

The view from the bridge

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new

Huh?

Belatedly, I read the Labour Party manifesto. Jeremy Corbyn's foreword includes this:

'How can it be right that in the fifth richest country in the world, people's living standards are going backwards and life expectancy is stalling?'¹

Like others have done, I paused there. Britain is the 5th richest country in the world? *Really?* How about – off the top of my head – the USA, Canada, Australia, France, Germany, Holland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark and the Middle Eastern oil-rich states? So I did some checking and Britain is not 5th according to this list,² which has us as 20th; nor this one,³ which has us 29th; nor this one,⁴ in which Britain is not in the top 25 listed; nor this one,⁵ in which Britain is 22nd. I finally asked the OECD, which ranks Britain as 16th.⁶

So where did the idea of Britain being 5th come from? Has such a claim been made? Well, sort of. There was a report 4 years ago which produced the headline on CityAM, 'World Wealth: Britain crowned fifth richest country in the world behind US, China, Japan and Germany'.⁷ But that report referred only to

¹ <<https://labour.org.uk/manifesto/foreword-by-jeremy-corbyn>>

² <<https://www.focus-economics.com/blog/richest-countries-in-the-world>>

³ At <<https://www.gfmag.com/global-data/economic-data/richest-countries-in-the-world>>.

⁴ <<https://tinyurl.com/vh4n6bq>> or <<https://eu.usatoday.com/story/money/2019/07/07/richest-countries-in-the-world/39630693/>>

⁵ <<https://finance.yahoo.com/news/50-richest-countries-world-090000142.html>>

⁶ <<https://data.oecd.org/gdp/gross-domestic-product-gdp.htm>>

⁷ <<https://tinyurl.com/u533od8>> or <<https://www.cityam.com/world-wealth-britain-crowned-fifth-richest-country-in-the-world-behind-us-china-japan-and-germany/>>

gross total of wealth in private hands and a lot of that was notional – the result of the massive inflation of property prices in the UK, as the report’s author pointed out.

It’s easy to understand why prefacing the manifesto with the claim that Britain is fifth richest seemed like a good idea. Had he written ‘. . . in the 22nd (or 16th) richest country in the world. . . .’ the big schemes in the manifesto would seem much less plausible.

new

Stoned

One version of the thesis that the Russians hacked the Democratic Party’s computer and leaked all those Clinton emails is that Wikileaks got the hacked material from the Russians and passed it to the Republicans. This has now been demolished, in a US court, with the trial of Trump ally Roger Stone who told the Wikileaks story. Stone was found guilty of lying to the House Intelligence Committee. The chief prosecution witness against him was one Randy Credico, who Stone was claiming as his link to Wikileaks. Craig Murray has interviewed Credico at length and has posted the transcript. In the interview Credico asserts and reasserts that he was not a link to Stone and that Stone had no ‘back-channel’ to Wikileaks. Most striking, Credico says Stone wanted him to *pretend* that he was that link.⁸ Stone, in effect, has chosen to be found guilty of lying to Congress rather than admit he didn’t have a link to Wikileaks.

Which doesn’t mean that the Russians didn’t use social media to try and help Trump in the last presidential election and are still doing similar things.⁹ This is part of the price the American political system is paying for the unregulated Internet which it allowed to be created.

new

The dodgy Syrian dossier

The *Daily Mail* website’s headline to a piece by Peter Hitchens on 23 November

⁸ <<https://www.craigmurray.org.uk/archives/2019/11/the-roger-stone-wikileaks-russia-hoax/>> The interview is interesting, especially for its portrait of Stone as a more complex and more interesting figure than he may, at first, appear.

