

The view from the bridge

Robin Ramsay

*My thanks to Garrick Alder and Nick Must for help with
the production of Lobster.*

new

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new

Wuhan

I always skim through the *Daily Mail* website. As well as the usual drooling Royals coverage, celebrities' weight loss stories and Labour-is-useless pieces, every once in a while they carry something interesting. For example, on 23 November Glen Owen wrote 'Covid inquiry evidence which criticised MI6 for denying Wuhan lab leak theory was censored by security officials'.¹ Owen reported:

Security officials censored a submission to the Covid Inquiry which highlighted the failure of intelligence agents to gather evidence which points to the virus having originated in a laboratory in Wuhan [in China].

The heavily criticised £200 million inquiry by Baroness Hallett stifled any discussion of the origins of Covid, with lawyers shutting down ex Cabinet Minister Michael Gove when he tried to tell them 'a significant

¹ <<https://shorturl.at/z3mGh>> or <<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-15317475/Covid-inquiry-evidence-criticised-MI6-denying-Wuhan-lab-leak-theory-censored-security-officials.html>>

body of judgment' believed the virus was man-made.

Last week, Lord Gove, who was at the heart of the Government's response to the crisis, publicly reasserted that the view of 'most intelligence agencies' was that the virus had leaked after being super-charged by Chinese scientists to become ultra-infectious.

Now Whitehall sources have revealed that Dominic Cummings' evidence to the inquiry was redacted by the security services to remove criticism of the fact that MI5 and MI6 had falsely dismissed the 'lab leak' hypothesis as a 'conspiracy theory'.

This is very striking and very odd. Did we know that 'security' officials (presumably MI5) had the right to edit official reports? And why did they bother? Considering how many nonsensical US lines our spooks have followed, why is it so embarrassing that they went along with the initial American line that Covid came from a food market and had nothing to do with the lab in Wuhan?

The belief that the outbreak began in the Wuhan lab is widespread. This is the view of Germany's intelligence agency BND,² and the US Congress's Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic,³ to name the first two stories I read when I asked Mr Google. On April 18 the Trump White House put out a statement 'Lab leak: the true origins of Covid 19' which included this paragraph:

ECOHEALTH ALLIANCE INC. (ECOHEALTH):

EcoHealth — under the leadership of Dr. Peter Daszak — used U.S. taxpayer dollars to facilitate dangerous gain-of-function research in Wuhan, China. After the Select Subcommittee released evidence of EcoHealth violating the terms of its National Institutes of Health (NIH) grant, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) commenced official debarment proceedings and suspended all funding to EcoHealth.

New evidence also shows that the Department of Justice (DOJ) has opened an investigation into EcoHealth's pandemic-era activities.⁴

² <<https://shorturl.at/KtMTG>> or <<https://www.dw.com/en/covid-pandemic-likely-unleashed-by-lab-mishap-germanys-bnd/a-71897701>>

³ <<https://shorturl.at/MnefJ>> or <<https://oversight.house.gov/release/covid-origins-hearing-wrap-up-facts-science-evidence-point-to-a-wuhan-lab-leak/>>

⁴ <<https://www.whitehouse.gov/lab-leak-true-origins-of-covid-19/>>

Ecohealth's role in all this was reported by me in this column in *Lobster* 81 under subhead **Follow the cover-up.**

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The *Daily Mail* also publicised former Fox TV host Tucker Carlson's conversation with someone who believes that the US state is spraying chemicals into the atmosphere – the chemtrails thread in American conspiracy writing in the last twenty years.⁵ T. J. Coles wrote about this in *Lobster* 64,⁶ citing, among other things, a 1996 paper by a group of US Air Force officers: *Weather as a Force Multiplier: Owning the Weather in 2025*.⁷ That paper alone means we shouldn't dismiss the chemtrails idea too quickly.

new

JFK and Israel

I wrote below (see under subhead **Israel and Dallas**) about an essay suggesting that the Israelis were involved in, or were responsible, for JFK's assassination. That essay was no good but, pursuing the subject a step further, I got Ken McCarthy's *JFK and RFK's Secret Battle Against Zionist Extremism: The Documentary Evidence* (Brasscheck Press).⁸ Which does what it says on the tin. The evidence is very impressive and shows in great detail that JFK was trying – and not too secretly, either – to move US foreign policy away from its blanket support for Israel. Tacked onto this McCarthy also reexamines RFK's assassination in some detail and concludes that it was probably organised by the CIA's very pro-Israel James Angleton. Perhaps so; but he has no evidence.

new

Broken-down Blighty

The delusion that the UK is a very rich country is not confined to members of the British left. This was a headline on CNN on 24 November:

Britain is one of the world's richest countries. So why do a third of its children live in poverty? ⁹

⁵ <<https://shorturl.at/5vCFD>> or <<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-15281179/us-military-secret-spraying-chemicals-chemtrails.html>>

⁶ <<https://shorturl.at/TfWXL>> or <<https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/article/issue/64/chemtrails-the-proof-and-the-purpose/>>

⁷ <<https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/pdfs/ADA333462.pdf>>

⁸ <<https://www.brasscheck.com/video/jfk-and-rfk/>>

⁹ <<https://edition.cnn.com/2025/11/24/uk/britain-child-poverty-intl-scli>>

The CIA's *World Factbook* has the UK as the 38th richest country.¹⁰

new

Ukraine

At time of writing no details had been made public about the proposed deal to end the Russia-Ukraine war. The fragments that had appeared suggested that the deal was very similar to that proposed in 2022 which Ukraine was urged to reject by NATO. I noted in the previous *Lobster* that 'Many Western commentators have written that the 2022 peace deal would have left Ukraine as essentially at the mercy of Russia: no NATO membership and a small army.'¹¹ Which is what Russia had been seeking in the decade before the outbreak of war. My guess would be that the entire NATO military-intelligence apparatus has known for at least two years that something like this deal would be the outcome but were quite happy to fight the Russians to the last dead Ukrainian.

No cigar, not even close

Professor Francis Fukuyama, you may remember, became famous in the early 1990s for writing an essay, which became a book, with the provocative title 'The End of History and the Last Man'. In that – which I haven't read – he argued that, with the collapse of the Soviet bloc, the last challenge to liberal democracy was over. Uh-huh. I recently saw reference to another, more recent essay by Professor Fukuyama, with the intriguing title 'In Defense of the deep state'. Alas, it turned out to be another dud, for Fukuyama chooses to consider 'deep state' only as used by the Trump regime.

These are the opening few lines:

This article seeks to defend the idea of an American "deep state". The phrase "deep state" originated in countries like Turkey and Egypt, where a complex of military and security agencies manipulated the political system and operated in a completely non-transparent way to affect

¹⁰ <<https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/field/real-gdp-per-capita/country-comparison/>>

¹¹ See, for example, <<https://shorturl.at/ZqOx6>> or <<https://theconversation.com/ukraine-war-the-idea-that-kyiv-should-have-signed-a-peace-deal-in-2022-is-flawed-heres-why-250423>>.

politics. This phrase was then appropriated by American conservatives like Steve Bannon and used to characterise the American bureaucracy; total destruction of the “deep state” has become a central agenda item for many populists on the right.

The United States does not have a “deep state” in the Middle Eastern sense of the term. It has a large and complex civil service at federal, state, and local levels that is responsible for providing the bulk of the services that citizens expect from their government, what is known as the “administrative state”.¹² (Emphasis added.)

So, Fukuyama isn’t defending the ‘deep state’ at all. He’s talking about ‘the administrative state’. In echoing the use of the phrase by Steve Bannon, Fukuyama ignores – or is unaware of – the likes of Peter Dale Scott who was using the phrase ‘deep politics’ nearly 40 years ago when the US definitely did have a deep state ‘in the Middle Eastern sense of the term’. Scott began using ‘deep state’ in 2007.

So where is the USA’s ‘deep state’ these days? If it has been trying to remove Donald Trump – as one might assume it would – it has thus far failed. Given the extraordinary material available on Trump’s past – let alone all the still secret stuff – this is sort of surprising. But perhaps it hasn’t been trying. Perhaps the large increase in funding for the Pentagon bought off the ‘deep state’.

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Related to the above, I asked Google AI for use of the term ‘deep state’ and *inter alia* it offered me this:

The “contractor state”: More recent analyses describe a “real deep state” made up of defense contractors, corporate networks, and career politicians that benefits from endless government spending and lobbying.

Which is what used to be called the military-industrial complex. (The first user of the term, President Eisenhower, originally wanted to call it the military-industrial-congressional complex.)

Like so much else, we have imported this from the USA. It has been exposed in great detail by the Ajax tank farce about which I wrote at some length in this column in *Lobster* 85.¹³ I noted there that the company making

¹² ‘In Defense of the deep state’, *Asia Pacific Journal of Public Administration*, <<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/23276665.2023.2249142>>.

¹³ <<https://shorturl.at/kD4U7>> or <<https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/article/issue/85/the-view-from-the-bridge-48/>> under subhead **Our military-industrial complex**.

the tank, General Dynamics, had hired General Sir Peter Wall, former head of the Army, Major-General Carew Wilks, former head of the MoD's 'land equipment' department, and Lieutenant-General Andrew Figgures from the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers.

The first batch of this white elephant has been delivered: 8 years late, now costing £10 million each, with the basic structural faults largely untouched, by the sounds of it.¹⁴ I ended my *Lobster* 85 piece with this:

This new £7 million (sic) tank – in the unlikely event of it being deployed – will be a sitting duck for drones which cost less than half of one per cent of that.

And that was before 3 years of intensive drone development by all and sundry after their success against tanks in the Russia-Ukraine war (in which 5,000 tanks have been destroyed so far, though not all by drones).¹⁵ Is the MoD really going to deploy 589 tanks (or armoured reconnaissance vehicles as they are sometimes called) which can't survive on a battlefield? Apparently so. A number of heads should roll for this farce but, this being Blighty, none will.

Conspiracy theories

Well, the academics are still beavering away at conspiracy theories and conspiracy theory. Take Michael Butter's 'Conspiracy Theories as Populist Counter-Narratives'.¹⁶ He offers this as a starting point:

Put simply, conspiracy theories assert the existence of a covertly operating group of people – the conspirators – who seek, from base motives and by underhand means, to achieve certain ends. Such theories assume that nothing happens by accident, that nothing is as it seems, and that everything is connected (Barkun 2003, 3–4). In other words, they hold that everything has been planned by the conspirators and that events unfold exactly as they intend; that these conspirator are operating in secret; and that there are links between seemingly unconnected events, organizations, and people.

¹⁴ See this recent report in *The Times* <<https://archive.ph/x4MtT>>. Thanks to William Macintyre for this.

¹⁵ Google AI tells me:

As of November 2025, visually confirmed data indicates that Russia has lost over 4,000 tanks, while Ukraine has lost over 1,300 tanks in the war. The total number of tanks destroyed is difficult to verify precisely, and estimates vary by source.

¹⁶ <<https://www.degruyterbrill.com/document/doi/10.1515/9783839461778-002/html>>

But there is an obvious disconnect between his first sentence and his second. All conspiracy theories *do not* 'assume that nothing happens by accident' or that 'that everything is connected'. Some of the big stupid ones do, perhaps. But most of them are much smaller than that and do not make such an assumption. Centrally, Butter does not grasp – has probably never come across – Anthony Summers' distinction between theories about conspiracies and conspiracy theories. Of course, in the contemporary world, if someone (particularly someone in a position of power) wants to thwart discussion of a particular conspiracy, they will make sure it is routinely dismissed as 'conspiracy theories'. This happened most famously with the CIA's 1967 direction to all its agents and influencers to dismiss criticism of the Warren Commission as conspiracy theory.

