

The view from the bridge

Robin Ramsay

*As always, thanks to Nick Must and Garrick Alder
for editorial help with Lobster.*

new

Back in Dallas

Something about the Kennedy assassination encourages otherwise intelligent people to abandon all their normal intellectual standards and just write stupid shit. Dominic Sandbrook's 'JFK: a death that sparked a thousand conspiracies'¹ is a classic example. Sandbrook is a popular writer of recent British history but he knows nothing at all about the Kennedy assassination. And there's the point: he doesn't think he needs to know anything before rehashing the lone gunman nonsense.

new

The CIA and post-modernism?

Thanks to Dr Youssef El-Gingihy for pointing me towards an essay showing apparent CIA interest in what might loosely be called post-modernist theory.² The essay's author, Gabriel Rockhill, cites a declassified essay by an unnamed CIA analyst discussing the effects on French intellectual life of the post-modernists. Rockhill suspects the CIA saw post-modernism as another useful distraction from class and inequality but nothing in the declassified CIA essay³

¹ In *The Times* on 24 November at <<https://shorturl.at/mvwK8>> or <<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/jfk-a-death-that-sparked-a-thousand-conspiracies-7b0h5vg0x>>. Behind a paywall, alas, and definitely not worth paying for unless you want to see an exemplar of this kind of JFK rubbish.

² Gabriel Rockhill, 'The CIA reads French theory: on the intellectual labor of dismantling the cultural left' at <<https://shorturl.at/T4578>> or <<https://thephilosophicalsalon.com/the-cia-reads-french-theory-on-the-intellectual-labor-of-dismantling-the-cultural-left/>>.

³ <<https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP86S00588R000300380001-5.pdf>>

shows Agency money or involvement in 'post-modernism'.

Rockhill's essay reminded me of Daniel Brandt's 'An Incorrect Political Memoir'.⁴

In 1975 I transferred to a Ph.D. program in Berkeley and took a part-time handyman job to support myself. I found myself carrying heavy boxes of copying paper up the stairs to the Women's Affairs Office, and being told to change their light bulbs. These feminists were all cruising comfortably on a huge Ford Foundation grant, spinning out analyses based on sex divisions while playing their neo-Marxist cards whenever it was in their interests. I was a theoretical Marxist by then (in the sixties I never needed it), and felt I knew a thing or two. I pointed out the obvious, namely that sex divisions cut the class divisions in half again.

The last comment of Brandt's above is echoed today in some of the critiques of identity politics, from people as far apart in most other areas as Julie Burchill⁵ and Norman Finkelstein.⁶

If we can't quite say that the Ford Foundation was a CIA front, there is lots of evidence of the Agency and the Foundation working together.⁷ After a decade which saw the rise of the American 'new left', Ford's decision to fund American feminists is very striking.

new

The tax 'burden'

The belief that taxes are a 'burden' has been an assumption on the political right in this country for as long as I can remember. No-one seems to know when the expression was first used, but the *New York Times* definitely used it in the 1960s.⁸ *The Times* of 23 November this year had a headline running across the whole front page 'Hunt eases tax burden'.⁹ Five days later, This is Money, part of the *Daily Mail* website, gave a different spin using the same

⁴ <<https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/article/issue/24/an-incorrect-political-memoir/>>

⁵ *Welcome to the Woke Trials* (London: Academica Press, 2021)

⁶ Lots of Finkelstein on Youtube. Just search for 'Norman Finkelstein and identity politics'.

⁷ Just Google 'Ford Foundation and CIA'.

⁸ <<https://shorturl.at/egIU4>> or <<https://www.nytimes.com/1964/01/26/archives/wilson-seeks-to-dispel-fears-of-business-on-labors-policy-british.html>>

⁹ <https://pbs.twimg.com/media/F_kmdNoXYAA392X?format=jpg&name=large>

words: 'Britain's tax burden to be highest since WW2 as households face £44bn stealth tax hit.'¹⁰ The expression is even used by government bodies, the Office of Budget Responsibility for example.¹¹

Given all this talk of 'burden' you might think that the UK had an unusually large 'tax burden', compared to other countries, but that is simply not the case. Although, according to statistics from the OECD, the amount of tax being paid by UK citizens has been rising over the last three documented years (i.e. 2020, 2021 and 2022) we're only just reaching the middle of the league, currently being '16th out of 38 OECD countries in terms of the tax-to-GDP'.¹²

Looking further back, the figures show that, with the discovery of North Sea oil and the dominance of the Conservative Party in the 80s and 90s, the UK 'burden' fell.

Between 1981 and 1995, the UK tax burden fell from a high of 33.9 per cent of GDP in 1982 to a low of 27.4 per cent in 1993, 6.8 and 10.6 per cent of GDP below the G7 and EU14 averages, respectively. This largely reflected a fall in taxes on income and profits (of 3.0 per cent of GDP), with successive cuts to the top and basic rates of income tax during the period and a sharp fall in oil and gas revenues By contrast, the tax burdens in other G7 and western European economies continued to rise (by 2.3 and 3.2 per cent of GDP respectively) over the same period.¹³

So, why is Blighty broken-down? A major part of the answer is that the Conservative governments of the 1980s cut back taxing and spending and let the public sector decline. (And the New Labour governments followed suit.) After 40 years of neglect, the comparison between public provision and public spaces in the UK and the rest of the EU is now stark, as a visit to any of the EU countries shows immediately. We could be generous and say that in Britain free market theories have been given an extended trial and have failed for most. The well off and the rich have done very nicely, thank you; which was the point, perhaps. But for the rest of us its millions in poverty, food banks, crappy housing, cancelled trains, potholes, waiting lists in the NHS, no dentists . . . the list could be extended almost infinitely.

¹⁰ <<https://shorturl.at/fgmE0>> or <<https://www.thisismoney.co.uk/money/article-12781839/Tax-burden-highest-Second-World-War-44-billion-stealth-tax.html>>.

¹¹ See <<https://obr.uk/box/the-uks-tax-burden-in-historical-and-international-context/>>.

¹² <<https://www.oecd.org/tax/revenue-statistics-united-kingdom.pdf>>

¹³ <https://obr.uk/box/the-uks-tax-burden-in-historical-and-international-context/>

Yet these obvious, even banal observations would be considered unsayable by the major British politics parties.

new

Prescience

Rereading *Lobster* 62 – published when Obama was beginning his second term as US president – I noticed the paragraphs below in this column.