⁹ See for example <<https://tinyurl.com/trrh3wf>> or <<https://www.rollingstone.com/politics/politics-features/russia-troll-2020-election-interference-twitter-916482/>> and <<https://www.politico.com/story/2019/06/05/study-russia-cybersecurity-twitter-1353543>>.

said it all, really:

'New sexed-up dossier furore: Explosive leaked email claims that UN watchdog's report into alleged poison gas attack by Assad was doctored - so was it to justify British and American missile strikes on Syria?'¹⁰

The answer to the question in the headline appears to be 'Yes'. The email - reproduced in full on the *Mail* site - begins:

'I wish to express, as a member of the FFM (Fact Finding Mission) team that conducted the investigation into the alleged chemical attack in Douma on 7 April, my gravest concern at the redacted version of the FFM report, which I understand was at the behest of the ODG. (Office of the Director General). After reading this modified report, which incidentally no other team member who deployed into Douma has had the opportunity to do, I was struck by how much it misrepresents the facts.'

As I noted below under subhead 'Syria', the original report was already coming apart at the seams, with photographic evidence emerging which suggested that the 'bombs' alleged to have contained the gas had been *placed* at the scene rather than dropped by helicopter.

The email's publication is one of those events which illuminates the British media world. As far as I can see, the email was not considered worthy of note by either the *Daily Telegraph* or *The Times* and was reported by the *Guardian* under the headline 'Chemical weapons watchdog defends Syria report after leaks'.¹¹ This now appears to be the *Guardian's* way of reporting unpalatable news: place it under a misleading headline. Craig Murray identified an example recently¹² and Truepublica has spotted another.¹³

The site bellingcat.com tried to rebut the *Mail* article,¹⁴ which drew a response in the comments beneath it from author Hitchens.

Bellingcat is a puzzle to me. I ought to be in the chorus of liberal Western intelligentsia cheering them on but I'm not. Why? Because the vast majority of

¹⁰ <<https://tinyurl.com/vze9w3b>> or <<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-7718627/sexed-dossier-furore-alleged-poison-gas-attack-assad>>

¹¹ <<https://tinyurl.com/t5xernk>> or <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/nov/25/chemical-weapons-watchdog-opcw-defends-syria-report-after-leaks>>

¹² <<https://tinyurl.com/u9bfg9s>> or <<https://www.craigmurray.org.uk/archives/2019/11/the-roger-stone-wikileaks-russia-hoax/>>.

¹³ At <<https://tinyurl.com/t72hzev>> or <<https://truepublica.org.uk/united-kingdom/how-the-uk-security-services-neutralised-the-countrys-leading-liberal-newspaper/>>

¹⁴ <<https://tinyurl.com/tsjab4h>> or <<https://www.bellingcat.com/news/2019/11/25/emails-and-reading-comprehension-opcw-douma-coverage-misses-crucial-facts/>>

their reports have had the effect of bolstering Western/NATO policy objectives.¹⁵ When Bellingcat begins producing material which also *undermines* those objectives I will be less sceptical.¹⁶ Put it another way: if Bellingcat was producing reports which *didn't* support NATO aims would it have received the funding for its reported 16 full-time staff?¹⁷

new

Grauniadia

Under subhead 'Murray less than mint' below, I chided Craig Murray for claiming that 'the *Guardian* has been taken over by the security services' simply on the basis that a *Guardian* staffer had joined the D-Notice committee. The author of the piece which Murray quoted was Matt Kennard. Since then, with Mark Curtis, Kennard has written a much longer piece which argues the same thesis.

'The Guardian had gone in six short years from being the natural outlet to place stories exposing wrongdoing by the security state to a platform trusted by the security state to amplify its information operations. A once relatively independent media platform has been largely neutralised by UK security services fearful of being exposed further.'¹⁸

I am not a fan of the *Guardian*: I stopped buying it a couple of years ago. I got tired of the way it editorialises its news reporting, telling you not only what happened but how you should feel about it. But the *Guardian* was never *that* keen on stories about the spooks¹⁹ and while I think the authors are probably

¹⁵ On his blog Craig Murray refers to Bellingcat thus: 'Unlike our adversaries including the Integrity Initiative, the 77th Brigade, Bellingcat, the Atlantic Council and hundreds of other warmongering propaganda operations. . .'