Mr Butter has a chapter headed: 'Resemanticization in the *Plandemic* Movies'. Resemanticization defeated Google but it told me that semanticization is the process by which information shifts from specific, episodic memories to general, semantic knowledge over time. The author uses resemanticization only once, in the second last line of the chapter. Of the films – The Plandemic series by documentary filmmaker Mikki Willis – that he is discussing, Butter writes: 'As it accuses Rockefeller and his allies of a major resemanticization, it engages in such an act itself.' Huh?

Richard Gott RIP

Gott was a *Guardian* journalist who resigned when it was discovered that he had been taking money from the Soviets. How much money is in dispute. The *Daily Mail* ran the commie-traitor-at-pinko-guardian version as you would expect.¹⁷ The *Guardian* obit – by an old friend of Gott's – was more considered and included this fascinating titbit:

He admitted having "enjoyed" contacts with Russian and other Soviet-bloc officials and having accepted Soviet-paid trips to Vienna, Athens and Nicosia. Fatally, he acknowledged taking "red gold, even if it was only in the form of expenses". He had regarded it all as "an enjoyable joke", in cloak-and-dagger fashion. Gott denied receiving direct payments or naming fellow journalists: he had been called in by MI6 almost a decade before and *they had accepted his explanation*.¹⁸ (Emphasis added.)

¹⁷ <<https://shorturl.at/u3rRO>> or <<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/columnists/article-15262519/Guardian-journalist-spy-Kremlin.html>>

¹⁸ <<https://www.theguardian.com/media/2025/nov/02/richard-gott-obituary>>

The unsayable

The *New Statesman* carried a decent critique by Neal Lawson of the rise of what he calls the Starmer-McSweeney project: 'The Starmer-McSweeney tendency is sinking Labour'.¹⁹ Lawson has been a major figure on the centre left of British politics for over 30 years²⁰ but he cannot bring himself to mention the fact that it was largely Israel lobby money which funded the Starmer-McSweeney project.

Place your bets . . .

The Times reported on 29 October that

Hedge funds will be allowed to take anonymous "down bets" on UK company shares under proposed new rules published by the Financial Conduct Authority.

At present the names of investors taking net short positions of more than 0.5 per cent of a listed company's share capital have to be publicly disclosed in a register updated daily by the FCA.

The Times report continued:

The FCA said the reduction in transparency *would support growth*, reducing barriers that might inhibit short-selling and reducing disproportionate costs for firms. (Emphasis added.)

Shorting is gambling on future share prices. Far from encouraging it, you might think that a Labour government would simply ban it. But hey, if the gambling is made easier, we'll get more of it in London. Economic growth!

The writer with no hands

In *Lobster 72* I reviewed a book by Michael Alford, *The Writer With No Hands*.²¹ Nine years later author Alford has emailed me that a film of his, with

¹⁹ <<https://shorturl.at/pp0Ia>> or <<https://www.newstatesman.com/politics/2025/11/the-starmer-mcsweeney-tendency-is-sinking-labour>>

²⁰ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neal_Lawson>

²¹ <<https://shorturl.at/y3h4W>> or <<https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/article/issue/72/the-writer-with-no-hands-by-matthew-alford/>>

the same title, is on YouTube.²²

You think?

You may have noticed some of the pre-publication publicity for a new book, *Prosperity Through Growth* by Arthur B. Laffer, Matthew Elliott, Michael Hintze, and Douglas McWilliams (Biteback Books, 2025). The publisher's spiel includes this:

Specially commissioned research for the book shows how the UK is forecast to slide down the league table of GDP per capita over the next twenty-five years.

This was expanded in a little piece in *The Times* of 18 October which reported, *inter alia*, that the UK was the 30th richest country in the world. Or lower: the CIA's World Fact Book has the UK at 38th.²³

I haven't read *Prosperity Through Growth* but, given the authors' careers,²⁴ we may assume they are advocating tax cuts and less state activity to produce economic growth. In short, despite the economic damage produced by 45 years of such ideas in this country, our authors, like most people, are unable to change their minds. Other recent examples of this phenomenon have been displayed by former Conservative MP Matthew Parris and Gerard Baker, former editor of *The Wall Street Journal*. They devoted their columns in *The Times* to bemoaning the decline of the Thatcher legacy (Baker, 17 October) and yearning for someone like Mrs Thatcher to sort things out (Parris, 20 October).

The difficulty most of us have in changing our minds is one of the subjects discussed in Matthew Syed's interesting *Black Box Thinking* (London: John Murray, 2016). He offers a striking example in relation to the decision to invade Iraq in 2003. He asked Alastair Campbell, Tony Blair's Director of Communications at the time, if Tony Blair could change his mind about the decision to invade. Campbell replied:

Think about what it would mean if he admitted he was wrong. It would overshadow everything he had ever worked for. It would taint his

²² <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FkDzpt9b9WA>>

²³ <<https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/field/real-gdp-per-capita/country-comparison/>>

²⁴ Laffer is well known for his Laffer curve – long since debunked – an economic model which purported to show the efficacy of tax cuts; Elliott has served as chief executive of the Tax Payers' Alliance and Williams was the CBI's chief economic adviser.

achievements. Tony is a rational and strong-minded guy, but I don't think he would be able to admit that Iraq was a mistake. It would be too devastating, even for him. (p. 103)

Well, what *would* it mean? Chiefly, it would mean he was no longer a reliable flunkey of the Americans. Consequently, in most of the world his status would rise but the money for the Blair Foundation from American corporates would dry up.

Israel and Dallas

One of the recurring minor themes in the JFK assassination literature is the idea that Israel did the dirty deed or had a hand in it.²⁵ There are indeed loose Israeli connections to JFK's demise. Among the big items on that list would be:

- * James Angleton, head of CIA counter-intelligence, had his people monitoring Oswald's activities in the US upon his return from the USSR. Why, we don't know; and whether or not this amounted to more than simply monitoring, we also don't know. The supposition of many, including me, is that Oswald was being prepared for his role as 'the lefty shooter'. Angleton was very pro-Israel and probably had a hand in getting nuclear technology to Israel in the 1950s.²⁶
- * JFK wanted US foreign policy to be less pro-Israel. He had done nothing during his first term but reliable reports suggest this was one of the things he would try in his second.
- * His successor, Lyndon Baines Johnson, was very pro-Israel and had many with the same views around him.²⁷

But actual *evidence* of an Israeli role in the event is non-existent.

A reworking of the Israel-dunnit theme has been published by the *Electronic Intifada*, Jim DeBrosse's 'Israel was part of the conspiracy to kill

²⁵ One such example, Laurent Guyénot's 'Kennedy Assassination: "CIA-Did-It" Theorists Are Covering for Israel', was discussed in this column in *Lobster* 88 under subhead **Dallas and Dimona**.

²⁶ See, for example, <<https://www.archives.gov/files/research/jfk/releases/2018/157-10005-10255.pdf>>.

²⁷ See, for example, <<https://shorturl.at/OhN7z>> or <<https://robertmorrowpoliticalresearchblog.blogspot.com/2021/09/grace-halsell-former-staff-writer-for.html>> and <<https://shorturl.at/20zML>> or <<https://peacelibertyprosperity.substack.com/p/the-most-incredible-story-never-told>>.

JFK'.²⁸ Mr DeBrosse hangs his assembly of fragments on the recent discovery that one of the CIA officers involved in the pre-assassination monitoring of Oswald, Reuben Efron, was Jewish.

A document released in 2023 from the JFK archive reveals that Reuben Efron, a lieutenant colonel in the US Army and a Jewish immigrant from Lithuania, was reading purported triggerman Lee Harvey Oswald's private mail years prior to the JFK assassination as part of a closely-held CIA surveillance program.

Beyond that DeBrosse offers only assertions and conspiracy theories. For example:

Evidence that Angleton was at the very center of the JFK assassination conspiracy has been compiled by many respected JFK researchers, including former army intelligence analyst John M. Newman and former *Washington Post* reporter Jefferson Morley, founder and editor of the *JFK Facts* Substack.

If Morley has indeed 'compiled' such evidence, I missed it. It may exist and it would be helpful if the author told the reader where it was. But here, as throughout his essay, DeBrosse doesn't bother with sources. Newman, on the other hand, does indeed believe this; or used to, any way. He is quoted thus in an essay by John Simkin:

In my view, whoever Oswald's direct handler or handlers were, we must now seriously consider the possibility that Angleton was probably their general manager. No one else in the Agency had the access, the authority, and the diabolically ingenious mind to manage this sophisticated plot. No one else had the means necessary to plant the WWII virus in Oswald's files and keep it dormant for six weeks until the president's assassination. Whoever those who were ultimately responsible for the decision to kill Kennedy were, their reach extended into the national intelligence apparatus to such a degree that they could call upon a person who knew its inner secrets and workings so well that he could design a failsafe mechanism into the fabric of the plot. The only person who could ensure that a national security cover-up of an apparent counterintelligence nightmare was the head of counterintelligence.²⁹

But this was Newman's *opinion* in 2008, not evidence. All we know for sure is

²⁸ <<https://electronicintifada.net/content/israel-was-part-conspiracy-kill-jfk/50982>>

²⁹ <<https://spartacus-educational.com/JFKnewmanJ.htm>>

that Angleton's department of the CIA was monitoring Oswald in America after his return from the USSR. It certainly looks like someone was running Oswald, creating the pro-Castro, Marxist image he acquired in New Orleans. It seems likely it was the Agency; Chauncey Holt said he was sent down to New Orleans by the Agency to 'support' Oswald. But which *branch* of the Agency was doing it isn't known.

In his *Electronic Intifada* piece, DeBrosse says:

The testimony and interviews of Gerry Patrick Hemming, a mercenary and former CIA asset, provides further evidence of connections between JFK's assassins and the Zionist-backed, terrorist-financing organization known as CMC-Perminindex.

Hemming was interesting but to my knowledge never identified the assassins, or claimed to know who they were. The CMC-Perminindex material is complicated and though there were apparent links between CMC/Perminindex, the CIA and machinations against the left in Italy, there is nothing linking it to the event in Dallas.³⁰

The author notes that some of the Mob's senior figures were Jewish.

There were also deep connections between Israel and Meyer Lansky, a mob boss at the top of America's national crime syndicate. Lansky, a Zionist, had run guns to Jewish terrorists in Palestine in 1945 and later in life tried unsuccessfully to emigrate to Israel.

Lansky was connected to two gangsters closely involved in the JFK assassination plot. The first of these was Jack Ruby who shot and killed Lee Harvey Oswald before the supposed killer of JFK could testify. "I'm just a patsy," Oswald had famously said after his arrest.

The second was Eugene Hale Brading (aka Jim Braden). An ex-convict with known ties to a group of hitmen, Brading was also a suspected courier for Lansky. He was stopped by Dallas police for suspicious behavior in a Dealey Plaza office building minutes after the JFK assassination. Brading, who used numerous aliases and had a long criminal history, was taken in for questioning but released.

If there is evidence connecting Lansky and Brading I can't find it, let alone the evidence of Brading's links to 'a group of hit men'. There is no evidence of

³⁰ A very useful summary is at <<https://shorturl.at/syiub>> or <<https://www.kennedysandking.com/john-f-kennedy-reviews/the-canadian-archives-michele-metta-and-the-latest-on-perminindex>>. There is a discussion of Perminindex on John Simkin's site. See, in particular, <<https://shorturl.at/rNWXX>> or <<https://educationforum.ipbhost.com/topic/28674-ferenc-nagy-william-donovan-correspondence-regarding-perminindex/>>.

Brading having a role in the shooting.

As for Ruby – also Jewish, of course – the author writes:

In his 1994 autobiography, *My Life as a Radical Lawyer*, Ruby's defense attorney William Kunstler wrote that Ruby repeatedly told him that he had killed Oswald "so they wouldn't implicate Jews." On Kunstler's last visit to his jail cell, Ruby handed him a note that stressed again his wish to protect Jews from a pogrom that he feared would follow the nation's outrage over the assassination of JFK.