A former Republican staffer in Congress, who has resigned after 30 years, had a very interesting piece on Truth-out. He wrote this about the Republicans:

'It should have been evident to clear-eyed observers that the Republican Party is becoming less and less like a traditional political party in a representative democracy and becoming more like an apocalyptic cult, or one of the intensely ideological authoritarian parties of 20th century Europe.'¹⁴

new

9/11

Professor Dr. Maximilian Ruppert, a German structural engineer, has recently spoken about 9/11. On the day the Twin Towers came down, he was at a party to celebrate one of his engineering colleagues getting his PhD. (This text below has been translated from German.)

It was on this day, September 11th, that we had a really great party [. . . .] Then the celebration was suddenly over, and big [TV] monitors were rolled in. I remember it as if it were yesterday, even if it was so long ago. The party was over and then. . . .

Americans were not present. Normally they are always there when there is a party, and this was actually the reason why a higher-ranking officer said: "Look what happened there! The Americans are bringing down these towers and didn't even bother to tell us! The audacity! Well, when there is a demolition on our side" — I'm now quoting him — "then they always come over to drink and guzzle, and now we can't join them."

This was the spontaneous reaction within the first seconds, after

¹⁴ <www.truth-out.org/goodbye-all-reflections-gop-operative-who-left-cult/1314907779>

seeing the images. But then silence overcame us, because we realized that people had been harmed, and this took our breath away in the truest sense of the word. . .

[. . . .]

All of us in that room did research these topics. This was a small community in the German-speaking area [of Europe]. There was also one in Israel with whom we were in close contact, and one in the USA, and [one] in the Far East as well, and that was it. So, everybody knew everybody.

And on that day, the German community — Berlin, Freiburg im Breisgau, Munich Bundeswehr University — they were all present. And we basically knew instantly, for buildings to come down that way, it can only be a planned procedure.

We also felt — wow, respect! This is a really clean job! This is quite a feat! This is not easy! You have to think about it this like — well, I won't hold a structural engineering class right now, don't worry — but to come up with the structural calculations to erect such a building — especially one of these dimensions — requires maybe one-hundredth of the effort and also of the technical expertise compared to what it takes to bring down such a building in this particular manner. You can always knock it down, but to do it without any great collateral damage, I mean . . .

[. . . .]

Bringing down this type of building really means two years of the hardest work and preparation, both in terms of engineering and calculations — these days virtual, with the help of computers — as well as actual practical work on the site.¹⁵

In other words, a group of structural engineers watched the Twin Towers come down and, like many of us, thought: they've been demolished.

Professor Ruppert is not the first in his profession to have that reaction. Dr. Judy Wood, another structural engineer, thought the same. But unlike Professor Ruppert, she did not stay silent for twenty years. On her site,¹⁶ beneath a picture of a vast fountain of pulverised debris erupting out the top of one of the Twin Towers buildings, she commented: 'My intellectual integrity prevents me from calling this a collapse.'

¹⁵ <<https://shorturl.at/gjBFW>> or <<https://ic911.org/news/9-11-the-beginning-of-the-end-of-science-professor-maximilian-rupperts-full-interview/>> Thanks to John Booth for this.

¹⁶ <http://www.drjudywood.com/articles/a/bio/Wood_Bio.html>

There is a lecture by Wood on YouTube in which she begins by pointing out that much of the Twin Towers turned into dust – ‘dustified’ is her word – before it hit the ground.¹⁷ To my knowledge, none of the conventional explanations deal with this simple fact. For Wood the evidence suggests that the buildings were demolished by a beam weapon of some kind. But there is no evidence that such a weapon, with that power, existed in 2001.

Nonetheless the puzzle remains: the buildings were hit by the planes and then were apparently demolished. Did some part of the US state spend years clandestinely wiring the buildings with explosives? This seems highly improbable to me. Is there another explanation? There is the one I briefly mentioned in *Lobster* 57. A man called Robert Parish Sr. wrote an article in 2004.¹⁸ Here are extracts from that.

I was working at Kirkwood Commutator in Cleveland, Ohio from 1974 to September 30th, 1998.

We had a team of consultants hired by Otis Elevator to supervise and inspect all aspects of those commutators we produced for those motors. That were being made for the largest ever Twin Towers going up in Asia. Otis Elevator had the elevator contract for providing the elevators. The lead consultant engineer would always come into my gage calibration lab to watch and inspect my setting up and calibration of gages for measuring the components we were producing for the assembly of those motors

On day, as the lead consultant engineer was in my lab talking just about “stuff”, I asked him, “Sometime in future, in 50 years or so, how are these Twin Towers are going to be taken down as tall as they were going to be and as tight as land is in a crowded city, without causing fast [sic: vast?] destruction to other buildings?”

He was standing upright. He outstretched his right arm with his palm down. And said, “Bam, bam, bam, bam, bam, bam” as he lowered his hand down one imaginary floor at a time. All the way down to the floor. I knew that we had to certify these commutators to be able to operate continuously for 50 years without service or repair as our part of the contract. He explained that as the buildings are being built, explosive charges are being incorporated into the structures at key floor joint locations. So, that when the first charges are set-off at the top floors, they will take that floor down to the next. And the charges at that floor

¹⁷ <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NZJZRxBrs4I>>

¹⁸ <<https://rense.com/general48/chargesplacedinWTC.htm>>

will take it down to the next floor. This will continue all the way down. The Twin Towers will come straight down like a stack of pancakes. When the buildings get old and no longer useful or profitable to have and maintain, all it will take is a phone call to take them down.

Some of the footage of the Twin Towers collapsing does seem to show small explosions at floor junctions but I can find nothing about buildings constructed with explosives built-in. And evidently the group of structural engineers watching the Twin Towers fall with Professor Ruppert had not heard of it, either. So this remains merely a very interesting notion with no support.

'5G is a compartmentalized weapons deployment'

I have commented before in this column on the apparent lack of editorial control over the content at the Global Research site. Because this is a huge site with millions of views, this matters. I look at it every few weeks just to see . . . and recently noticed another disinformation belter. One Mark Steele, who claims to have been a research scientist,¹⁹ has an essay there on the dangers of 5G.²⁰ The piece concludes thus:

To quote Martin L Pall, PhD, Emeritus Professor of Biochemistry and Medical Sciences at Washington State University, 'Putting tens of millions of 5G antennas, without a single biological test of safety, has to be about the stupidest idea anyone has had in the history of the world'. [Sic: presumably 'putting up'] Professor Pall is wrong, however: it is not a stupid idea but a heinous crime if one understands the motive behind this deployment. 5G is a *compartmentalized weapons deployment masquerading as a benign technological advance* for enhanced communications and faster downloads. The globalist false propaganda falls away with one simple undisputed fact: their PCR test patent for Covid-19, which was filed in 2015, was never able to identify a live virus, so that it could be utilized to terrorize ignorant and unsuspecting

¹⁹ See the autobiographical letter at <<https://tinyurl.com/2fkazkf3>> or <https://edrms2.hartlepool.gov.uk/PublicAccess_Live/Document/ViewDocument?id=08501D434D494CC29D01E8DEF94C950F>.

