-the-border.pdf>>.

²⁴ For a timeline of his infidelity see <<https://tinyurl.com/ybkhkr48>> or <<https://www.businessinsider.com/trump-melania-stormy-daniels-affairs-marriages-timeline-2018-3>>.

²⁵ 'The Trump Files: When Donald Tried to Shake Down Mike Tyson for \$2 Million' at <<https://tinyurl.com/y5s8b7b2>> or <<https://www.motherjones.com/politics/2020/09/trump-files-when-donald-shook-down-mike-tyson-2-million/>>.

²⁶ See 'How Donald Trump Tried to Protect His Name From Others Who Shared It' at <<https://tinyurl.com/yyyygh4x>> or <<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/01/nyregion/how-donald-trump-tried-to-protect-his-name-from-others-who-shared-it.html>>.

²⁷ See 'USA TODAY exclusive: Hundreds allege Donald Trump doesn't pay his bills' at <<https://tinyurl.com/y5uozq4t>> or <<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/elections/2016/06/09/donald-trump-unpaid-bills-republican-president-lawsuits/85297274/>>.

²⁸ Although the extensive nature of the Trump family's needs are apparently becoming a little challenging. See 'Are the unprecedented demands of protecting the Trumps straining the Secret Service?' at <<https://tinyurl.com/y3k2bqgq>> or <<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/unprecedented-demands-protecting-trumps-straining-secret-service>>.

a car that was stopped by cops in Hackney, the Metropolitan Police offered the explanation that it had all been due to human error. The officer responsible for entering the vehicle registration details into the on-board computer system in the patrol car had made a mistake. The resulting search of the DVLA records showed details for a different car from another part of the UK and that fact was, the Met claimed, the reason for the stop.²⁹

But why not double check the DVLA records before making the stop? Why assume (at that time) that there was no possibility of error on their part? Presumably, they are not aware of their own poor track record. Earlier this year, *The Independent* catalogued a series of police blunders that included at least one 'wrongful arrest caused by a typographical error'.³⁰

In the Met Police press release regarding the stop in Hackney, Deputy Commissioner Sir Steve House is quoted thus:

'The officers who undertook the stop were from the violent crime taskforce and were in the area as part of our proactive work to protect communities from violence.

Criminals often use vehicles to travel in and to commit crime, therefore officers will often check cars to see if there is anything that requires them to stop it and do further checks.'³¹

This is interesting on two levels. Firstly, it would appear that the patrol car was conducting random vehicle registration checks and did not allow for the possibility they had made a mistake. Secondly, it was Steve House, as Assistant Commissioner of Central Operations, whom the Met chose to attempt a soft soap on the use of Operation Kratos 'shoot-to-kill' tactics in a 2006 Panorama documentary on the police shooting of Jean-Charles de Menezes at Stockwell tube station.³²

Additionally, I think what can be safely deduced from the Met Police press release is that the violent crime taskforce had intelligence that members of a

²⁹ See 'Statement from Deputy Commissioner re: vehicle stop – Hackney' (the official Metropolitan Police statement): <<https://tinyurl.com/y46qkgv9>> or <<https://www.mynewsdesk.com/uk/metpoliceuk/news/statement-from-deputy-commissioner-re-vehicle-stop-hackney-408428>>.

³⁰ 'Innocent families' homes raided by police because of investigation errors, report reveals' <<https://tinyurl.com/y3zqraaz>> or <<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/home-raids-paedophiles-criminals-mistake-investigation-error-a9381196.html>>

³¹ See footnote 1.

³² Panorama: Stockwell - Countdown to Killing' currently available on YouTube: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wfglNwz7Lh8>> (the original date of broadcast was 8 March 2006 <<https://tinyurl.com/y398cwwg>> or <http://www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/pressreleases/stories/2006/03_march/08/panorama.shtml>).

criminal gang from outside London (and possibly more specifically the north) was due to visit the area. The patrol cars had been briefed to be on the lookout for either a BMW or a similar high end vehicle. The incorrectly entered vehicle registration then caused the patrol to think this was the car they were looking for because, the system showed, it appeared to have false plates. The topic of technical surveillance of – and informers inside – criminal gangs is an extremely sensitive one.³³ I am unsurprised that this aspect of the event has not been discussed anywhere in the media.