The author does not tell the reader that as well as this unintelligible nonsense, Ruby also dropped several clear hints that LBJ was behind the shooting.

The author asserts:

For those willing to look at all the facts, there is evidence of a broad conspiracy to assassinate Kennedy, led by rogue elements of the CIA, Israel's leaders and intelligence officials, the national crime syndicate under the leadership of Zionist gangster Meyer Lansky, and the French underground army of assassins known as the Organisation de l'Armée Secrète (OAS).

If there is evidence of this 'broad conspiracy' the author has not presented it.

It is a pity the *Electronic Intifada* published this without first running it past someone who knew the assassination literature. Would they run something as sloppy as this about Israel and the Palestinians?

Robert Caro

The Observer of 19 October devoted a page to a paean for the American biographer of Lyndon Baines Johnson, Robert Caro, on his 90th birthday. His four volumes on LBJ are indeed a great piece of work but, in his fourth volume, he completely flunks JFK's assassination and LBJ's role in it. Of course the Anglo-American literati are unaware of this. Below is what I wrote in this column in *Lobster* 64.

Caro flunks it

Looking at the role of LBJ in the Kennedy assassination has proved to be too difficult for Robert Caro. In *The Passage of Power* (2012), the fourth volume of his widely lauded biography of LBJ – covering his accession to the presidency – while he devotes much attention to the Bobby Baker scandal of 1962/3, he omits Billie Sol Estes and the Department of Agriculture events: hundreds of millions of dollars and

seven or eight murders. At a couple of places Caro writes that he found nothing to indicate that LBJ was involved in JFK's assassination. He could only write this by ignoring the Estes-Texas material. And this wasn't an obscure Texas scandal: Michael Carlson pointed out to me that Estes was on the cover of *Time* in the 1960s. He was indeed, on 25 May 1962, under the strap line 'The Billie Sol Estes Scandal'. Estes was alive while Caro was writing his book and available for interview. As the title of the French book about Estes has it, he is *Le Dernier Témoin*, the last witness; and Caro took a pass. Caro's need to flunk this is what poker players would call 'a tell', and a great big one. That Caro, the world's expert on the life, times – and, yes, to some extent the corruption – of LBJ has had to avert his eyes, is very striking indeed.

And so it goes on

Colin Wallace's name reappeared in mid October in a piece by erstwhile *Guardian* investigative journalist (and playwright) Richard Norton-Taylor, 'Military "lost or destroyed" whistleblower files'.³¹ Wallace is that whistleblower and the Ministry of Defence (MOD) is reporting that Wallace's service file went missing in 2023. That was the year Wallace began legal proceedings against the MOD and the two events may be presumed to be linked. As Norton-Taylor writes:

With the files now missing, Wallace's activities have been airbrushed out of Ministry of Defence (MoD) official history enabling it to deny his claims even though they have been corroborated by other documents and evidence the ministry desperately tried to keep secret.

But there is also the possibility that the files were 'lost' or destroyed because of the then (2023) imminent publication of Chris Moore's book about the Kincora scandal (reviewed in this issue). This includes allegations about the late Lord Mountbatten using at least one of the boys in Kincora. On past performance, Moore will have been under surveillance by MI5 and the British state will have been aware of the book's contents. Wallace is a witness to MI5's use of Kincora in the 1970s and is not impossible that his files have been 'lost' to enable the state to undermine anything he has to say about those distant events. Little seems to rank more highly with our state than the defence of the Royal Family and the material in Moore's book about Mountbatten will be seen as a threat.

³¹ <<https://www.declassifieduk.org/military-lost-or-destroyed-whistleblower-files/>>

Well, well

Under subhead **Theorizing conspiracy** below I noted that a British academic criminologist, Theo Kindynis, is arguing that the academic criminology world has to stop being afraid of the word conspiracy because . . . there are lots of big conspiracies. He writes:

This article has argued not only that conspiracies exist, but that criminologists and other social scientists should acknowledge them as important political and social phenomena that merit investigation and analysis. In short, our focus should shift away from psychologizing, pathologizing and criminalizing conspiracy theories and conspiracy theorists, and towards theorizing conspiracy.

Amen to that.

Now another British academic, Andrew Mullen, has written an 11,600 words essay showing that Anglo-American academia has almost entirely ignored one of the basic building blocks of the 20th century Western world: the role of the American elite's Council on Foreign Relations in planning the post WW2 American empire.³² Mullen notes in his introduction:

To investigate such charges [that the design for American hegemony has not received the attention it deserves within academia], thirty political science journals, spanning nearly fifty years and encompassing tens of thousands of articles, together with a sample of hundreds of books on American grand strategy, American foreign policy and International Relations were analysed to reveal if and how the Grand Area Plan has been treated. *The results demonstrate, unequivocally, that it has largely been ignored. Moreover, this is also true of its creator: the Council on Foreign Relations.* Such findings raise unsettling questions for scholars – widespread bias by omission and a myopic interpretation of the post-1945 world order – and they point to the impoverishment of political science and International Relations in particular. (Emphasis added.)

Mullen's findings also point to a degree of cowardice and/or career-mindedness, especially among the American end of this. Have any American academics prospered examining the American empire *qua* empire? The obvious example would be Noam Chomsky, but he was a linguist first and had tenure.

It is striking to read this in an academic paper:

³² 'The Council on Foreign Relations' Grand Area Plan for America's Post-1945 Hegemony and the Silence of Political Science' at <<https://shorturl.at/5mg1S>> or <https://researchportal.northumbria.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/203973702/Grand_Area_Plan_NPS_Final_.pdf>.

Regarding the history of the CFR . . . following the 1919 Paris Peace Conference, members of the Cecil Rhodes-Alfred Milner network/Round Table Movement (Quigley, 1966) created the Institute of International Affairs to serve as an Anglo-American organization for coordinating foreign policy with branches in Britain and America. In 1921, the American branch was renamed as the CFR.

Mullen's reference to (Quigley, 1966) is to Carroll Quigley's *Tragedy and Hope*, which is rarely cited in academic writing.³³ It was this book which described the Round Table network and the various organisations it created throughout the English-speaking world during the first quarter of the 20th century.

It will be interesting to see if Mullen finds an academic journal willing to publish his essay. At present it on his university's site.

And amen to this

It is always a pleasure to come across someone writing about economics who gets the scale and nature of this country's economic fuck-ups since the Thatcher/Lawson years. So thank you James Meadway, former advisor to Labour's John McDonnell MP. His 'Is Nigel Farage right about the Bank of England?'³⁴ includes these paragraphs:

Excessively high interest rates maintained by the Bank of England following independence in 1997 were blamed, largely accurately, for further waves of deindustrialisation under New Labour. The pound was held at a value that made manufacturing exports uncompetitive: 1.5 million manufacturing jobs went, largely ignored at the time, between 1997 and 2009.

Factory closures here may have appeared to be a price worth paying.

Inflation remained low, interest rates manageable, real wages grew and a great expansion of consumer borrowing fuelled wider economic growth. The Bank of England governor at the time, Mervyn King, claimed to have midwived the "Nice" decade – Non-Inflationary, Continual Expansion.

³³ On Quigley see Kevin Cole at <<https://shorturl.at/NOcpT>> or <<https://www.unityofthepolis.com/professor-carroll-quigley-and-the-article-that-said-too-little/>>. I wrote about Quigley in *Lobster* 1 and may have been the first person to do so on this side of the Atlantic.

³⁴ <<https://shorturl.at/QKHWu>> or <bbb>

This was pure hubris. The arrival of central bank independence as a doctrine coincided with the extraordinary transformation of China, in particular, from one of the poorest countries on the planet to what is, by some measures, the world's largest economy. The relationship wasn't coincidental: the freeing up of global financial systems that "independent" central banks were a component part of enabled the spread of consumer borrowing on a heroic scale throughout the Global North and this, in turn, helped lubricate the flow of cheap consumer products opened up by the mass industrialisation of East Asia. But what, plausibly, has more impact on consumer prices: a letter from Gordon Brown to the governor of the Bank of England, or 300 million Chinese moving from the countryside to work in factories? If you can buy a 50-inch flatscreen TV today for a fraction of its price even a few years ago, that isn't because the Bank's Monetary Policy Committee managed to keep voting the right way.

The problem

The core of British economic problems is that England dominates the UK, London dominates England and the City of London dominates London. So the City of London's interests dominate the UK. Alan Bickley, the current director of the Libertarian Alliance, put it this way recently:

The ultimate authority here lies not with governments or parliaments. It lies with the monied interest: the financial oligarchy that operates from the City of London and its global satellites. Its interest is simple and permanent—to maintain Britain as a safe and profitable base for international rentier capitalism. The governing class—politicians, civil servants, academics, media figures—are its subordinate agents. They are not usually bribed, not even directly instructed. They absorb the agenda by osmosis, and carry it forward through a mixture of ambition and cowardice.³⁵

Which results in situations such as that described by Mick McAteer, a board member of the Financial Conduct Authority for six years. He reported recently:³⁶

³⁵ 'Starmer's Thermidor: The Blairite Restoration' at <<https://shorturl.at/VYUaQ>> or <<https://mailchi.mp/ca2c45ada33e/libertarianalliance-6825654?e=303893c162>>

³⁶ 'The UK finance lobby's growing influence is threatening all our interests' at <<https://shorturl.at/MdJIU>> or <<https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/uk-finance-lobby-growing-influence-government-threatens-public-interests-labour-government/>>.

We analysed the make-up of six key working groups that advise ministers on issues such as the role of AI in finance, financing critical public infrastructure, the National Wealth Fund's role in providing corporate welfare to private finance, and financial consumer protection. . . . the financial sector boasts over 100 of the 130 representatives across the working groups and task forces.

The City of London is just 4% of the UK economy.³⁷

UFOs

The frequently interesting Dick Russell returned to UFOs on his Substack site,³⁸ reporting a large number of incidents in which UFOs have been sighted near nuclear missiles or sites in which radiation was released. Russell is unusual in being willing to discuss UFOs, a subject which is still regarded as *infra dig* by most writers. Granted, like the JFK assassination research, the subject has attracted its fair share of nutters over the years; but aren't we supposed to be better than just walking away because the subject has been contaminated by association with them? Anyway: read Russell and don't dismiss UFOs. Something major is going on there.

The unsayable

The Israel lobby may be boasting about their operation to destroy Jeremy Corbyn³⁹ but our major media is still unwilling to use the term 'Israel lobby'; probably for fear of being accused of being anti-semitic by the lobby and, perhaps, of being called conspiracy theorists.⁴⁰ This makes life a little awkward for journalists. Take Juliet Samuel of the *The Times*. Writing about Morgan

³⁷ I asked Google for 'City of London contribution to UK GDP' and it responded:

The City of London (the financial district) generated £97 billion in economic output in 2023, which was approximately 4% of the entire UK's Gross Value Added (GVA). In comparison, Greater London as a whole produced £618 billion in GDP in 2023, accounting for 22.3% of the UK's total economic output. The City of London's contribution comes primarily from its thriving financial and professional services sectors.

See also <<https://shorturl.at/2ZALE>> or <<https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/assets/Business/COL-City-Stats-Factsheet-May-2025-v3.pdf>>.

³⁸ <<https://dickrussell.substack.com/p/ufos-and-nuclear-weapons>>

³⁹ See below under subhead **The Israel lobby**.

⁴⁰ There is a pretty recent good short history of the lobby at <<https://theconversation.com/what-is-the-israel-lobby-and-why-is-it-so-anxious-240334>>.