I have found no evidence of any of this but a page about him on Wikipedia – whatever that's worth – <[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mark_Steele_\(conspiracy_theorist\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mark_Steele_(conspiracy_theorist))> tells us he has been in prison for a firearms offence committed while working as a bouncer.

²⁰ <<https://tinyurl.com/y7htpcn>> or <www.globalresearch.ca/expert-report-fifth-generation-5g-directed-energy-radiation-emissions-context-nanometal-contaminated-vaccines-include-covid-19-graphite-ferrous-oxide-antennas/5786727>

populations across the world into taking a Covid-19 vaccine *polluted with a nano antenna technology* to hook victims up to the 5G network. (Emphases added.)

IRD

The opening of official files on the activities of IRD (the Information Research Department) is producing a steady stream of articles, as historians go through the archives. Unfortunately many of these are available only through academic publishers and are very expensive. However two such essays by one of the leading researchers in the field, Rory Cormac, are available on his university's website. They are 'UK "Black" Productions: Forgeries, Fake Groups, and Propaganda, 1951–1977'²¹ and 'The Information Research Department, Unattributable Propaganda, and Northern Ireland: Promising Salvation but Ending in Failure?'²²

He ends the first of these essays with this:

There can no longer be any doubt: the UK systematically used disinformation to attack and disrupt adversaries.

There were doubts? It's almost 40 years since Colin Wallace's story began being reported, bringing IRD to our attention.

AIPAC

When the events in Gaza began I wondered what the Israel lobby's main body in the US – the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) – had been doing.²³ The first few Google hits were about AIPAC funding Republicans.

AIPAC claims to be bipartisan because it gives money to members of both parties. But that's not how it functions in earnest. Increasingly, the group gives lavishly to far-right Republicans. (In 2022, it famously endorsed 109 Republican members of Congress who voted to overturn the 2020 election results.) And the group raises millions of dollars from

²¹ <<https://nottingham-repository.worktribe.com/output/6295895>>

You get the essays by clicking on the Download button.

²² <<https://nottingham-repository.worktribe.com/index.php/output/807819/>>

²³ Last referenced in these columns in *Lobster* 57 in Simon Matthews' review of John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt, *The Israel Lobby* (London: Allen Lane, 2007).

Republican megadonors, including billionaire Trump-backer Bernie Marcus.²⁴

The same article quotes Congressman Mark Pocan describing AIPAC as 'basically a wholly-owned subsidiary of the GOP . . . a front group for conservative policy here in the U.S..' ²⁵

Using Lobster's website

You probably know this already, but in case there are readers – like me! – who hadn't noticed, on the opening display of an article on the site in issues 58 onwards, the button to the right of 'Zoom 100%' converts the text into a larger PDF format, which you may prefer.

The false flag problem

So there was Roger Waters (he of Pink Floyd fame) wondering if the Hamas attack on Israel was a false flag attack.²⁶ I confess I did initially wonder if the much vaunted Israeli intelligence services had let it happen. Surely the Palestinian populations were completely penetrated by human and electronic means? Apparently not.

Back to the notion of a false flag. Its use seems to me to have increased markedly since 9/11 and I wondered if anyone had examined this. Of course someone has done just that. Merrill Perlman wrote a piece for the *Columbia Journalism Review* in 2018 discussing the concept's use.²⁷ She notes that it was first used in the context of pirate ships flying false flags in the 17th century – and that kind of false flag is still being used today, to enable the sanction-busting transportation of crude oil. She dates its recent public use to 1981 and Robert Moss (purveyor of the 'Soviet threat' theme to the UK during the 1970s), appearing before the US Senate's Subcommittee on Terrorism.

The problem with the concept is that it offers too ready a way to avoid

²⁴ <<https://tinyurl.com/563ys7un>> or <<https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2023/11/aipac-israel-gaza-netanyahu-mark-pocan.html>>

²⁵ See also Cara MariAnna, 'Israel Lobby's Disastrous Domination' at <<https://consortiumnews.com/2023/11/13/israel-lobbys-disastrous-domination/>>.

²⁶ <<https://twitter.com/AvivaKlompas/status/1721782191221325984>>

²⁷ <https://www.cjr.org/language_corner/false-flags.php>

uncomfortable information. If the idea that Hamas are willing to kill Israeli civilians is discomfiting, the false flag notion can save you having to deal with the complexity of Islamists and the Middle East.

The new Cold War online

Craig Murray reported on his website on 24 October that he had been detained and questioned by police as he was entering the UK at Glasgow airport.²⁸ The police confiscated his phone and computer. The police were acting under the powers of Schedule 7 of the Terrorism Act 2000. This

provides police officers with unique powers to examine people who pass through the United Kingdom's borders. It allows them to stop, question and when necessary, search and detain individuals and goods travelling through the UK's borders to determine whether they may be involved or concerned in the commission, preparation or instigation of acts of terrorism.

The examination of an individual under Schedule 7 is not conditional upon having grounds to suspect that person of being engaged in terrorism, but the decision must not be arbitrary. There are a range of safeguards and measures in place to ensure appropriate use of the powers.

A vital tool for policing, Schedule 7 powers can be instrumental in securing evidence to support the conviction of terrorists, gathering intelligence to detect terrorist threats and deterring terrorist or *hostile activity* in the UK.²⁹ (emphasis added)

'Hostile activity' could be anything.

Murray had previously mentioned that three other people whom he says he knows had been similarly detained before him – these being Kit Klarenberg, Vanessa Beeley and Johanna Ross.³⁰ In the comments section of the blog post where Craig Murray detailed his experience, John Laughland stated that he had also been similarly detained at Gatwick. (More on Mr Laughland below.) We may therefore reasonably infer that the trawl through the phones and

²⁸ <<https://shorturl.at/eimoS>> or <<https://www.craigmurray.org.uk/archives/2023/10/incredibly-i-face-investigation-for-terrorism-defence-funds-appeal/>>

²⁹ <<https://www.counterterrorism.police.uk/what-we-do/protect/schedule-7/>>

³⁰ See Murray's blog post from May at <<https://www.craigmurray.org.uk/archives/2023/05/the-twilight-of-freedom/>>.

computers of Ross, Klarenberg and Beeley led the police to Murray. Klarenberg and Ross³¹ have both worked for Russian government-funded outlets, including Sputnik News.

Klarenberg reported that he had been detained under Schedule Three, Section Four of the 2019 Counter-Terrorism and Border Act,³² as was Beeley in 2021.³³ Beeley wrote:

The questions I was asked related to my work in Syria and especially my work on exposing the UK FCDO-incubated White Helmet organisation embedded exclusively with illegal armed groups dominated by Al Qaeda since their establishment in 2013 in Turkey and Jordan – by a former British Military Intelligence Officer, James Le Mesurier.