Official confirmation of what is already known

A 'hat tip' to Tom Griffin for pointing me in the direction of an update from Ciarán MacAirt and his project Paper Trail ('A charity/social enterprise supporting victims and survivors of conflict in Ireland and Britain'). Official documents, discovered by Paper Trail in the National Archives, show that British Military Intelligence had failed to 'protect its own soldiers and agents' who had been running the 'Four Square Laundry' and 'Gemini Massage Parlour' operations in Belfast.³⁴

But these documents merely confirm what has been known for a couple of years. Much the same information was included in chapter 10 of Patrick Radden Keefe's *Say Nothing: A True Story of Murder and Memory in Northern Ireland*.³⁵

Daily Mail blogging: it's a lonely place

In the latest instalment of his 'View from the Bridge', Robin Ramsay mentions Peter Hitchens and his blog³⁶ on the *Daily Mail* website. Hitchens is truly the

³³ It is also an extremely complex issue. The Crown Prosecution Service's 'Queen's Evidence - Immunities, Undertakings and Agreements under the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005' (a.k.a. guidelines for engaging criminal informants) runs to over 14,000 words. <<https://tinyurl.com/yyfubust>> or <<https://www.cps.gov.uk/legal-guidance/queens-evidence-immunities-undertakings-and-agreements-under-serious-organised-crime>>

³⁴ 'Secret British MoD Files Record MRF's Failure to Protect Freds' <<https://tinyurl.com/yyz4u6e7>> or <<http://www.papertrail.pro/secret-british-mod-files-record-mrfs-failure-to-protect-freds/>>

A good introduction to the MRF can be found in chapter 2 of Martin Dillon's *The Dirty War* (London: Random House, 1991).

³⁵ London: Harper Collins, 2018.

³⁶ See <<https://hitchensblog.mailonsunday.co.uk/>>.

stalwart of the 'Wail' blog: his being their only current mainstream political blog (having first contributed in February of 2006 and maintaining a presence to this day). In contrast, there has been nothing in the last seven plus years from e.g. Andrew Pierce, Amada Platell or Richard Littlejohn³⁷ – although they continue to contribute to the main part of the paper.

Thus, Peter Hitchens is the sole political contributor to the *Daily Mail* blogs and it looks like he has been given free rein to operate it himself, without editorial or proof-reading oversight. I can think of no other sensible explanation for him using his blog entries to constantly promote his appearances in other media (such as the Mike Graham show on Talk Radio³⁸), his articles for other websites (such as 'America's most influential journal of religion and public life' *First Things*³⁹), or for the immense grammatical howlers such as 'My Cameo Appearance on BBC Today programme, to discuss the Rhodes statue, not the Virus Panic'.⁴⁰ (emphasis added)

Bungled coup joke (stolen from a wag on Twitter)

A spoof Yelp-type review of mercenary company 'Silvercorp USA':⁴¹

'Friendly service, clean office but got caught while planning a coup. 1 star
Do not recommend – CIA.'⁴²

Turkey Tattle

Blink during recent events and you may have missed the news that an

³⁷ Pierce has no newer blog entries than 1 February 2013, for Platell it's 29 February 2012 and for Littlejohn 4 October 2011.

³⁸ The latest example at time of writing being <<https://tinyurl.com/y967qn5k>> or <<https://hitchensblog.mailonsunday.co.uk/2020/06/my-most-recent-appearance-on-mike-grahams-talk-radio-programme.html>>.

³⁹ See <<https://tinyurl.com/y9k3qwsa>> or <<https://hitchensblog.mailonsunday.co.uk/2020/06/why-do-we-get-so-worked-up-about-statues.html>>

⁴⁰ See <<https://tinyurl.com/y8ktqho4>> or <<https://hitchensblog.mailonsunday.co.uk/2020/06/my-cameo-appearance-on-bbc-today-rgramme-to-discuss-the-rhodes-statue-not-the-virus-panic.html>>

⁴¹ Whose personnel got caught in country by Venezuelan security forces. See, for example, <<https://tinyurl.com/yah68vj5>> or <<https://www.vox.com/2020/5/11/21249203/venezuela-coup-jordan-goudreau-maduro-guaido-explain>>.