MacSweeney and his Labour Together organisation, Samuel can only hint at the existence of the Israel lobby, describing Trevor Chinn – a major conduit for money into Labour Together – as ‘a prominent Jewish business man’.⁴¹

Mandelson

In the wake of Peter Mandelson’s third departure from Whitehall, the best account of his career and paymasters is by *Lobster* contributor John Booth. Do check this out: <www.youtube.com/watch?v=1hBYB3hoXb8

Assange and O’Hagan

I was sent this paragraph recently:

In June 2023, *The Age* reported that the FBI is seeking to gather new evidence in the Julian Assange case, based on a request from the FBI to interview O’Hagan. O’Hagan refused the request, and said to the newspaper that ‘I would not give a witness statement against a fellow journalist being pursued for telling the truth. I would happily go to jail before agreeing in any way to support the American security establishment in this cynical effort.’⁴²

This is Andrew O’Hagan who wrote the 25,000 word assault on Assange for the *London Review of Books*.⁴³ Something doesn’t compute.

Broken down Blighty

In this column in *Lobster* 89, under the subhead **The myth persists**, I noted a number of people, including the *Guardian*’s senior economics commentator Aditya Chakraborty, who were quoted as saying or writing that the UK was the sixth richest country in the world.⁴⁴ In reality we are about 27th. I caught the tail end of an interview with a female Labour MP on Times Radio in early September. Alas I didn’t hear her name but she repeated this *canard*. It does

⁴¹ *The Times*, 25 September 2025.

⁴² <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andrew_O'Hagan>

⁴³ <<https://www.lrb.co.uk/the-paper/v36/n05/andrew-o-hagan/ghosting>>

⁴⁴ <<https://shorturl.at/S3sNj>> or <<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2022/aug/26/energy-bills-britons-afford-pay-price-hike-poor>>

seem to be people on the left – Jeremy Corbyn is another – who perpetuate this nonsense.⁴⁵ Not hard to see why it appeals to them. If we are a really rich country, solving the problems of poverty, housing etc. is merely a technical detail. Elect the right people and the problems will be solved.

The mysterious thing to me is how this belief survives encounters with all the other European countries which are visibly more prosperous than Britain.

Kincora

Ed Moloney's *The Broken Elbow* site alerted me to the fact that Chris Moore,⁴⁶ has written a book about Kincora: *Kincora: Britain's Shame – Mountbatten, MI5, the Belfast Boys' Home Sex Abuse Scandal and the British Cover-Up*.⁴⁷

I will be reviewing this in these columns anon [review posted since this was written] but in the meantime here is Moloney's initial comment:

I am not going to delve into the massive detail of Chris Moore's supremely important book KINCORA – BRITAIN'S SHAME, except to say that it is not possible to read the book's many revelations without concluding, as I have, that it is one of the most significant, if not the most significant pieces of journalistic research produced by the Troubles. Thanks to Chris we now know that the Kincora Boys Home was an MI5 operation almost from the get-go, that the boys were raped with MI5's approval, that the staff were de facto MI5 employees and the boys were used and discarded like human trash. We also know that MI5 facilitated a well known member of the British Royal Family, allowing him access to Kincora to indulge his sexual perversions in the knowledge that he would never face a judge or jury. The fact that the late Chief Superintendent George Caskey co-operated with Chris Moore, giving him access to the results of his own PSNI [Police Service of Northern Ireland] investigation before his death, adds enormously to the credibility of this book. This matter cannot be allowed to rest. MI5 is in the dock, as are the many British and Irish politicians and officials who facilitated their crimes.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ See, for example, <<https://shorturl.at/ijEeW>> or <<https://www.facebook.com/JeremyCorbynMP/videos/jeremy-corbyn-nothing-inevitable-about-poverty/844598875891014/>>

⁴⁶ Chris Moore profile at <<https://tcij.org/person/chris-moore/>>.

⁴⁷ Published by the Merrion Press at <<https://www.irishacademicpress.ie/imprint/merrion-press/>>.

⁴⁸ <<https://shorturl.at/FOcTS>> or <<https://thebrokenelbow.com/2025/07/15/chris-moore-has-written-the-best-book-on-the-troubles/#comments>>

It will be interesting to see what – if anything – the mainstream British media does with this story.

The IMF incident

David Smith, the Economics Editor of *The Sunday Times*, returned to the economic events of the mid 1970s in a piece in *The Times*.⁴⁹ He recounts the experiences of the then Chancellor the Exchequer, Denis Healey, noting that Healey had inherited 'a terrible situation from the Tories, namely "the Barber boom" that put inflation on a trajectory which meant it nearly hit 27% in 1975.' Smith notes that Healey blamed 'dodgy statistics which suggested public spending had hit 60% of gross domestic product'. In reality, Smith tell us, it was 46.5%.

Smith is almost there. Had he been a little more curious about those 'dodgy statistics' he would have discovered the best documented international conspiracy between the US Treasury, the IMF and the British Treasury to damage the Labour government. It was the British Treasury which faked those 'dodgy statistics'. This is documented in my '1976 and all that: the IMF incident' in *Lobster* 89.⁵⁰

Right or left?

It's getting hard to tell the political stance of some commentators.

Item: this was the headline in a British newspaper recently.

Thames Water, hugely in debt and culpably negligent in halting pollution must be placed in special administration. But the lenders, not the state, must pay.

Which paper? *Guardian*? No, a bit radical for the *Grauniad*, I think. *Morning Star*? No, not their style. Nope: this was a *Times* leader on 18 August.

Item: who do you think wrote this?

Starmer should attend to the lessons of [John] Major's locust years. His government needs a philosophy, a set of principles, an ideology. Indeed Starmer's need is greater than Major's was. A Conservative administration benefits from a sense of purpose; a Labour government

⁴⁹ 'Don't fall for the old chestnut about Britain needing an IMF bailout', 27 August.

⁵⁰ <<https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/article/issue/89/1976-and-all-that-the-imf-incident/>

cannot survive without one. Progressive politics needs a galvanising, uniting, liberating, crusading temper – the arc of history may be long, but if you are on the left, unless you are bending it towards justice, it will eventually smack you in the face.

That is what happened last week. The failure of this government to make social justice its mission, indeed the absence of any shared understanding among ministers of what a mission might look like, led to a Spring Statement that was at once hurried, incoherent and cruel – a fiscal drive-by shooting. And the poorest in our society are the victims.

That was former Conservative Minister, now editor of *The Spectator*, Michael Gove.⁵¹

Item: and who had 'Soul Suckers: How private equity ruined Britain' as the title of a recent essay? Gus Carter, *The Spectator's* deputy features editor did. (And very good it is, too.)⁵²

Item: who wrote this?

If peace breaks out, defense contractors like Raytheon, Boeing and Lockheed Martin lose billions in profits. There are 7-figure jobs waiting for Pentagon brass who ensure that peace does not happen when they "retire" from public service. This is why they all willingly lied to the public about Afghanistan for years because to rock the boat would mean they might lose out on that next big payday. They were willing to let the troops die in vain to protect their power and prestige. That is how Washington D.C. operates.

No, not *CovertAction Magazine*. That was Trump-supporting, friend of Richard Nixon, Roger Stone.⁵³

A blast from the past

I was skimming Nick Cohen's account of a strange industrial dispute in Glasgow when I noticed this:

Their union, the Industrial Workers of the World . . .⁵⁴

The IWW? The Wobblies? Who knew they were still in existence, let alone

⁵¹ <<https://www.spectator.co.uk/article/labour-needs-a-sense-of-social-justice/>>

⁵² <<https://www.spectator.co.uk/article/how-private-equity-ruined-britain/>>

⁵³ <<https://www.stonecoldtruth.com/p/president-trump-shatters-the-foreign>>

⁵⁴ <<https://nickcohen.substack.com/p/the-woke-go-for-broke?>>

active in the UK.⁵⁵

Watergate

I am grateful to Professor Richard Keeble for the following.

[There was] an intriguing revelation buried in yesterday's *Times* obit [19 August] for Fred Emery, their former Washington correspondent. Emery, according to the obit, was told by Bill Ruckelshaus, acting head of the FBI, in 1973 that he 'could not exclude a criminal proceeding against the president'. The obit says that in this way Emery was handed a 'sensational scoop' with Nixon's impeachment still 15 months away. But *Times* editor William Rees-Mogg, a Nixon loyalist who believed that Watergate was simply a Democratic conspiracy, 'had no intention of publishing'. So the story (which Emery thought would make the front pages around the world) was spiked.

Interestingly, Ruckelshaus and US attorney general Elliot Richardson later resigned from their positions rather than obey Nixon's order to fire the independent special prosecutor, Archibald Cox, who was tasked with investigating Nixon's role in the Watergate scandal.⁵⁶

Theorizing conspiracy

Do check out 'Criminology, Conspiracy Theories and Theorizing Conspiracy' by Theo Kindynis in *The British Journal of Criminology*.⁵⁷ Below are some of the sections I highlighted on first reading.

Rather than dismissing conspiracy theories out of hand, criminologists should consider hypotheses about elite wrongdoing on the basis of their merits and the evidence available to us. Conspiracies are important sociological and political phenomena. History shows that political, corporate, financial and military elites routinely conspire to do harm and to deceive and mislead the public.

In these ways, the conspiracy theory label functions to 'discredit [] any

⁵⁵ <<https://iww.org.uk/>>

⁵⁶ On Keeble see
<<https://thecensorshipfiles.wordpress.com/an-interview-with-richard-lance-keeble/>>.

⁵⁷ <<https://academic.oup.com/bjc/advance-article/doi/10.1093/bjc/azae100/7991030>>
For Kindynis see <<https://www.citystgeorges.ac.uk/about/people/academics/theo-kindynis>>.

explanations offered for specific social or historical events “regardless of the quality or quantity of evidence”

There is no shortage of political or historical events where official narratives are found wanting and counter-narratives (of varying plausibility) abound: from the suspicious deaths of government weapons experts, cryptographers and shadowy financiers to the covered-up connections between intelligence agencies and terror groups (see Curtis 2010). Criminologists should shrug off the stigma attached to theorizing that diverges from official accounts and carefully excavate the deep political contexts of such events.

The cumulative effect of the conspiracy theory research agenda has been to reinforce the notion that belief in political conspiracies is a priori delusional, and to discredit the idea that wealthy and powerful individuals and groups might collude to protect their shared interests at the expense of others.

This article has argued not only that conspiracies exist, but that criminologists and other social scientists should acknowledge them as important political and social phenomena that merit investigation and analysis. In short, our focus should shift away from psychologizing, pathologizing and criminalizing conspiracy theories and conspiracy theorists, and towards theorizing conspiracy.

Amen to all that. An academic criminologist has finally taken on board Peter Dale Scott’s concepts of parapolitics and deep politics. What a pleasure it is to see Scott and the late Carl Oglesby cited in an academic paper.

I would add one concluding thought on the significance in all this of JFK’s assassination. Shooting the president dead on the street threatened to reveal the real nature of American politics. The entire political system wanted this buried lest the schmucks begin to find out how things really worked. Thus the elaborate cover-up by all and sundry. Thus, also, the collective turn of the head by academia and journalists whose careers would be in jeopardy if they began inquiring in the wrong areas. Central to all this was the notorious 1967 CIA memo to its agents and influencers round the world telling them to denigrate Warren Commission sceptics as ‘conspiracy theorists’.⁵⁸ Boy, did they ever!

Banksters

The penultimate paragraph of a portrait of the Bank of England governor

⁵⁸ Text at <<https://www.maryferrell.org/showDoc.html?docId=9547>>.

Andrew Bailey in *The Times* on 14 July was this:

The technocrat [Bailey] has also been thrown into the political spotlight by Reform UK, which has railed against the Bank's decision to sell gilts, losing money for the exchequer, and to *pay full interest on money held by commercial banks*, calling it a subsidy to the banking system. Bailey was forced to write a five-page letter to Richard Tice, deputy leader of Reform, defining the Bank's decisions.⁵⁹ (Emphasis added.)