I have written a little about Beeley and the White Helmets.³⁴ She seemed to be either an intellectual incompetent or a disinformant. I couldn't tell which.

Klarenberg is a much more substantial figure who has written a series of striking articles, none of which I quite trust because of the lack of clarity about his sources – and his tendency to slightly overcook everything. The account of Klarenberg's detention and legal questions relating to his reporting opens out into an extremely complex set of issues going back several years, mostly to do with Russian disinformation and reporting sympathetic to Russia.³⁵

The fourth detainee mentioned by Murray, John Laughland, is another member of what we might call the pro-Russian intellectual ecosystem. He was Director of Studies at the Paris-based Institute of Democracy and Cooperation. This is funded by Russia. Laughland has written an angry but rather drôle account of his experience at the hands of the British police: PC Plod, apparently tipped off by the French that he was crossing the Channel, armed with Google, tried to find out who he was and what he thought, prior to asking

³¹ On Ross see <<https://shorturl.at/tABJX>> or <<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3717375/Revealed-Putin-s-propaganda-girls-working-destabilise-UK-Pair-new-news-agency-linked-string-controversial-stories.html>>

³² <<https://shorturl.at/kJWZ8>> or <<https://new.thecradle.co/articles/uk-police-detain-the-cradle-columnist-kit-klarenberg-over-political-views>>

³³ <<https://shorturl.at/kwBV3>> or <<https://beforeitsnews.com/eu/2023/06/vanessa-beeley-we-are-all-potential-terrorists-according-to-british-anti-terrorism-legislation-2706131.html>>

³⁴ <<https://shorturl.at/eFKR3>> or <<https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/lob80-view-from-the-bridge.pdf>> under subhead **The problem of sources.**

³⁵ <<https://shorturl.at/BFHLy>> or <<https://thegrayzone.com/2023/05/30/journalist-kit-klarenberg-british-police-interrogated-grayzone/>>

him questions.³⁶

Laughland is a conservative, some of whose views are not far from some of those on the Tory right. But while, like them, he is pro-nation state and anti-EU, he is also anti-NATO. I quoted Laughland in this column in *Lobster* 45.

Nato is now a device to exert control and extract cash. Those who resist, like Belarus, are punished . . . All eastern European states are required to sell off their national economic assets to foreigners, and close down their agriculture by accepting the dumping of subsidised EU food imports. This creates massive social disruption and unemployment. In addition, they must spend at least 2% of their GDP on defence, preferably on arms made in the US.

Consequently, a small country like Lithuania, whose economy has collapsed so catastrophically, has just announced the purchase of \$34 million worth of Stinger missiles, made by the Raytheon Corporation of Tucson, Arizona. When Tanzania announced it was spending \$40 million on a new civilian air traffic control system, there was an outcry; but Lithuania, whose official GDP is not much larger than Tanzania's, will have to spend \$240m on arms every year as the price for Nato membership. And Lithuania is just one of seven new member states, all of which are spending hundreds of millions of dollars on arms.³⁷

As for Laughland's Institute of Democracy and Cooperation (IDC), another institute – The Institute for European Integrity³⁸ – says that the IDC (or IDCP; they can't decide which is the appropriate acronym):

appears to operate predominantly as a two-person team involving the following individuals: at its helm is Director Natalia Narochnitskaya, while John Laughland fills the role of Director of Studies. According to a leaked diplomatic cable from Wikileaks, the founder of IDCP Anatoliy Kucherena confirmed that the Government of Russia would be providing financial support to the organization; furthermore, circa 2014, John Laughland stated that the Foundation for Historical Outlook in Moscow, whose president is Ms. Narochnitskaya, would provide funds. Ms. Narochnitskaya is a former Soviet diplomat, an erstwhile Rodina member turned prominent far-right figure and, until quite recently, a

³⁶ <<https://fvdinternational.com/article/europe-s-descent-into-totalitarianism>>

³⁷ <<https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/article/issue/45/the-view-from-the-bridge-9/>> under subhead **NATO and Eastern Europe**.

³⁸ Self-description at <<https://www.iei.ngo/about-institute-european-integrity>>.

trustee for the now-sanctioned Russkiy Mir Foundation. John Laughland offers amplification and outreach into the UK political conservative sphere by offering a Eurosceptic perception on a variety of issues that are often girded by an extreme national sovereignty philosophy.³⁹

The recently formed Institute for European Integrity doesn't tell us who is funding it, but it defines its activities thus:

[It] identifies suspicious TSOs [third sector organisations] and investigates their leaderships, enabling structures, and activities for meaningful links to or behaviours consistent with: malign influence and finance; financial and organised crime; narrative or reputation laundering; terrorism, genocide, espionage; or other indicators flagged in our methodology.

And it

seeks to empower the third sector through our flagship NGO Watchlist, special investigations, and informative opinion pieces. IEI's work is intended to serve as a tool for necessary due diligence to prevent the corruption of the nonprofit space and safeguard against threats to institutional integrity or democratic norms.⁴⁰

In short, if you ever wondered what the Cold War would have looked like with the Internet, here's a corner of it.

Getting rid of Corbyn

As we approach the next general election with the Labour Party safely in the hands of people who are no threat to any of society's vested interests, the defenestration of the previous leader, Jeremy Corbyn, is being publicly celebrated. One Harry Burns, head of Labour's elections unit under Corbyn, has boasted 'I did everything I could to bring Corbyn down'.⁴¹ And in a post to Twitter, the Jewish Labour Group group said of Corbyn that they 'saw him off' as leader of the party.⁴²

³⁹ <<https://www.iei.ngo/ngo-watchlist/institute-democracy-and-cooperation-paris>>

⁴⁰ <<https://www.iei.ngo/ngo-watchlist>>

⁴¹ <<https://tinyurl.com/mrxa2bka>> or <<https://www.thelondoneconomic.com/politics/i-did-everything-i-could-to-bring-corbyn-down-ex-labour-elections-head-says-360591/>>

⁴² <<https://tinyurl.com/muhktmvx>> or <https://electronicintifada.net/blogs/asa-winstanley/jewish-labour-movement-says-it-brought-down-corbyn?fbclid=IwAR02zzBL0Xj2_UEQgwgokGnPF2-BV9UrBXf37cYS-LAN8dcpXIKR4sOcn7I>

Which does nothing to mitigate the stupidity of Corbyn taking the job as leader when he knew the vast majority of MPs didn't want him. A recipe for disaster, that was.