⁴² <<https://twitter.com/shewz/status/1257553180184834048>>

employee of the American government, with a quarter of a century of service, has been sentenced to more than eight and a half years in jail by a Turkish court for aiding a terrorist organisation'.⁴³ That Metin Topuz has been associated with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) since at least the mid '90s is confirmed by his name being mentioned and his photograph included in the Spring/Summer 1995 edition of the in-house publication *DEA World*.⁴⁴

In fact a total of three Turkish nationals in the employ of the United States embassy and consulates in Turkey were detained after the failed coup attempt against Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in 2016. The other two were Nazmi Mete Cantürk, 'a security officer at the U.S. Consulate in Istanbul',⁴⁵ and Hamza Ulucay, 'a translator at the U.S. consulate in Adana'.⁴⁶ That Mr. Ulucay is also a long-term US government employee is confirmed by a 1988 Senate Committee on Foreign Relations report, which refers to his work as a translator for a weapons inspection team that had visited the Turkey/Iraq border.⁴⁷

The U.S. Embassy in Ankara was apparently 'deeply disappointed' by the conviction and claimed not to have seen any 'credible evidence' to support it.⁴⁸

That's a rather feeble response compared to that given to Turkey's imprisonment in 2018 of evangelical pastor Andrew Brunson (*not* a U.S. employee, note) whose case, *Time* reported, had become

' . . . a flashpoint in worsening relations between Turkey and the United States – and in a war of words between Erdoğan and President Trump. In

⁴³ The English language news coverage was pretty sparse. The most extensive account was from the BBC: <<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-53012776>>.

⁴⁴ 'Istanbul Resident Office' report, pp 39-40 of *DEA World*, Spring/Summer 1995 <<https://tinyurl.com/ycz4f3cw>> or <<https://books.google.com.mx/books?id=Do7Pt9gIncUC&printsec=frontcover#v=onepage&q&f=false>>.

⁴⁵ 'Turkish court orders release of US Consulate employee from house arrest' <<https://tinyurl.com/y97245ne>> or <<https://www.dailysabah.com/investigations/2019/06/25/turkish-court-orders-release-of-us-consulate-employee-from-house-arrest>>.

⁴⁶ 'Turkish court frees U.S. consulate employee: Anadolu' <<https://tinyurl.com/y6wr7qn7>> or <<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-turkey-security-usa/turkish-court-frees-u-s-consulate-employee-anadolu-idUSKCN1PO1XB>>.

⁴⁷ 'Chemical Weapons Use in Kurdistan: Iraq's Final Offensive: a Staff Report to the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate' (September 1988) page (v) <https://books.google.com.mx/books?id=9Gks9S_oPd0C>

⁴⁸ 'U.S. Embassy Statement on Today's Court Decision for U.S. Consulate General Istanbul Employee Metin Topuz' <<https://tinyurl.com/yd5e3w9k>> or <<https://tr.usembassy.gov/u-s-embassy-statement-on-todays-court-decision-for-u-s-consulate-general-istanbul-employee-metin-topuz/>>.

August, the U.S. imposed financial sanctions on Turkey, in an extraordinary move against a NATO ally. "Our relations with Turkey are not good at this time!" Trump tweeted.⁴⁹

All four of the above mentioned cases – Topuz, Cantürk, Ulucay and Brunson – have been alleged to have had contact with, or supported by various means, the Fethullah Gülen network. That is the group made up of the followers of the eponymous Turkish moderate Muslim cleric who has a Green Card to live in – and is currently resident in – the United States.⁵⁰ What is interesting about Fethullah Gülen's U.S. green card is that he was originally denied residence but his appeal was supported by a letter of recommendation from 'former CIA officer' and 'former vice-chair of the US National Intelligence Council Graham Fuller'.⁵¹