Oh really? This is the key assertion from Tice's letter.⁶⁰

. . . the Bank of England should not be paying voluntary interest on the reserves created through Quantitative Easing.

That's right: the Bank of England is paying interest not on borrowing from other banks but on *deposits* it has made with banks.

Tice is not the first to make this point. In 2023 The New Economics Foundation wrote:

The government could save £55bn over the next five years if it limits the amount of money the Bank of England pays interest on to commercial banks, according to new analysis from the New Economics Foundation. *The Treasury will pay out over £150bn to the Bank of England to fund its payments to the banking sector by 2028*, this on top of the £30bn already paid out in 2023. This is a result of the Bank of England paying interest on all central bank reserves, including the £875bn created through quantitative easing (QE). (Emphasis added.)

Instead, the analysis finds that the Bank of England could pay interest on a smaller portion of reserves by requiring commercial banks to hold 10% of their liquid assets in reserves that pay no interest. This would save the government £55bn over the next five years, enough to repair crumbling schools and hospitals and fund installation for 7 million homes.

Dominic Caddick, economist at the New Economics Foundation (NEF), wrote:

At a time when millions are struggling with rising mortgage and debt costs, the Treasury are set to pay out billions in public money to fund transfers to commercial banks. The policy of the Bank of England paying interest on reserves was introduced in response to the financial crisis,

⁵⁹ Bailey's letter to Tice is at <https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/letter/2025/june/letter-to-richard-tice>.

⁶⁰ Text at <https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:EU:f23bcf6f-ea26-4539-9a13-2caca200c35c>.

but now we're 15 years on and in a different economic context, the government needs to change its approach. Public money should be spent supporting people through the cost of living crisis, not giving banks a huge bonus.⁶¹

Richard Murphy said the same thing in 2024 in his 'The Bank of England should not be paying interest on the money the government gifted to our commercial banks'.⁶²

Bailey's letter to Tice did try explain why the BoE was paying interest on its reserves but I found his account unintelligible – probably due to my lack of familiarity with central banker speak. He wrote:

Our policy in steady state is to meet the *demand of the banks* to hold reserves at the Bank. These reserves take the form of cash accounts which can be used to meet immediate requirements for liquidity. From the Bank's perspective, they are the foundation of both of our statutory policy objectives, namely monetary and financial stability. (Emphasis added.)

If they're being paid interest to hold the reserves, no wonder the banks 'demand' them.

I suspect that the real reason the BoE insists on paying banks to hold its reserves, is to disguise the fact that the state can just create money at will, without cost. This is not an idea the financial system wants to see entering political discourse in this country. The creation of money at zero cost must remain the monopoly of commercial banks.

The Israel lobby

I am grateful to *Lobster* contributor Colin Challen, whose blog⁶³ recently reported on a fairly astonishing story in the *Jerusalem Post* by its editor-in-chief Zvika Kelin: 'New York Jews must use the London playbook to stop Mamdani – British Jews have already shown the road map for defeating a

⁶¹ <<https://shorturl.at/XWzWR>> or <<https://neweconomics.org/2023/11/government-could-save-55bn-over-next-five-years-by-limiting-bank-of-englands-interest-payments-to-commercial-banks>>

⁶² <<https://shorturl.at/yQlaB>> or <<https://www.taxresearch.org.uk/Blog/2024/06/07/the-bank-of-england-should-not-be-paying-interest-on-the-money-the-government-gifted-to-our-commercial-banks/>>

⁶³ <<http://www.colinchallen.org/blog>>

politician whose campaign flirts with antisemitism; New York's Jews should dust it off before November.' *Inter alia* Kelin wrote:

From mid-2018 until polling day in 2019, British Jewish outlets fed Fleet Street an almost daily scoop: leaked emails, victim testimonies, opinion polls showing public disgust. My own December 2019 report – "The Jew who laughed last at Corbyn" – followed an Orthodox candidate who beat the Labour leader in his own district and embodied the backlash. The aim was ruthless and explicit: never let voters forget the word antisemitism.⁶⁴

The 'London playbook' indeed. While the major British media and our politicians⁶⁵ will not publicly acknowledge the existence of an Israel lobby, one of its senior members is boasting about that lobby destroying Jeremy Corbyn.

The MLK files

I asked Google why the Trump administration had released the official files on the assassination of Martin Luther King? Its AI summary was this:

The US government, under President Donald Trump, released previously classified files concerning Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination due to an executive order signed in January 2025, fulfilling a campaign promise to declassify records related to the assassinations of King, John F. Kennedy, and Robert F. Kennedy. This release also occurred amidst ongoing criticism and pressure on the Trump administration regarding the handling and transparency of documents related to Jeffrey Epstein's case, according to some reports.

While the MLK files were intended to be released by 2027, President Trump's executive order accelerated their declassification. The release was made despite objections from members of the King family, who expressed concerns about the personal nature of the files and the potential for tarnishing King's legacy. The files, totaling over 230,000 pages, largely reinforce the official conclusion that James Earl Ray acted alone in King's assassination, though they also detail the extensive FBI

⁶⁴ <<https://www.jpost.com/opinion/article-862928>>

⁶⁵ The sole exception is former Conservative minister Alan Duncan, whose 2021 memoir begins with complaints about that lobby. See the review by John Booth at <<https://shorturl.at/gu3DL>> or <<https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/article/issue/82/in-the-thick-of-it-the-private-diaries-of-a-minister-alan-duncan/>>.

surveillance and harassment of King.

'Largely reinforce'? I suspect 'totally reinforce' would be more accurate. (This, presumably, is this merely a summary of comment on what the files will show.) Somewhere, somebody – as opposed to some machine – is actually grinding through all of the 6,302 files released and we may eventually find out.⁶⁶ I looked at the 21 files produced by searching for 'James Earl Ray', who was the patsy in the shooting. There is nothing of interest in them.

Back to paper

There is a growing collection of research which suggests that the Republicans stole the last presidential election. Start with Anthony Robinson's 'Did Donald Trump steal the 2024 election?'⁶⁷ Robinson's account is readily accessible. Much bigger is *The Common Coalition Report*.⁶⁸ – 'a grassroots initiative working to inform voters of the statistical anomalies in the 2024 election data — particularly in the swing states and Texas— anomalies that suggest algorithmic interference rather than human behavior.' This contains much serious data, including a link to an essay by Greg Palast on non-computer means used to suppress the Democrat vote.⁶⁹ And there is a long series of essays on the Substack site *This Will Hold*.⁷⁰ Their central claims about voting anomalies look plausible to me but there is much there I am not competent to evaluate. A pity then that *This Will Hold* chose to run 'Ex-CIA Whistleblower: "The NSA Audited The 2024 Election, Kamala Harris Won"'.⁷¹ For a little poking around about the author, Adam Zarnowski, suggests this 'ex-CIA Whistleblower' is not reliable.⁷²

But the general point in all this must be that if you run elections with computer systems, you will get fraud and theft. Back to paper!

⁶⁶ <<https://www.archives.gov/research/mlk>>

⁶⁷ <<https://yorkshirebylines.co.uk/politics/did-donald-trump-steal-the-2024-election/>>

⁶⁸ <<https://shorturl.at/4XNtd>> or <https://thecommoncoalition.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/TheCommonCoalitionReport_5.14_NM.pdf>

⁶⁹ <<https://www.gregpalast.com/trump-lost-vote-suppression-won/>>

⁷⁰ The is the first of them:
<<https://thiswillhold.substack.com/p/she-won-they-didnt-just-change-the>>.

⁷¹ <<https://thiswillhold.substack.com/p/ex-cia-whistleblower-the-nsa-audited>>

⁷² Try some of his conspiracy theorising at
<<https://awarning.substack.com/p/unleash-hell-pulling-up-the-dragnet>>.

'Nuff said

'The City's big investment in Starmer's Labour is about to pay dividends. Reeves' Mansion House speech shows the corporate takeover of Labour is complete' is the headline to an important piece by Ethan Shone, worth quoting at length.⁷³

How did the major political party designed to be the working class's bulwark against the financial might of the speculators end up with an economic programme of reheated trickle-down? [. . .]

Since 2020, the party has accepted support worth around £16m from people and organisations with direct ties to the finance industry. . .

A small army of secondees was embedded in the offices of half Labour's front bench, sent and paid for by banks (HSBC, NatWest), consultancies (PWC, Grant Thornton, EY, Oliver Wyman) and lobbyists (FGS, Weber Shandwick, Teneo) – all of whom are heavily invested in the fate of the finance industry [. . .]

For many of these new Labour MPs, the work must feel strikingly familiar. Callum Anderson, whose previous job was lobbying for the London Stock Exchange Group, has devoted much of his energies from the backbenches toward promoting retail investment in the domestic market, AKA the interests of the London Stock Exchange Group. Emma Reynolds, now the minister charged with regulating the City, often finds herself at the other side of the same tables she sat around as chief lobbyist for TheCityUK, where her role was to push for the very same lighter-touch regulation that she now implements.

All this for a sector of the economy less than half the size of manufacturing.

Oh boy . . .

There's a man called John Robles, an American by birth, some time presenter at the Russian government's Voice of Russia World Service in English.⁷⁴ He has self-published a book, *Nuland's Nazis and the destruction of Ukraine*. It starts off with pretty standard anti-American and anti-NATO rhetoric but soon dives off the rails. On page 13 there is this.

⁷³ <<https://shorturl.at/zw3Lg>> or <<https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/dark-money-investigations/rachel-reeves-keir-starmer-labour-finance-private-equity-takeover/>>.

⁷⁴ <https://en.everybodywiki.com/John_Robles>

When you start digging you will learn that NATO was actually founded by Nazi thinkers and legal scholars and that under Operation PAPERCLIP, in fact 40,000 Nazis found safe refuge in the United States after "World War II". Not only did they "find refuge" but they went on to found such organizations as the Central Intelligence Agency, NASA, DARPA and a host of other secret organizations in the United States.

If you dig even deeper you will learn that it was in fact US oligarchs such as Prescott Bush and the Bush family, as well as the British Royals and the Rothschilds who not only financed the Nazis before the war and gave them refuge after the war but in fact were instrumental in bringing them to power in the first place.

Was NATO founded by Nazi thinkers? Not that I can see. Did Operation Paperclip involve 40,000 Nazis? Other sources suggest about a tenth of that. Did the Bush family finance the Nazis? A smidgeon, indirectly.⁷⁵

A page later he hits his stride.

It is also important to note that like the NeoCons, all of the key figures in the Ukrainian coup, although supposedly Nazis and following the white supremacist ideology of Hitler (a Rothschild) and other such scum as Bandera, are in fact Zionists or religious "Jews".

And on page 15 he's in full conspiracy theory flow.

The entrenched heads of the body refused to go away, and NATO was given a "new mission" by the CFR-Rothschilds-City of London-"Illuminati"-lunatics. That mission was taking over the world through lies and deceptions with a doctrine called Full Spectrum Dominance and fulfilling the thousands year old dream of the Pagan Khazaris, the European Black Nobility and the Illuminati, which includes destroying and enslaving Russia and bringing her to her knees, which was in fact the real goal of WWII and the real reason behind "Project Ukraine". Their genocide of the Palestinians and other races, the destruction of societies and cultures and the bringing about of a Satanic society, I have written about in more detail in my work on the New World Order.

This is almost a parody of some contemporary conspiratorial thinking.

However, the man has a website <<http://www.jar2.com/>>, with some interesting source material on much of the parapolitical spectrum – if you can dig it out from the junk.

Going back to the title of Robles' book, *Nuland's Nazis*, the same theme

⁷⁵ See <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2004/sep/25/usa.secondworldwar>>.

was done in a rational manner by the late Robert Parry in his 2015 article for *ConsortiumNews*, 'The Mess that Nuland Made',⁷⁶ which is as good an introduction to the Ukraine events as any.