JFK again

A cracker of a blog post from Robert Morrow. In it he lists all the major names who suspected LBJ of being behind the Kennedy assassination, many of them expressing the thought shortly after the event. Rather than cite the sources, Morrow has posted copies of the relevant page or document for us to read. Here's the list:

Robert Landis, the Secret Service agent who recently admitted finding 'the magic bullet' in the presidential limo, says some of the Secret Service agents thought this.

Jackie Kennedy and her mother.

JFK's secretary Evelyn Lincoln.

KGB officer Oleg Nechiporenko.

The KGB office in the USA.

CIA officer E. Howard Hunt.

Madeleine Brown, LBJ's mistress.

Barr McClellan, a Dallas lawyer.

Republican presidential candidate Barry Goldwater.

Gen. Joseph J. Cappucci, the head of Air Force Counter Intelligence.⁴³

And yet barely a word about LBJ's possible role made it into public consciousness for thirty? forty? years after the event. Why? The political mainstream did not want to damage American's projection of itself and was happy to go along with the official cover-up, patently absurd though it was. And because most if not all of the assassination sceptics were/are Democratic Party voters, consciously or not the researchers steered away from an hypothesis which could only benefit the Republicans.

Ukraine

On the Russian invasion of Ukraine I am out of step with many on the left who

⁴³ <<https://tinyurl.com/khuya2sc>> or <<https://robertmorrowpoliticalresearchblog.blogspot.com/2023/10/paul-landis-day-after-jfk-assassination.html>>

argue that the Russian invasion was 'provoked' by the US/NATO and thus do not think NATO and others should be supporting Ukraine in the war. Jonathan Cooke is an example. He's a seriously well-informed commentator with whom I usually agree. In an essay,⁴⁴ Cooke takes the reader through the diplomatic and military to and fro leading up to the invasion and says that this sequence of events shows, as he puts it in his subheading, that 'the western narrative of an "unprovoked" attack has become impossible to sustain.' His narrative seems accurate to me. The 'great game' of influence between the US and Russia continued over Ukraine with the US winning with the resignation of the Russian-supporting government in 2014. In response to which Russia annexed Crimea. Having occupied Crimea without a significant Western response, it supported the insurgents' war in the east of Ukraine, and eventually moved to the threat of an invading ground force – the 40 mile military column on the border. I assume the Russians thought the Ukraine would fold at the point – a huge miscalculation but one from which they could not back down. So we had an invasion. Cook sees it thus:

It was then, after 14 years of US meddling on Russia's borders, that Moscow sent in its soldiers – "unprovoked".

But Russia did not invade the 'meddling' USA. It invaded Ukraine and that invasion rather than American 'meddling' explains why some former Warsaw Pact members have joined NATO. The countries bordering Russia have to live with the possibility that Russia might attack them. In its previous incarnation it invaded Hungary and Czechoslovakia. Cook doesn't see it this way. Towards the end of his essay he writes:

Without prolonged US intervention, the reality is that Ukraine would have had to come to an accommodation many years ago with its much larger, stronger neighbour – just as Mexico and Canada have had to do with the US. Invasion would have been avoided.

This seems very plausible. Without NATO and EU support for the pro-democracy movement the Russian-backed government would have remained in power. On the other hand, in effect Cooke says that, by virtue of its size and weapons, Russia has a veto over political development in the countries on its border. Cooke opposes American attempts to control the political development of countries in Central and South American, but not apparently, Russian attempts to do the same. The analogy with Canada and Mexico doesn't work because the USA, for all its faults, is not the murderous, totalitarian

⁴⁴ 'Russia-Ukraine war: How the US paved the way to Moscow's invasion' <<https://www.jonathan-cook.net/2023-01-10/russia-ukraine-war-us-pave-invasion/>>

kleptocracy that Russia is today.⁴⁵

In any case, as President Putin believes that Ukraine has no right to exist, is a part of Russia, and its existence as an independent entity is an affront,⁴⁶ what kind of 'accommodation' would have satisfied him?

Curious, is it not, that when the Russians were unable to persuade NATO *et al* to take seriously their objections to events in Ukraine, they didn't just turn off their oil and gas taps. That would have got attention PDQ.

Divide and rule

After the Hamas attack, the best thing I read in the first couple of days was Jon Schwarz, 'Yes, This Is Israel's 9/11. Both the U.S. and Israel were stunned to experience the ultraviolence they mete out to others.'⁴⁷ Schwarz included this sentence: "Hamas, to my great regret, is Israel's creation," according to one of the Israelis who worked on this clever project.' That quote is from Avner Cohen and was originally published by Andrew Higgins in a piece in the *Wall Street Journal* in 2009, 'How Israel Helped to Spawn Hamas'.⁴⁸ Higgins wrote this:

. . . Mr. Cohen, a Tunisian-born Jew who worked in Gaza for more than two decades. Responsible for religious affairs in the region until 1994, Mr. Cohen watched the Islamist movement take shape, muscle aside secular Palestinian rivals and then morph into what is today Hamas, a militant group that is sworn to Israel's destruction.

Instead of trying to curb Gaza's Islamists from the outset, says Mr. Cohen, Israel for years tolerated and, in some cases, encouraged them as a counterweight to the secular nationalists of the Palestine Liberation Organization and its dominant faction, Yasser Arafat's Fatah.

⁴⁵ Alex Cox picked me up on this. If we agree that imperial America has killed something like 20 million people around the world since WW2, is that not 'murderous'? Yes, of course. Unclear writing on my part. I was thinking of Russia's domestic politics in which the regime's opponents are regularly murdered, disappeared or imprisoned. That has happened in the US but rarely in the last 40 years.

⁴⁶ See his 2021 speech at <<http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/66181>>.

⁴⁷ <<https://tinyurl.com/e9t27ac7>> or <<https://theintercept.com/2023/10/09/israel-hamas-september-11/>>

⁴⁸ Available at <<https://tinyurl.com/5847rkjc>> or <<https://web.archive.org/web/20090926212507/http://online.wsj.com/article/SB123275572295011847.html>>.

Another Israeli official, Bezalel Smotrich, in 2022 Israel's Finance Minister, is quoted elsewhere as saying:

The Palestinian Authority is a burden, and Hamas is an asset. It's a terrorist organization, no one will recognize it, no one will give it status at the [International Criminal Court], no one will let it put forth a resolution at the U.N. Security Council.⁴⁹

A third Israeli official, Brigadier General Yitzhak Segev – who, during part of the 1980s, was the Israeli military governor of the Gaza Strip – was quoted in *New York Times* journalist David K. Shipler's book *Arab and Jew* as saying, 'he had financed the Islamic movement as a counterweight to the PLO and the Communists. "The Israeli Government gave me a budget and the military government gives to the mosques".'⁵⁰ The PLO was lead, of course, by Yasser Arafat who was himself reported to have referred to Hamas as 'a creature of Israel'. (Although the precise source of that quote is unclear.)