Originally an intimate ally of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Gülen is now considered his sworn enemy and the Turkish government believes that the Gülen network was heavily involved in the attempted 2016 coup. That is the stated reason for the arrest of both the three embassy/consulate employees and Pastor Brunson. According to the Erdoğan administration – and, it would seem, the entire Turkish population – ultimate responsibility for the coup rests with the CIA.⁵² Alleged links between the Gülen network and the CIA. is nothing new. As Jeff Stein noted in his 'SpyTalk' column for *The Washington Post* in 2011:

'A memoir by a top former Turkish intelligence official claims that a worldwide moderate Islamic movement based in Pennsylvania has been providing cover for the CIA since the mid-1990s.'⁵³

⁴⁹ 'Who is Andrew Brunson, the Evangelical Pastor Freed in Turkey?' <<https://time.com/5351025/andrew-brunson-trump-turkey/>>

⁵⁰ President Trump's ex-National Security advisor, Michael Flynn, was allegedly involved in a plot to 'kidnap [Gülen] and deliver him to the Turkish government for a \$15 million fee'. See <<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-5069871/Flynn-son-paid-15m-kidnap-cleric.html>>.

⁵¹ See Melvin A. Goodman, *Whistleblower at the CIA: An Insider's Account of the Politics of Intelligence* (San Francisco: City Lights Publishers, 2017) p. 126 and 'Turkey seeks arrest of ex-CIA officer Fuller over coup plot' <<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-42198399>>. Goodman, a 42 year intelligence veteran <<https://melvingoodman.com/bio/>>, further describes Graham Fuller as 'one of the strangest characters I encountered in the directorate of operations' (*Whistleblower at the CIA* p. 126).

⁵² See 'Turks Can Agree on One Thing: U.S. Was Behind Failed Coup' in the *New York Times* (2 August 2016) <<https://tinyurl.com/ya4y9lor>> or <<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/03/world/europe/turkey-coup-erdogan-fethullah-gulen-united-states.html>>.

⁵³ 'Islamic group is CIA front, ex-Turkish intel chief says' by Jeff Stein, *Washington Post*, 5 January 2011 <<https://tinyurl.com/yabsy365>> or <http://voices.washingtonpost.com/spy-talk/2011/01/islamic_group_is_cia_front_ex-.html>.

Who should be quoted in the Stein piece, attempting to debunk the allegation? Step forward the already mentioned Graham Fuller, who said: 'I think the story of 130 CIA agents in Gulen schools in Central Asia is pretty wild'. He was, however, also keen to stress:

'I left CIA in 1987 – nearly 25 years ago – and I have absolutely no concrete personal knowledge whatsoever about this. But my instincts tell me the claim is highly improbable.'

That's some special kind of 'non-denial denial'.

Another non-viable 'ISIS bomb plot'

In my *South of the Border* from *Lobster 76* I wrote about Naa'imur Zakariyah Rahman, the alleged ISIS supporter who was sentenced to a minimum 30 year jail term for plotting to kill British Prime Minister, Theresa May.⁵⁴ It seemed pretty clear to me that he had been entirely manipulated by the undercover MI5 officers with whom he was in contact as they were 'the only people who did anything to facilitate' his intended attack.

The case of Safiyya Shaikh, recently 'jailed for life with a minimum term of 14 years' after she pleaded guilty to the charge of preparation of terrorist acts and dissemination of terrorist publications, appears to be very similar. BBC news reported that, regarding the likelihood that she would have actually carried out such an attack, her defence counsel stated in court:

'The key words are "if carried out". Three people were involved in this plot, and two others were police officers. There was no bomb, there never would be. There were only police officers pretending to care about her, offering her words of encouragement to see how far she would go.'⁵⁵

Transcripts of the online conversations she had with the MI5 officers show that she asked them: 'U will teach me everything to do?'

In earlier BBC coverage of the case, defence counsel was also quoted as saying:

'On evidence before the court, there were clear indicators Safiyya Shaikh had cold feet and wouldn't go through with it.'