9/11

The 9/11 thing never grabbed me. Twenty years on, I am still not sure why. Nevertheless, as well as some crappy conspiracy theories, the field contains some impressive research. The most striking I have seen is the 9/11 Timeline <<https://ic911.org/complete-911-timeline/>>, a searchable collection of data on the event and the personnel, which John Booth mentions in his essay in this issue. As an illustration of the mind-boggling detail of the site, it has 57 entries on Vice President Dick Cheney, of which this is the first.

Shortly Before 7:00 a.m.-7:45 a.m. September 11, 2001: Vice President Cheney Receives Daily Intelligence Briefing; Heads to White House

Just before 7:00 a.m., Vice President Dick Cheney sits in the library of the vice president's residence at the Naval Observatory in Washington, DC, for his regular CIA briefing. His solo briefing is more detailed than the president's because he asks for more material. According to journalist and author Stephen Hayes, the briefing is "unremarkable." Cheney typically sets off for the three-mile drive to the White House at 7:30 a.m. He usually joins the president for his intelligence briefing, but with Bush away in Florida, there is no briefing at the White House on this day. [Hayes, 2007, pp. 327-328] According to David Kuo, a special assistant to the president, Cheney arrives at the White House at just after 7:00 a.m. this morning. Kuo will later recall that Cheney "looked like an absentminded professor, deep in thought, oblivious to the world." [Kuo, 2006, pp. 183]

Entity Tags: [David Kuo](#), [Richard \("Dick"\) Cheney](#), [Stephen Hayes](#)

Category Tags: [All Day of 9/11 Events](#), [Dick Cheney](#)

Dallas again

Marc Caputo's 'CIA admits shadowy officer monitored Oswald before JFK assassination, new records reveal'⁷⁷ discusses the recent release of documents showing that CIA officer George Joannides was involved with and funded a

⁷⁶ <<https://consortiumnews.com/2015/07/13/the-mess-that-nuland-made/>>

⁷⁷ <<https://shorturl.at/PdE5V>> or
<<https://www.axios.com/2025/07/05/cia-agent-oswald-kennedy-assassination?>>

Cuban student group, the DRE. Lee Harvey Oswald was involved with them in the months before the assassination. As Caputo notes:

The new documents don't shed any additional light on Kennedy's shooting or settle the controversy over whether Oswald acted alone. Nor is there any evidence showing why the CIA covered up Joannides' ties to DRE. All the records disclosed so far show how the CIA lied about financing or being involved with DRE.

That includes the agency's interactions with the Warren Commission (1964), the Church Committee (1975), the House Select Committee on Assassinations (1977-78) and the Assassination Review Board (until 1998). . . . Joannides didn't just have knowledge of Oswald before the assassination — afterward he played a central role in deceiving the House Select Committee on Assassinations.

So big stuff? Biggish, any way. It is useful to have it officially admitted that the CIA lied to official inquiries. Which they would, wouldn't they? But this is small beer compared to the late Chauncey Holt who was photographed with Oswald in New Orleans while Oswald was giving out 'Hands off Cuba' leaflets⁷⁸ and photographed on Dealey Plaza two hours after the shooting in the company of mob hit man Charles Harrelson.⁷⁹ What will it take to persuade the buffs to look at Holt?

Nixon and Israel

Current events in the Middle East sent me back to the 1973 Arab-Israeli war, when the American-Israel alliance was permanently rooted in American politics. The official US government's version of those events can be found in

⁷⁸ in the photograph at <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fair_Play_for_Cuba_Committee> Holt is on the right, wearing the shades.

Nick Must commented:

The photo in question gained some attention in 2016 when Donald Trump accused Ted Cruz's father of having been 'somehow' involved in the assassination because (allegedly) Cruz's father is also in the pic.

Several media outlets, including

<<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2016/05/03/the-50-year-old-mystery-behind-that-photo-of-lee-harvey-oswald/>>

<<https://www.bbc.com/news/election-us-2016-36195317>>

<<https://www.vox.com/2016/5/3/11580740/ted-cruz-lee-harvey-oswald-donald-trump>>

used a version of the photograph with Chauncey Holt removed from it.

⁷⁹ In the various photographs of 'the three tramps' on Dealey Plaza, Harrelson is the tallest of them.

the Department of State's Office of the Historian.⁸⁰ It concludes:

The 1973 war thus ended in an Israeli victory, but at great cost to the United States. Though the war did not scuttle détente, it nevertheless brought the United States closer to a nuclear confrontation with the Soviet Union than at any point since the Cuban missile crisis. The American military airlift to Israel, moreover, had led Arab oil producers to embargo oil shipments to the United States and some Western European countries, causing international economic upheaval. The stage was set for Kissinger to make a major effort at Arab-Israeli peacemaking.

In this official version, all the considerations were geo-political. In a post on 16 June, however, Roger Stone describes Nixon as 'driven by a mix of geopolitical strategy (countering Soviet influence) and *domestic political considerations*'.⁸¹ (Emphasis added.) By which Stone means the influence of the Israel lobby in the US. The Israel lobby and Nixon is not apparently widely discussed but Eric Grynviski concludes his essay on it with this:

Now, Nixon and Kissinger were crazy, and often overestimated the political forces set against them, in particular because of Nixon's anti-Semitism. Although in this case they may have been right to be concerned about pro-Israeli sentiment, and Nixon's 'personal' relationship with Israel was always more complicated than simple accusations of anti-Semitism really allow. But, I think these archival documents pretty clearly provide direct evidence that Nixon and Kissinger were influenced by at least their perception of the Lobby's influence. And, at least for Nixon and Kissinger, I am unaware (after reading quite a bit about the administration) of another lobby exercising the same inordinate influence.⁸²

As for Nixon's anti-semitism, there are some striking examples in transcriptions of a taped conversation Nixon had in 1972 with the evangelist Billy Graham, who was also a crude anti-semite.⁸³

⁸⁰ <<https://history.state.gov/milestones/1969-1976/arab-israeli-war-1973>>

⁸¹ <<https://www.stonecoldtruth.com/p/how-richard-nixon-saved-israel-in>>

⁸² 'THE "ISRAEL LOBBY" AND THE NIXON ADMINISTRATION' at <<https://shorturl.at/rJ0RJ>> or <<https://www.duckofminerva.com/2013/07/the-israel-lobby-and-the-nixon-administration.html>>.

⁸³ Jerry Klinger, 'Richard Nixon - Henry Kissinger The Anti-Semite who saved Israel' at <<https://shorturl.at/aWkAy>> or <http://www.jewish-american-society-for-historic-preservation.org/images/Richard_Nixon-2.pdf>

Briefly

I am grateful to Kit Klarenberg for steering me towards two articles I had missed. One is his recent account of ructions between the House of Commons Intelligence and Security Committee (ISC) and the Cabinet Office.⁸⁴ The ISC is, apparently, being squeezed financially. Its chair, Lord Beamish (the Labour MP Kevan Jones as was) thinks it should employ more staff than his current budget will allow. The ISC was created in the early 1990s, after all the revelations in the preceding decade of hanky-panky by the secret state. The Committee is essentially a token gesture towards accountability and, as it has no independent power, it matters little if it is adequately financed. At best it is capable of creating occasional minor embarrassment for the government.

The second essay is a five year-old piece by Matt Kennard – one of our most important investigative journalists – ‘Five questions for new Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer about his UK and US national security establishment links’.⁸⁵ Kennard’s essay almost persuades me that there is more to Starmer than a politician who simply wanted to be prime minister.

Not unrelated to which is the essay in *Byline Times* of July 2025 ‘The Founding Myth of Morgan McSweeney’ by Adam Bienkov.⁸⁶ This tries to debunk McSweeney’s status as the great campaign organiser but omits the fact that most of the money that McSweeney raised to support Starmer’s bid for the party leadership came from the Israel lobby.

Paul Johnson, the director of the Institute for Fiscal Studies, on the current economic ‘shitshow’.⁸⁷

Debt is close to 100 per cent of national income, and it is not falling. Borrowing last year was over £150 billion. Spending on debt interest is well over £100 billion a year. We can argue about the details of the fiscal rules, but the idea that we can simply borrow more to cover growing pension and benefit bills, and the promised £30 billion a year extra on defence spending, and to increase spending on health and all

⁸⁴ ‘British Intelligence: A Law Unto Themselves’ at <https://www.kitklarenberg.com/p/british-intelligence-a-law-unto-themselves>.

⁸⁵ <https://shorturl.at/PUZ3i> or <https://thegrayzone.com/2020/06/05/five-questions-for-new-labour-leader-sir-keir-starmer-about-his-uk-and-us-national-security-establishment-links/>.

⁸⁶ On-line at <https://www.adambienkov.co.uk/p/the-founding-myth-of-morgan-mcsweeney>.

⁸⁷ See below under subhead **The shitshow**.

the rest, is for the birds.⁸⁸

Israel, Gaza and the BBC

I'm almost beginning to feel sorry for the higher echelons of the BBC trying to deal with the dilemmas posed by the Israeli assault on Gaza. When there's nothing more than the 'normal' killing of Palestinians by Israelis – a few here and there – the BBC news editors don't have too difficult a job. When necessary, the official Israeli explanations can be run and there won't be much of a to-do beyond the usual pro-Palestinian groups – who can be ignored or dismissed as being 'biased'. But it's difficult to turn a blind eye to mass slaughter. And they have been turning a blind eye. The Centre for Media Monitoring found recently that 'Israeli deaths given 33 times more coverage, per fatality, and significantly more emotive language' than Palestinian deaths.⁸⁹ The long account in *The Observer* of the BBC's handling of a film it commissioned about the Israeli military going after Gaza's medical staff,⁹⁰ includes this paragraph which illustrates the lengths to which some people will go to resist material critical of Israel:

We [the filmmakers] had numerous script meetings to ensure our film complied with BBC standards. In one in early February at which we took detailed notes, a BBC editorial policy representative said he thought a UN report on hospital attacks cited in our film should not be included because, he said, "*the UN is not a trusted independent organisation*". *The same had been repeatedly said about Amnesty International*. (Emphasis added.)

In the end the BBC found a comment on the Today programme by one of the film's creators that Israel was a 'a rogue state that's committing war crimes and ethnic cleansing and mass murdering Palestinians'. This was used as the reason not to show it because doing so would risk the BBC's 'impartiality'. That 'impartiality' was apparently not damaged by BBC big-wigs being briefed on the war by the former chief of the Israeli military.⁹¹ Tricky for a state-funded

⁸⁸ Quoted in Wolfgang Munchau, 'Labour is heading for a solvency crisis' <<https://unherd.com/newsroom/labour-is-heading-for-a-solvency-crisis/>>.

⁸⁹ <<https://cfmm.org.uk/bbc-on-gaza-israel-one-story-double-standards/>>

⁹⁰ <<https://shorturl.at/Xd6nN>> or <<https://observer.co.uk/news/national/article/bbc-bosses-pulled-our-film-on-israel-attacking-gazas-medics-heres-why>>

⁹¹ <<https://shorturl.at/ji5pr>> or <<https://www.declassifieduk.org/bbc-guardian-editors-private-meetings-with-israeli-general-kohavi/>>

broadcaster, isn't it, when the government (and state) are covertly supporting Israel.⁹²

Tim Pendry commented recently:

The UK is essentially a wholly owned economic subsidiary of the US with a strategic position completely dependent on integration with the US war machine. The troubling complicity of the British military-industrial complex with the Israeli war effort is actually an example of the impossibility of detaching the country from a military-industrial nexus in which the US, the UK and Israel are all dependent on each other or rather the last two are absolutely dependent on the US and on each other.⁹³

All our yesterdays

One of the main causes of all the government's financial problems, Iain Martin reminded us recently, is the 2008 financial crisis.⁹⁴ A complete melt-down was averted by the government buying the Royal Bank of Scotland which was about to go broke, bringing who-knows-what-else down with it. Martin noted:

Gordon Brown, the Chancellor at the time, didn't cause the crisis, but his hubristic policies in the run-up helped make the UK particularly vulnerable to a global financial disaster. The GFC [Great Financial Crisis] hits Britain hardest of all the major economies because we went all in on financialisation, a process that did not start with Brown. It started under the governments led by Margaret Thatcher. Brown then accelerated it and the over-extended and over-leveraged banks became far too big relative to the rest of the economy.