These comments were echoed in the *Daily Telegraph* on 16 October in a piece which included these paragraphs:

For years, the various governments led by Benjamin Netanyahu took an approach that divided power between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank – bringing Palestinian Authority president Mahmoud Abbas to his knees while making moves that propped up the Hamas terror group', wrote political correspondent Tal Schneider in the *Times of Israel* last week. 'The idea was to prevent Abbas – or anyone else in the Palestinian Authority's West Bank government – from advancing toward the establishment of a Palestinian state.

Dmitry Shumsky, a columnist for *Haaretz*, took a similar line, arguing that Mr Netanyahu had pursued a policy of 'diplomatic paralysis' in order to avoid negotiations with the Palestinians over a two-state solution – a solution despised by the country's extreme Right. This flawed strategy turned Hamas from 'a minor terrorist group into an efficient, lethal army with bloodthirsty killers who mercilessly slaughtered innocent Israeli civilians', said Mr Shumsky.⁵¹

⁴⁹ <<https://theintercept.com/2023/10/14/hamas-israel-palestinian-authority/>>.

⁵⁰ <https://archive.org/details/isbn_9780394012735/page/176/mode/2up?q=yitzhak+segev>

⁵¹ <<https://tinyurl.com/bdfnr4n>> or <<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/world-news/2023/10/16/how-benjamin-netanyahu-empowered-hamas/>>

None dare call it conspiracy

I intended to read and review Mike Rothschild's *Jewish Space Lasers: The Rothschilds and 200 years of conspiracy theories* (New York and London: Melville House Publishing, 2023).⁵² It's a biography of the Rothschild family and its financial affairs, with an account of the contemporaneous conspiracy theories which were created about them, running parallel to it. An awful lot of research has gone into this and it is thoroughly documented. But I gave up after 100 pages; it didn't interest me much, and there's so much else to read.

In the opening pages the author makes some comments on the nature of conspiracy theories which may have general interest.

Almost all conspiracy theories are rooted in antisemitism, and almost all antisemitism is rooted in conspiracy theories. Jewish people will always be scapegoats for some people, and the Rothschilds are some of the best-known Jews in modern history. In many ways, the story of Rothschild conspiracy theories *is* the story of modern antisemitism. That is how inseparable they are. (p. XIV)

'Almost all conspiracy theories are rooted in antisemitism'. Are they? The author shows that this was true in the 19th century, and it that might have been true up to a generation or three ago, but these days, in the English-speaking world? I doubt it. (Though how could we measure this?) The most recent new batch of conspiracy theories were triggered by covid and I didn't notice antisemitism being a significant feature in them. Rothschild continues:

To understand Kanye West ranting on Alex Jones's show about how great Hitler was requires understanding the influence that John Birch Society speechwriter Gary Allen's 1971 book, *None Dare Call It Conspiracy*, had on Jones, an effect which he has spoken of many times. Allen's book, which sold millions of copies by attacking Jewish "insiders" like the Rothschilds, was inspired in part by *Secrets of the Federal Reserve*, a bestselling conspiracy book funded by the antisemitic and openly pro-fascist poet Ezra Pound. And Pound was inspired by that deathless work of anti-Jewish paranoia, *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, which emerged from the antisemitism of Tsarist Russia at the start of the Twentieth Century. (p. XV)

To understand Kanye West ranting about anything requires understanding that

⁵² There is an interview with the author at <<https://tinyurl.com/45j3wakj>> or <<https://www.jta.org/2022/05/23/culture/a-rothschild-who-debunks-conspiracy-theories-for-a-living-is-writing-the-book-about-jewish-space-lasers>>. He is *not* related to the Rothschilds in the book.

he's mentally ill – bi-polar, I have read.⁵³ About Pound and the influence of the *Protocols* I know nothing but I used to know a little about Gary Allen and I didn't remember his book being anti-semitic. So I went back to my 40-year old copy of *None Dare Call It Conspiracy* to check; and Rothschild's brief account of it is misleading. Allen was a leading figure in the John Birch Society and his little book showed the intellectual journey made by the Birchers: paranoid anti-communists in the early 1950s, via the discovery of Carroll Quigley's account of the Round Table in the mid 1960s, they moved to Allen's view of America (and the world) run by '*Insiders*' (Allen's italics) – loosely, bankers, the Bilderberg group and the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR).

The book ends with a list of the members of the CFR. In Allen's account some of them were Jews, but they were bankers first. Allen writes on p. 39:

Anti-Semites have played into the hands of the conspiracy by trying to portray the entire conspiracy as Jewish.

Dallas again

I have been rereading James W. Douglass's *JFK and The Unspeakable*.⁵⁴ Fifteen years or so after its publication, it remains the best single volume that I know of on the events leading to JFK's death. Douglass describes in detail how JFK tried to shift American foreign policy away from its Cold War positions. His attempt to change US policy towards the Soviet Union, Cuba and Vietnam, against the wishes of the military, the CIA and most of his foreign service, was breathtakingly ambitious and dangerous.

Douglass shows the pre-assassination workings of the CIA to frame Oswald for the shooting. His thesis is virtually irresistible but there's a major anomaly he doesn't cover. The creation of the Oswald-as-pro-Castro-lefty operation was very complex, with minute attention to detail. Yet the rifle with which he was supposed to have done the shooting, the Mannlicher-Carcano, a pre-WW2 Italian model, simply could not have made the shots apparently fired. So why, in such a complex, high-risk venture, did the conspirators chose the Mannlicher-Carcano as the putative assassination weapon rather than one of the many better rifles which could have plausibly fired the shots?

There is a large literature on the rifle and whether or not Oswald actually

⁵³ <<https://tinyurl.com/mrbmbpvj>> or <<https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2022/10/kanye-west-anti-semitism-mental-illness-bipolar-jews-white-lives-matter.html>>

⁵⁴ Reviewed by Michael Carlson in *Lobster* 56 at <<https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/article/issue/56/everything-going-to-change/>>.

bought it;⁵⁵ on whether or not the photograph of Oswald posing with the rifle is genuine or not;⁵⁶ and on whether or not we should believe Oswald's wife, Marina, when she testified that she had taken the photograph. Is there any way through all this?