This was because

⁵⁴ See 'How viable was the "ISIS-inspired Theresa May murder plot"'? in <<https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/free/lobster76/lob76-south-of-the-border.pdf>>.

⁵⁵ See 'Safiyya Shaikh: How undercover operation caught a drug addict jihadist' <<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-53264640>>.

'she cancelled a meeting with the undercover officers in October [2019] as she 'started to get doubts', *causing concerned police to swoop in and arrest her*'.⁵⁶ (emphasis added)

Which makes it sound like she was arrested due to the fact that she started to *drift away* from the idea. Surely not?!

The life history of Safiyya Shaikh, as recounted in court, is certainly very sad. A heroin addict who had been arrested for possession of the Class A narcotic, her 'family was riven by drug and alcohol abuse'. Her habit was so bad that 'The first day of the police interviews had to be abandoned, [her defence barrister] said, because Shaikh was in a state of heroin withdrawal.' Even more tellingly:

'Mr Newton [her defence counsel] said his client had experienced a "life of pain and loneliness", and disclosed she suffered a "truly traumatic childhood".'

She also went to great lengths to please people, even travelling to Pakistan to get married against her will, before backing out at the last minute and being sent home to the UK in disgrace, he added.' (emphasis added)

Bearing that in mind, the fact from the prosecution presented evidence that she said, in a phone call she made from prison: 'I'm so tired about things [. . .] I didn't get cold feet yeah . . . I was ready to go through with it . . . I wasn't having doubts' would seem a bit harsh. Let me repeat that she was a people-pleasing drug addict who could well say anything, as long as she believed it would hold her in good stead with whomever she were speaking.

That she was, at one time at least, full of good intentions is shown by a crowdfunding page on the JustGiving platform, set up in her name in early December 2016 with the intention of establishing a Islamic based women's refuge.⁵⁷ That life was regularly giving her a hard time can be deduced by the fact that the same fundraising page was closed a month later, in early 2017, having gained £0 in donations.

Rave on!

The end of December 2016 saw the release of files by the National Archives from the 1989/90 period. These include a batch that are enlightening as to the

⁵⁶ See 'St Paul's bomb plot: IS supporter Safiyya Shaikh "got cold feet"' <<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-london-53199146>>.

⁵⁷ See <<https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/Womansrefuge>>.

Thatcher administration's thoughts on how to deal with the 'Acid House craze' that had emerged over the previous couple of years.⁵⁸ The first document in the file provides an amusing aside in that Malcolm Rifkind, writing to David Waddington at the Home Office, was anxious that 'the proposed Private Member's Bill . . . will have to be very carefully drafted if we are to avoid catching entirely innocent events such as a barn dance'.⁵⁹ Noisy youth music event, with 'loved-up' and friendly attendees – bad; noisy middle-class music event, with boozed-up and aggressive attendees – good.⁶⁰

The main take I have got from reading the files is the Government's actual (as opposed to public) attitude to drugs use at such events: 'The main problem with acid house parties is the nuisance caused by the noise. [. . .] Drugs are not the main issue.'⁶¹ That would come as a surprise to anyone who had followed the moral panic induced by the British media in response to acid house reaching the UK. In the previous issue's *South of the Border*, I mentioned how Rupert Murdoch's *Sun* newspaper had made its own attempt to cash in on the burgeoning rave scene – in the process daftly claiming 'Sharp street kids love Acid music. . . . but they're saying a resounding NO to the daft drugs that plague the scene'.⁶² The National Archives file itself goes on to include a photograph of a page from the *Daily Express* (of 9 October 1989) that began: 'DRUG BUSTING police sealed off an entire town twice at the weekend to claim their first victory over the Acid House cult'.⁶³ (caps in the original)

Sticking the boot in – Cominic Dummings

It is time again that I kick a man when he's down. Dominic Cummings fully deserves the shit he has had thrown at him recently. However, there is one

⁵⁸ 'HOME AFFAIRS. Acid house parties' [PREM-19-2724]:
<<http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C16328940>>

⁵⁹ See p. 2 of the PREM-19-2724 file (as per note 3 above).