To give a proper sense of the scale of what was created pre-crisis, as finance expanded in the boom years and politicians enjoyed the benefits of growth and of spending the resulting tax receipts on vote-winning largesse, I always return to the Bank of England graph from 2010 sent to me by the economist Richard Davies.

In 1990, the total combined balance sheets (total assets) of Britain's clearing banks reached a sum equivalent to 75% of UK

⁹² Mark Curtis, "'NATIONAL SCANDAL': THE BBC'S GAZA COVER-UP'
<<https://www.declassifieduk.org/national-scandal-the-bbcs-gaza-cover-up/>>

⁹³ <<https://timpendry.substack.com/p/no-longer-in-denial>>

⁹⁴ <<https://www.reaction.life/p/britains-economy-and-our-politics>>

GDP that year.

In 2000, the total combined balance sheets (total assets) of Britain's clearing banks hit a sum equivalent to 143% of UK GDP that year.

By 2010, the total combined balance sheets (total assets) of Britain's clearing banks were a sum equivalent to 450% of UK GDP that year.

That's why the blow-up when it came was so consequential. When the banks failed, the impact was so large it punched a huge hole in the British economy. The effect on the public finances was equivalent to a national war and when our economic performance might have recovered, with the Brexit fight out of the way, Covid hit and the British taxpayer was clobbered again.

He also points out that:

Fortunately, a great depression was avoided. Unfortunately, choosing to spread it out we underwent a slow, great repression [sic; presumably recession] that has lasted many years.

The present government is desperate for economic growth as the way out of its current (inherited) problems. Pursuing this, it is getting into bed with the big tech companies. Lucas Amin and Peter Geoghegan noted:

New figures obtained by *Democracy for Sale* reveal that Labour ministers and senior civil servants met with tech industry executives and lobbyists an average of six times a week during the government's first six months in office.⁹⁵

Faint echoes of Harold Wilson's notorious 'white heat of technology', used in a speech in 1963 – and about as likely to lead to anything other than the tech companies getting their hands on government money.

Labour leaders give no sign of grasping that – as far as the major businesses which provide state-level, 'outsourced', services are concerned – the British government is a big sow full of money and their one desire is to get clamped onto one of its teats. There are lots of examples.⁹⁶ The Ministry of Defence, for example, is notoriously corrupt, with companies bribing officials

⁹⁵ <<https://shorturl.at/zrKW2>> or <<https://democracyforsale.substack.com/p/revealed-shocking-scale-of-big-tech-influence-labour-peter-kyle-amazon-google-meta>>

⁹⁶ Unison has done a survey of the field at <<https://www.unison.org.uk/at-work/local-government/key-issues/privatisation/>>.

and senior military with jobs, real and notional, in exchange for contracts. Occasional attempts by MPs to interfere with this particular gravy train are brushed off. At the end of last year, the MoD simply refused to release – even to MPs – a report from the Audit Office on its spending.⁹⁷ And there's the money being poured – literally and metaphorically – down the drain with the privatised water companies who have paid more than £85 *billion* in dividends to shareholders since being privatised.⁹⁸

Further down the scale, the National Institute of Economic and Social Research issued a report recently on the consequences of Gordon Brown's Private Finance Initiative, 'PFI: Getting the Bill on the Fiscal Credit Card'.⁹⁹ It notes:

£1 billion has been made by PFI companies in pre-tax profits from all contracts; Eight companies own 80 per cent of all PFI schools projects; £300 million has been distributed as dividends.

Of these eight companies, five are registered offshore.

And there's the HS2 fiasco, privatised child care¹⁰⁰ and much more.

Along with this comes corruption. Simon Kuper, *author of Good Chaps: How Corrupt Politicians Broke Our Law and Institutions*, was interviewed by Peter Geoghegan.¹⁰¹ This is one Q and A.

Peter: What surprised you most when you were researching the book?

Simon: The degree and the shamelessness with which politicians and especially the Tory party were taking money from autocracies, or people with links to autocracies – and then the impunity of it. I realised that the UK has almost no laws about political corruption. I'd research all this material and think, "What?! Another Russian spy donating to the Tories?" or "Boris Johnson really flew to the former KGB agent Alexander Lebedev's Italian villa while foreign minister without any aides present? He made Lebedev Junior a Lord? Cameron lobbies for Chinese interests? Blair lobbies for everyone? And this is just allowed?"

⁹⁷ <<https://shorturl.at/EbpEJ>> or <<https://bylinetimes.com/2024/11/26/ministry-of-defence-national-audit-office-report-blocked/>>

⁹⁸ <<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cw4478wnjdpo>>

⁹⁹ <<https://shorturl.at/7boEy>> or <<https://niesr.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/PP-42-PFI-Getting-the-Bill-on-the-Fiscal-Credit-Card.pdf>>

¹⁰⁰ <<https://shorturl.at/1kxAz>> or <<https://www.lgcplus.com/services/children/revealed-spiralling-cost-of-childrens-homes-19-03-2024/>>

¹⁰¹ <<https://democracyforsale.substack.com/p/corruption-in-british-politics-with-simon-kuper>>

It was the gap between all the stuff that was happening and the absence of any sanction that kept astounding me.

In pursuit of growth, the government appears to believe that it is being impeded by regulation and is thus seeking to reduce it. Meg Hillier MP, chair of the Treasury select committee of the House of Commons, wrote earlier this year:

What concerns me is the seemingly one-sided narrative that stripping back financial regulation is the holy grail for raising living standards across the UK.¹⁰²

Which has obvious risks. Deregulate the City of London and, as Sue Hawley of *Spotlight on Corruption* noted recently,¹⁰³ we will get another explosion of dodgy lending and speculation like we had before 2008. And why wouldn't we? After all, if the banks fuck-up, on past experience the government will bail them out with our taxes.

Briefly

Trump and Russia

Former British diplomat, Arthur Snell, returned to the question of Trump and Russian intelligence in his 'Let's talk about Krasnov: It's time to take a serious look at the evidence of Trump's relationship with Russia'.¹⁰⁴ Snell carefully works his way through the extant evidence; and there's a lot of it. *En passant* he writes, 'I am a friend and former colleague of Christopher Steele'. Since Steele was SIS, is Snell saying he was, too?

Nick Must commented:

According to his LinkedIn profile,¹⁰⁵ Mr Snell was a 'Senior Consultant' from 'Nov 2019 - Dec 2022' at Orbis Business Intelligence – the spies for hire firm that Christopher Steele still runs. He does, also, have an 'endorsement' on same LinkedIn profile from Clovis Meath Baker, who 'was Director of Intelligence Production at GCHQ 2010-13, and previously filled senior foreign service roles dealing with the Middle

¹⁰² <<https://www.ft.com/content/57c14cfd-641f-4edf-9c57-9715a99e6dea>>

¹⁰³ <<https://shorturl.at/9Jtbi>> or <<https://democracyforsale.substack.com/p/labours-deregulatory-race-to-the-bottom-corruption-dirty-money-singapore-on-thames>>

¹⁰⁴ <<https://shorturl.at/pKZIx>> or <<https://arthursnell.substack.com/p/lets-talk-about-krasnov>>

¹⁰⁵ <<https://www.linkedin.com/in/arthursnell/>>

East'.¹⁰⁶ So Mr Snell has some version of the word 'spook' running through him, but the work relationship with Christopher Steele can only be proven via Orbis.

Dallas again

At the House Task Force on the Declassification of Federal Secrets, Douglas Horne read a statement. Horne was a senior member of the Assassination Records Review Board staff in the 1990s. You can watch him reading it on YouTube or you can read the text.¹⁰⁷ The document is four screen's worth of material – about 10 minutes of video. But he has attached an additional four pages to the formal presentation. He shows evidence of much hanky-panky with the physical evidence, notably by the CIA, which altered the Zapruder film. I found it very impressive but – of course! – it has come in for criticism from some of the other researchers.¹⁰⁸

Flag-waving

On Times Radio on 31 May the current leader of the Conservative Party, Kemi Badenoch, described Reform UK as 'Corbynism with a Union Jack'. It isn't true, of course, at least not yet: Nigel Farage is no Corbynista. But Reform is advocating the state acquiring 50% of the British utilities¹⁰⁹ and certainly sees a much greater role for the state than the current leadership of the Conservative Party – or the Labour Party, come to that. 'Corbynism with a Union Jack' – i.e. an activist state, decent social services and an unselfconscious patriotism – is how the Labour Party was before the Thatcher fan-boys, Brown and Blair, took it over. Reform as old Labour?

The Starmer mystery

Meanwhile, back at the Starmer mystery, the generally excellent Tom McTague has written a long profile of the man, based on many conversations: 'What Keir Starmer can't say'.¹¹⁰ In that, Starmer offers no economic ideas or views (and declined to comment on Israel and Gaza). Commenting on the article, Richard

¹⁰⁶ <<https://www.thecipherbrief.com/experts/clovis-meath-baker>>

¹⁰⁷ <www.youtube.com/watch?v=c8NBSjRJpkk> and
<<https://oversight.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Horne-Written-Testimony.pdf>>

¹⁰⁸ See <<https://shorturl.at/SKUn2>> or <https://educationforum.ipbhost.com/search/?&q=DouglasHorne&type=forums_topic&quick=1&nodes=126&search_and_or=or&sortby=relevancy>.

¹⁰⁹ But see also Reform's Richard Tice on nationalising British Steel at
<<https://shorturl.at/KYDYf>> or <<https://www.gbnews.com/politics/politics-news-richard-tice-reform-british-steel-emergency>>.

¹¹⁰ <<https://www.newstatesman.com/politics/2025/06/what-keir-starmer-cant-say>>

Murphy wrote:

The overarching theme of the whole article was, in fact, that Keir Starmer really does not know why he is Prime Minister, or what motivates him, or what he wants to achieve. He is just where he is, doing what he thought he might do next to make his CV look good, and finding, to his apparent surprise, that for the first time in his life, he is both out of his depth and that his efforts are neither good enough nor appreciated.¹¹¹

Hard to argue with that, isn't it? But it didn't happen by accident; he didn't just stumble into it. Starmer wanted to be prime minister. He wanted it enough to pretend he supported Jeremy Corbyn and so stay in the shadow cabinet.

Ukraine

ConsortiumNews's interesting and welcome publication of what we might loosely call pro-Russian pieces on the Ukraine war continues. In 'Russia at Crossroads', John Wight's essay offers a subhead 'Moscow's military campaign under Putin's leadership has focused on avoiding escalation'.¹¹² Oh really? Well, yes, the Russians could use their nukes, so I suppose that is true. But Wight goes further:

But let us not lose sight of the salient fact that Russia is not engaged in a conflict with President Volodymyr Zelensky's Ukraine. This is instead a conflict pitting the Russian Federation against NATO, with Ukraine a proxy of the latter. And NATO is taking advantage of Putin's caution.

Is that true? Does providing support for Ukraine make Ukraine a 'proxy' for NATO? Not really, in my view; and that is one of the issues. Another is the Russian operations – sabotage, assassination etc – in NATO countries. We are in new territory here. Conflict without a declaration of war. And it is worth restating an obvious point. Military action was not the only tool available to the Russians at the beginning of the conflict. They had the oil weapon which they chose not to use.