There might be, if we return to Chauncey Holt's account of being involved on the periphery of the event. He tells us that his CIA unit was tasked to produce a smooth bore rifle which would take a cartridge containing a round already fired by a Mannlicher-Carcano rifle. The smooth bore meant that a bullet fired from the rifle would not be terribly powerful and could not be fired with great accuracy.⁵⁷ However, upon forensic examination the bullet would appear to have been fired by a Mannlicher-Carcano. JFK had a shallow back wound, inflicted by the first shot fired at him. On examination of his corpse there was no bullet in the wound. It had fallen out.⁵⁸

We can extrapolate a little from Holt's account and see how the pieces fit. The plan for which he provided technical assistance was an attempt to sabotage Kennedy's (secret) policy of slowly building détente with Cuba. The fake assassination attempt would fire the Mannlicher-Carcano round through the smooth bore rifle at Kennedy and attribute this to the (presumably soon to be dead) apparently pro-Castro activist Oswald. One shot could plausibly be attributed to the Mannlicher-Carcano.

In the event, the single, non-lethal shot plan was piggy-backed by a real assassination conspiracy and the authors of the cover-up were left trying explain how the wounds to Connally and JFK – plus the shot which stuck the pavement – could have been done by Oswald's crappy rifle and the apparently undamaged 'magic bullet' found at Parkland hospital which had fallen out of Kennedy's back wound.

But wasn't the rifle found in the Texas Book Depository initially identified

⁵⁵ See for example 'Mail order rifle' at <https://www.harveyandlee.net/Mail_Order_Rifle/Mail_Order_Rifle.html>.

⁵⁶ A recent analysis, using latest computer technology, concluded the photograph was genuine. <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GD1d8wKIrps>>.

⁵⁷ There is a discussion of how accurate (or not) a smooth bore rifle can be at <<https://tinyurl.com/bdd3yzbt>> or <<https://castboolits.gunloads.com/showthread.php?66882-How-accurate-is-a-smooth-bore-rifle>>. Roughly speaking, it seems that a smooth bore rifle would hit JFK but could not guarantee where it would land. It also possible that, as Garrick Alder suggested, the aim was to hit the car and JFK was struck by accident.

⁵⁸ This was the bullet recently revealed to have been found in the presidential limousine by a Secret Service agent. See, for example, <<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-66792977>>.

by three Dallas police officers as a Mauser? Against that, the only one of the three who is reported as claiming to have seen the word 'Mauser' on the rifle was Roger Craig and his testimony was entirely unreliable.⁵⁹ The House Select Committee on Assassinations report on the assassination has this:⁶⁰

Page 51

Over the years, skepticism has arisen as to whether the rifle found in the depository by Boone is the same rifle that was delivered to the Warren Commission and is presently stored in the National Archives. The suspicion has been based to some extent on allegations that police officers who first discovered the rifle identified it as a 7.5 millimeter German Mauser. (77) The controversy was intensified by the allegation that various photographs of the rifle, taken at different times, portray inconsistencies with respect to the proportions of the various component parts. (78)

To resolve the controversy, the committee assembled a wide range of photographs of the rifle: a police photograph taken where it was found in the depository; a motion picture film taken by a television station showing the rifle when it was found by the police; a series of photographs of a police officer carrying the rifle from the depository; photographs taken as the rifle was carried through the halls of Dallas Police Department; and photographs taken later by the FBI and Dallas Police Department. (79)

The examination by committee photographic consultants determined that all photographs were of the same rifle. Both a study of proportions and a comparison of identifying marks indicated that only one rifle was involved. (80) ⁶¹

The Mauser misidentification seems to have been made because the Mannlicher-Carcano looked quite like a Mauser and was a relatively obscure weapon.

Broken-down Britain

I have commented before in this column on the delusions of many of the left

⁵⁹ See <<https://www.jfk-assassination.net/craig.htm>>.

⁶⁰ <<https://www.archives.gov/research/jfk/select-committee-report/part-1a.html>>

⁶¹ My thanks to Garrick Alder for bringing this to my attention.

wing of the British political class about the status of the UK economy.⁶² And here we go again. Sharon Graham, the General Secretary of the trade union Unite, apparently thinks we are 'the sixth richest economy in the world'. (The *Observer* 8 October 2023)⁶³ *With food banks?* On GDP per head – the total value of the economy divided by the population – the first site I looked at ranked UK as 27th.⁶⁴ I wrote 'apparently thinks' because it may simply be expedient for Graham to state that the UK is 6th. If it is, the kinds of changes and redistribution that Graham and others seek would be relatively painless for most taxpayers and is thus politically possible. If the UK is 27th, on the other hand, the redistribution she desires is going to affect many more people and thus becomes politically difficult.

Is the line changing?

I am probably over-reading this, but there seem to me to be distinct signs of pennies dropping and lines changing at *The Times*. There was Emma Duncan on 1 September in 'If the bus networks are poor, then so are we'. Duncan felt it necessary to explain to *Times* readers that after the privatisation of the buses 'companies put services on only where they think they can make money.' Well, duh . . . On 8 September 2023, explaining the local government financial crisis, she noted that 'councils were the principal victims of George Osborne's austerity programme', and that 'The squeeze on local government series is making Britain look and feel poorer and uglier . . . Britain looks like a developing-world country that's not worth investing in.'

On 7 September James Marriott had a piece headed 'We must restore the glamour of public service'. In it he stated: 'The future of our politics and of professions such as teaching requires that we rediscover the glamour of genuine public service'. Well, three cheers for words in favour of the public services after 40 years of denigration from the right, but *glamour?*

And on 2 September we had former Tory MP Matthew Parris on the Conservative government's recent decision to allow house-builders to be excused from clearing up the polluting effects of more houses. Parris was outraged but did not mention that 20% of all Conservative Party funding in the

⁶² In this column in *Lobster* 78.

⁶³ <<https://tinyurl.com/5dsxnyzv>> or <<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/oct/08/sharon-graham-unite-labour-must-be-bolder-they-cant-afford-not-to-be>>

⁶⁴ <<https://www.worldometers.info/gdp/gdp-per-capita/>>

last decade has come from the house-building companies.⁶⁵ (Or did he mention it and have it edited out?) I guess there are limits to what *Times* readers can be expected to digest over breakfast.

Coups are US

If you have read Jonathan Marshall's essay on Watergate in this issue of *Lobster*, you will have some idea of what to expect in his new essay, 'U.S. Cold War Policy and the Italian Far-Right: The Nixon Administration, Republican Party Operatives, and the Borghese Coup Plot of 1970'.⁶⁶ This is classic parapolitics: massive documentation (100 footnotes, many of them lengthy) from public sources used to analyse secret affairs.

As getting a copy essay of this will be a fiddle at best and may cost you money, here are Marshall's abstract and conclusion.