⁶⁰ I agree with Stephen Fry that 'you should try everything once, except incest and country dancing'. Fry has variously attributed the originator of this witticism as either Arnold Bax or Harry Walpole. The first time I read it was in the '*Agony Cousin*' chapter of Fry's book of collected articles – *Paperweight* (London: Heinemann, 1992).

⁶¹ See p. 29 of the PREM-19-2724 file (as per note 3 above).

⁶² See the section 'That time *The Sun* tried to cash in on Acid House' from my *South of the Border* in *Lobster* 78 at
<<https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/free/lobster78/lob78-south-of-the-border.pdf>>.

⁶³ See p. 34 of the PREM-19-2724 file (as per note 3 above).

aspect of what he claims happened during the trip to Durham that I have not heard any media pick up on. At the presser held in the No.10 garden, Dominic Cummings stated that he has never been tested for COVID-19. Neither, as far as I am aware, has his wife Mary Wakefield.⁶⁴ Considering they were so petrified that they were carriers, the true reason they didn't get tested would seem to be abundantly clear. Their son was tested when he was briefly hospitalised overnight – and the result came back as negative. That was the wake-up for Cummings and Wakefield, who realised that they were in all likelihood also negative. Thus, their reasoning for dashing up to Durham – their fear that they were both highly infectious – had been an over-reaction. Neither of them were actually infected and they could return to London.

I commented on a blog post by Bernard Porter thus:

'As you say, Cummings is undoubtedly intelligent. I would say he fits the Conan Doyle characterisation of Sherlock Holmes as "the perfect reasoning machine". That supposed advantage actually got Holmes (admittedly a fictional creation) into more than a few scrapes but the same could be said for what has now happened to the real-life Cummings. Who is to say that there haven't been similar, less publicly made, ultra-gaffes by the Svengali-in-Chief?'⁶⁵

Harry Dunn/Anne Sacoolas

Much excitement recently at the prospect that CIA officer Anne Sacoolas might be extradited to the UK, following the issuance of what was reported to be an Interpol Red Notice in her name.⁶⁶ The fact that the U.S. government swiftly announced that it would be completely ignoring the warrant⁶⁷ will have come as no surprise to those familiar with previous arrest warrants for CIA officers, such as those involved in the rendition of terrorist suspects in the early

⁶⁴ In her now infamous article for the *Spectator*, she used the expression 'My *version* of the virus' [added emphasis] – which is very open to interpretation and hardly a clear and unequivocal statement that she had it. See <<https://www.spectator.co.uk/article/getting-coronavirus-does-not-bring-clarity>>.

⁶⁵ <<https://bernardjporter.com/2020/05/24/classic-dom/>>

⁶⁶ See, for instance, <<https://tinyurl.com/yct6a7vy>> or <<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/may/11/interpol-red-notice-issued-for-arrest-of-anne-sacoolas>>.

⁶⁷ 'Harry Dunn crash: Anne Sacoolas extradition refusal "final"': <<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-northamptonshire-52630089>>

2000s.⁶⁸

What might be more surprising is that the issuing of the Red Notice would seem to have been a charade, as it has already been removed. There is no sign of it on the Interpol website, which only lists three Red Notices for female U.S. citizens – none of whom is Anne Sacoolas. It is very easy to confirm this: go to the Interpol website,⁶⁹ click on the section for 'Wanted Persons' (i.e. Red Notices) and you can then filter the results by nationality and gender. Voilà, she is already no longer a wanted person.⁷⁰ There can be no possibility of human error because, as the Interpol website notes: 'The Notices data on this website is updated every hour.'

⁶⁸ 'Italy Asks Interpol For CIA Agents':

<<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/italy-asks-interpol-for-cia-agents/>>

⁶⁹ <<https://www.interpol.int/en>>

⁷⁰ A search for family name 'Sacoolas' comes up entirely negative (i.e. zero results), as does one for Red Notices that have been issued for *any* person being sought by the UK police.