ConsortiumNews's pro-Russian position is most strikingly illustrated in Joe Lauria's 'Yes, Ukraine Started the War'.¹¹³ He writes:

¹¹¹ <<https://shorturl.at/ELPuK>> or <<https://www.taxresearch.org.uk/Blog/2025/06/14/how-did-a-man-like-starmer-become-prime-minister/>>

¹¹² <<https://consortiumnews.com/2025/06/03/russia-at-a-crossroads/>>

¹¹³ <<https://consortiumnews.com/2025/02/23/yes-ukraine-started-the-war/?>>

With U.S. backing, the unconstitutional government on April 16, 2014 launched a military attack against those two provinces in the Donbass region.

In support of that proposition, he cites a 2014 BBC News report which begins:

Ukraine's acting President Olexander Turchynov has announced the start of an "anti-terrorist operation" against pro-Russian separatists.

But the BBC piece also reported:

Pro-Russian rebels have seized buildings in about 10 towns and cities across Ukraine's eastern provinces, its industrial heartland.

and

There were reports overnight of gun attacks on rebel checkpoints near the Donetsk town of Sloviansk, where pro-Russian militants seized a police station and a security services building at the weekend.¹¹⁴

And these events occurred a month after the Russians had annexed Crimea. To my knowledge, no-one has produced a chronology detailed and reliable enough to say for certain who struck the first blow. And where should such a chronology begin? Before or after the events of Maidan Square?

Dallas again

Lansdale

In the famous 'three tramps' photograph (below) taken around 2.30pm in Dallas on the day of JFK's assassination, a figure passes 'the tramps'. He was identified as being the CIA's Edward Lansdale by General Victor Krulak, Colonel L. Fletcher Prouty and Lansdale's second wife. Robert Morrow has noted that Lansdale has also been recognised in the photograph by his current biographer, Gregory C. Lavin.¹¹⁵ Morrow quotes Lavin:

Having spent hours in Lansdale's presence at each of his last two homes, I had no trouble identifying him in his Dallas photo. Ed Lansdale's superior at the OSO, Lieutenant General Victor Krulak, said it succinctly: "The haircut, the stoop, the twisted left hand, the large class ring. It's Lansdale." Ed's haircut, head shape, and posture remain his most memorable features to me. Ed's hair seemed to have been

¹¹⁴ <<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-27035196>>

¹¹⁵ <<https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/1662958781>>



always semi-short, as in the Dallas photo. Also, Ed's head and face seem rectangular, rather long up-and-down. Combined with his natural slow-and-easy gait, right-shouldered stoop, and big class ring, he looked very distinctive to me.¹¹⁶

Four people identifying him means we have to accept that Lansdale was there, even though we can't see his face; which means the CIA was involved at some level. However the only CIA officer who spoke of the Agency's role, E. Howard Hunt, did not include Lansdale in his version of the conspiracy;¹¹⁷ and CIA contract agent Chauncey Holt, one of the three 'tramps', also does not mention Lansdale in his various accounts.

Ruby

I receive Roger Stone's email bulletins. In the March 24 edition, 'Nightmare On Elm Street: JFK and the Assassination That Still Haunts America',¹¹⁸ Stone recounts a conversation he had with Richard Nixon, about the JFK

¹¹⁶ Gregory C. Lavin, *Chasing Ed: Was Major General Edward G. Lansdale the Mastermind of the JFK Assassination?*, p. 176 in the Kindle version.

¹¹⁷ See the account of his son St. John, at https://wikileaks.org/gifiles/attach/32/32349_bond-of-secrecy4.pdf.

¹¹⁸ <https://www.stonecoldtruth.com/p/nightmare-on-elm-street-jfk-and-the>

assassination, after Nixon's resignation. Nixon reportedly said:

I actually knew [Jack] Ruby. Murray Chotiner introduced him back in '47. He went by Rubenstein then. An informant. Murray said he was one of Lyndon's people . . . We put him on the payroll at Lyndon's request.

Chotiner was a lawyer/bagman who began working with Nixon in 1946. But whose payroll is Nixon referring to? His own? Or that of the House UnAmerican Activities Committee (HUAC) of which Nixon was a member? This question is answered in an earlier version of the same anecdote:

Nixon said, 'The damn thing is, I knew this Jack Ruby. Murray [Chotiner] brought him to me in 1947, said he was one of "Johnson's boys" and that LBJ wanted us to hire him as an informant to the Committee. We did.'¹¹⁹

So clearly HUAC. But the striking thing is the link to LBJ. This may explain why Ruby killed Oswald: he was tidying up for his political boss. Ruby's hints about LBJ's role to the Warren Commission people who interviewed him may have been provoked by LBJ not getting him out of jail.

The economic shitshow

The UK is now in unavoidable economic decline. The major unknowns are how bad it will get and how fast. None of the political parties will publicly admit this but they all must know it. They must also know that it began in 1979, with the arrival of the Thatcher government and the delusion that a modern western European society can function with low taxation. Florence Sutcliffe-Braithwaite reworks some of this in 'It's a shitshow', her review of a memoir by Tim Lancaster who had been Thatcher's private secretary for economic affairs for the first two and a half years of her tenure.¹²⁰ Lancaster shows – yet again – that neither Mrs Thatcher nor Chancellor Geoffrey Howe knew what they were doing. They adopted Milton Friedman's thesis that inflation could be brought down by controlling the money supply. But they found that there were many ways to define 'the money supply' and none of them were capable of producing reliable figures. In the end it really didn't matter which definition of 'the money supply' they chose: what counted was the method chosen to control it.

¹¹⁹ <<https://dailycaller.com/2013/11/22/roger-stone-nixon-thought-lbj-killed-kennedy/>>

¹²⁰ <<https://www.lrb.co.uk/the-paper/v47/n08/florence-sutcliffe-braithwaite/it-s-a-shitshow>>, reviewing Tim Lancaster, *Inside Thatcher's Monetarism Experiment: The Promise, the Failure, the Legacy*.

Eschewing controls on the creation of money and debt, they introduced high interest rates to discourage borrowing. Who benefits from high interest rates? The money-lenders. If the PM and her Chancellor were footling with barely understood economic theories,¹²¹ at the Treasury, Nigel Lawson – a financial journalist for many years at the *Financial Times* and *Telegraph* – knew what the City of London wanted: the abolition of exchange controls and an end to some of the restrictions on bank lending. These duly came in late 1979.

It is commonplace to refer to all this post 1980 economics as 'neoliberalism'. But that's almost a cover story. The governments of the US and the UK in the 1980s became instruments of their financial sectors, abandoned their manufacturing bases and, as a result, had ever increasing trade deficits. The UK has had a trade deficit in goods every year since 1983, after the policy of high interest rates reduced UK manufacturing by about 15%.¹²² Craig Murray pointed out recently that the US trade deficit is now 4% of GDP, with the UK at around 2%.¹²³

Add to that the policy of not adequately taxing the well-off, let alone the actual rich, and you have the perfect racket. Without sufficient tax income, the US and UK governments borrow the money and pay interest on loans, some of which come from those who should be paying more taxes. In the US, interest on those loans is now 13% of government income. In the UK it is 8%; and set fair to get quite a lot bigger if this government refuses to raise taxes on the well-off and wealthy.¹²⁴ And, as it gets bigger, the cost of the borrowing rises.

The Israel lobby

I don't always agree with Craig Murray's interpretations of events, but he is frequently an invaluable commentator on the machinations of the state. On 28 May he wrote a very important piece, 'The UK Rebukes the UN and Bows to the

¹²¹ 'A small group of ideologues pursued an incoherent policy based on some vague notions about "the money supply" and "expectations", and ignored compelling recent empirical evidence about how disruptive to the economy such policy lurches could be because of their effects on the exchange rate.'

Jim Tomlinson, 'Mrs Thatcher's Macroeconomic Adventurism, 1979–1981, and its Political Consequences' in *British Politics*, 2007, 2, (3–19)
<<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/palgrave.bp.4200038>>.

¹²² <<https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-8261/CBP-8261.pdf>>

¹²³ <<https://www.craigmurray.org.uk/archives/2025/04/trump-tariffs-and-trade/>>

¹²⁴ <<https://shorturl.at/5qIZ0>> or <<https://obr.uk/forecasts-in-depth/tax-by-tax-spend-by-spend/debt-interest-central-government-net/>>

Israeli Embassy over “Terrorism” Arrests of Journalists’.¹²⁵ It included this:

There is a stunning contrast between the access given by the UK to the Israeli Embassy to influence prosecutions of anti-Genocide journalists and protestors, and the repudiation by the UK of United Nations querying such prosecutions. The UK has rebuked the UN for “outside interference”.

I cannot state enough how unusual it is for the UK to give direct access to the Israeli Embassy to the Police and the Crown Prosecution Service, in order for the Israeli government to influence the prosecution of UK citizens. This is not about extradition, in which case there may be treaty arrangements for direct contact between prosecutors. It is just not normal nor right for an Embassy to be involved with domestic prosecutions in this way.

9/11

Another pointed piece on the subject from Russ Baker.¹²⁶ He writes that while President Trump was hobnobbing with the Saudis:

Two men — directly connected to the 9/11 terrorists *and* the Saudi royal family — are living apparently normal lives under the royal nose of Prince Mohammed bin Salman, whom Trump “likes a lot”. (Emphasis in the original.)

The two men are Esam Ghazzawi and Omar al-Bayoumi. Of Ghazzawi, Baker notes: ‘Phone records and surveillance videos of their gated community showed frequent contact with the hijackers, including lead hijacker Muhammad Atta’.

The liberal website Propublica noted last year:

FBI agents identified Bayoumi as having helped the two young Saudis [two known al-Qaida operatives, Nawaf al-Hazmi and Khalid al-Mihdhar] rent an apartment, set up a bank account and take care of other needs.¹²⁷

¹²⁵ <<https://www.craigmurray.org.uk/archives/2025/05/the-uk-rebukes-the-un-and-bows-to-the-israeli-embassy-over-terrorism-arrests-of-journalists/>> NB Neither of the apps I use to shorten URLs would work with this one of Murray’s.

¹²⁶ <<https://russbaker.substack.com/p/memorial-day-flyover-off-we-go-into>>

¹²⁷ <<https://shorturl.at/Zuzqt>> or <<https://www.propublica.org/article/saudi-officials-may-have-assisted-911-hijackers-new-evidence-suggests>>

Both men – and others – were identified in the original official 9/11 Report, in the chapter which was initially withheld from publication. Subsequently declassified (but still redacted in places), that chapter is on-line.¹²⁸

Ledeen

Michael Ledeen's death in May this year produced a flurry of articles about him. Not discussed, in those I read, was Ledeen's possible relationship with Israeli intelligence. Which is odd, really, for Israel's interests run through his career as an interface between US state and non-state officials and Israel. Google AI gave me this when asked about Ledeen and Israeli intelligence:

Michael Ledeen denied any affiliation with Israeli intelligence and resented allusions to his relationship with them. While he was involved in the Iran-Contra affair and had contacts with figures linked to Israel, his precise role and connection to Israeli intelligence were never fully established. He was a consultant to various US government agencies, including the National Security Council, and was involved in the Iran-Contra affair through contacts with Manucher Ghorbanifar, an Iranian arms merchant who had ties to Israel. The Senate intelligence committee questioned Ledeen under oath about his relationship with Israeli intelligence, and he denied any affiliation.

But as one 1987 account noted:

Whatever the ambiguities about his roles inside or outside the U.S. government, two facts stand out clearly. For a man without 'close ties with Israel', Michael Ledeen had remarkable access to its leaders; and for a man 'never particularly active in Jewish affairs' he was very, very, close to those who are.¹²⁹

¹²⁸ <<https://shorturl.at/2tIWc>> or <<http://intelligence.senate.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/sites-default-filesations-28pages.pdf>>

¹²⁹ <<https://www.wrmea.org/1987-march/shadows-michael-ledeen-man-of-mystery.html>>