Marshall's abstract:

The Nixon administration's attempt to promote a military coup in Chile after the election of a far-left president in September 1970 is a well-documented example of U.S. officials' willingness do whatever was needed to curtail Soviet influence in the Third World. Drawing on declassified White House documents and records of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, this article examines the parallel but largely unknown story of U.S. dealings with right-wing extremists in one of the founding members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Italy, at around that same time. In December 1970, far-right activists in Italy staged an abortive coup that was intended to prevent further gains by Italy's leftist parties. The article draws on new and widely forgotten sources to examine the background and involvement of two private U.S. operatives for the Republican Party who were closely aligned with senior coup plotters in Italy. Their involvement with Italian neo-fascists should raise concerns about the dangers of private meddling in foreign policy and the potential for private actors to create misperceptions about critical U.S. government policies.

⁶⁵ '20% of Tory donations come from property tycoons' at <<https://tinyurl.com/2ypdbt8d>> or <<https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/dark-money-investigations/20-tory-donations-come-property-tycoons/>>. 'The sector gave more than £60m to Boris Johnson's party over ten years, new analysis by Transparency International shows.'

⁶⁶ In the *Journal of Cold War Studies* (2023) 25 (1): 138–167: <https://doi.org/10.1162/jcws_a_01124>.

Marshall's conclusion:

Controversies over the dangers of private meddling in U.S. foreign policy are as old as the Logan Act, enacted in 1799, and as recent as Special Counsel Robert Mueller's investigation of Russian interference in the 2016 U.S. presidential election. In the case of Italy, local representatives of the U.S. Republican Party, acting with a combination of personal, party, and perceived national interests, apparently tried to help foment an attempted coup d'état by right-wing extremists that would have dragged the country into a bloody civil war had it gone further. The abortive Borghese coup should be a sobering reminder of how easily blurred roles and mistaken communications can turn into foreign policy and human rights debacles.



Dallas again

Above is one of the famous 'three tramps' photographs taken in Dallas on 22 November 1963, a couple of hours after the shooting of JFK. I reproduce it here because Robert Morrow⁶⁷ has reminded his readers that two senior American military officers, Colonel Fletcher Prouty and General Victor Krulak, identified the figure with his back to the camera as the senior CIA officer Edward Lansdale.⁶⁸ Could you identify someone you knew without seeing their

⁶⁷ <<https://robertmorrowpoliticalresearchblog.blogspot.com/>>

⁶⁸ Prouty discusses this in an audio tape at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wA-3navQ-_E>. Start around 3 mins.

face? Perhaps. If it was Lansdale, he is the only CIA *officer* positively identified at the assassination scene, albeit 2 hours or so after the event.⁶⁹

There's no information on Lansdale's whereabouts that day. ChatGPT can find nothing. E. Howard Hunt, the former CIA officer who talked about the CIA's role in the assassination conspiracy when he was old and ill, did not mention Lansdale. But, assuming it is Lansdale, would his presence there make sense? It would.

The piggy-back theory of the assassination is the one I believe to be the most consistent with the available evidence.⁷⁰ In that a faction within the CIA ran a phoney assassination attempt on JFK which they intended to attribute to Castro's Cuba, via the role of public Castro-sympathiser Lee Harvey Oswald. This would provide the pretext for US action – another invasion perhaps. This was piggy-backed upon by a real assassination attempt, which was done in the knowledge that the existence of the phoney CIA attempt would ensure that everything was covered-up. Given Lansdale's track record within the Agency,⁷¹ it is entirely plausible that he was involved in the phoney attempt.

Sloppy stuff from *Covert Action*

'Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky Came to Power in Carefully Planned Operation Coordinated by Western Intelligence Services, Says Former U.S. Diplomat'. Thus the headline in a piece by *Covert Action's* editor, Jeremy Kuzmarov, on 4 August 2023.⁷² The article's subheading piles it on: 'Secret Meeting with British MI6 Head Richard Moore Points to the Likelihood That Zelensky Is a British Intelligence Agent'. This was the first paragraph:

In October 2020, on a visit to London, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky met with Sir Richard Moore, the head of the British intelligence service, MI6. The usual diplomatic protocol is for a visiting foreign head of state to meet with his counterpart, which in this case would have been Prime Minister Boris Johnson. According to Andriy Mishin, a former

⁶⁹ Chauncey Holt was there but he was not a CIA *officer*.

⁷⁰ I discussed it at <<https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/article/issue/83/dallas-again/>>.

⁷¹ See, for example, <<https://www.statecraft.org/chapter8.html>>.

⁷² <<https://tinyurl.com/bdffn7pf>> or <https://covertactionmagazine.com/2023/08/04/ukrainian-president-volodymyr-zelensky-came-to-power-in-a-carefully-planned-operation-coordinated-by-western-intelligence-services-says-former-u-s-diplomat/?mc_cid=379f4dff31&mc_eid=53f70ad8e2>

employee of the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry, the meeting signified that Zelensky was a professional intelligence agent and that Moore was his direct handler, telling him what to do.

Where to begin? Mr Zelensky and his wife made an *official state visit* to the UK in October 2020. They met PM Boris Johnson and The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge. The Zelenskys 'were the first international guests Buckingham Palace has received in nearly seven months, since the U.K. announced the coronavirus lockdown on March 16'.⁷³ Zelensky did indeed meet Sir Richard Moore. But far from it being agent and handler, it was head of MI6 telling a head of state that his entourage was leaky.⁷⁴

I don't have the patience to nit-pick my way through the whole article but there is one other sentence worth noting. During a visit to the Vatican this year, we are told, 'Zelensky was also wearing a shirt with the insignia of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) which collaborated with the Nazis against the Soviet Union in World War II'. *See? He's a fascist sympathiser!* This seemed unlikely to me: nothing I had seen thus far linked Zelensky – a Jew – to OUN. So, unlike *Covert Action*, apparently, I checked. Of course there is video footage of the Vatican visit on YouTube, in which Zelensky is wearing a sort of sweatshirt with small badges on it.⁷⁵ These are, indeed, the insignia of the Ukrainian nationalists OUN. But – big but – that symbol, used by OUN, is also the national symbol of Ukraine.⁷⁶ Zelensky wearing it is no more significant than a British PM wearing a miniature union jack.

⁷³ <<https://tinyurl.com/59dxc9xb>> or <<https://archive.kyivpost.com/ukraine-politics/zelensky-visit-to-uk-historic-trade-deal-military-and-civil-support.html>>

⁷⁴ <<https://tinyurl.com/3aep2tk8>> or <<https://www.unian.info/politics/zelensky-meets-mi6-chief-brits-warn-of-leaks-from-inner-circle-11179916.html>>

⁷⁵ See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1_nIa9czaZc>.

⁷⁶ See, for example, <<https://tinyurl.com/3ebj6ztz>> or <<https://thedispatch.com/article/fact-check-did-volodymyr-zelensky-wear-a-symbol-of-a-far-right-nationalist-group/>>.