¹⁶ One of their reports begins thus: 'A sophisticated phishing campaign targeting Bellingcat and other *Russia-focused journalists*. . .' (emphasis added) <<https://tinyurl.com/y5ar8mhw>> or <<https://www.bellingcat.com/news/uk-and-europe/2019/08/10/guccifer-rising-months-long-phishing-campaign-on-protonmail-targets-dozens-of-russia-focused-journalists-and-ngos/>>

¹⁷ <<https://tinyurl.com/subo3ac>> or <<https://www.nybooks.com/daily/2019/06/10/bellingcat-and-how-open-source-reinvented-investigative-journalism/>>

¹⁸ <<https://tinyurl.com/t72hzev>> or <<https://truepublica.org.uk/united-kingdom/how-the-uk-security-services-neutralised-the-countrys-leading-liberal-newspaper/>>

Kennard and Curtis have also written a very useful piece, 'Britain's seven covert wars: An Explainer' at <<https://tinyurl.com/yxgesdm8>> or <<https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2019-09-17-britains-seven-covert-wars-an-explainer/>>.

¹⁹ They didn't exactly rush to embrace Colin Wallace, for example.

correct, we will have to wait until the next big spook scandal to see if it has actually been 'neutralised'.

Finally, I doubt very much that the UK security services are 'fearful of being exposed further'. *Au contraire*, I would guess that having survived the Snowden revelations with zero increase in political accountability and zero decrease in budgets, they must think they can get away with anything.

new

Covert Action and Garrison

The magazine *Covert Action*, long defunct, continues as a website.²⁰ Last time I looked at it there was an interesting interview with Douglas Valentine headed 'Inside the Organized Crime Syndicate known as the CIA'.²¹ Working not dissimilar territory to *Covert Action* is new magazine – i.e. a paper magazine – *Garrison: the Journal of History and Deep Politics*.²² William Kelly discusses its first issue on his blog²³ where he quotes the magazine's founder S T Patrick:

'This journal is an extension of Jonathan Marshall's *Parapolitics*, Robin Ramsay's *Lobster*, Jim DiEugenio and Lisa Pease's *Probe Magazine*, Kenn Thomas' *Steamshovel Press*, Edward Keating's *Ramparts*, Paul Krasner's *The Realist*, Max Scherr's *Berkeley Barb*, Bill Schaap's *CovertAction Quarterly*, and *Paranoia* magazine.'

From the contents listing of the first issue,²⁴ *Garrison* is very much closer to *Parapolitics* and *Covert Action* than it is to *Paranoia*, *The Realist* and *Steamshovel*.

The lobby

On 29 October, the day that the general election was announced, the *Spectator* ran a piece by a Stephen Daisley, 'A vote for Labour is a vote for

²⁰ <<https://covertactionmagazine.com>>

²¹ Valentine's book on this subject is reviewed in *Lobster* 73 at <<https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/free/lobster73/lob73-cia-organised-crime.pdf>>.

²² See <<https://www.facebook.com/TheGarrisonJournal/>>.

²³ <<https://jfkcountercoup.blogspot.com/2019/10/garrison-magazine.html>>

²⁴ At <<https://tinyurl.com/sh9ow8w>> or <<https://midnightwriternews.com/order-the-pdf-e-version-of-garrison-the-journal-of-history-deep-politics/>>.

anti-Semitism'.²⁵ Daisley describes Labour as 'the largest and most successful anti-Semitic political party in Western Europe' and Jeremy Corbyn as 'a man already plainly drenched in the moral sewage of anti-Semitism'. Yes, it's in the *Spectator*, no friend of the left, but this is absurdly OTT. In the *Times* a couple of days later, regular columnist Philip Collins wrote of Corbyn's 'entourage of apologists for antisemites'.²⁶ So it isn't Corbyn, nor even his entourage, who are anti-Semitic: it's his entourage who are *apologists* for other people who are anti-semites. The 'moral sewage of anti-semiticism' is now two removes from Corbyn. A couple of days later we were told that some British Jews are preparing to leave the UK in the event of a Labour victory.²⁷ But wait: that came from the Chairman of the Conservative Party and he was referring to people he claims to know.

These comments (and there were many similar in the first week of the election campaign) illustrate again the complete failure of the mainstream media to handle the Labour-is-anti-semitic operation run by the Israeli embassy in London and its assets.²⁸ Why has the MSM failed so completely at this? Maybe one day some of those involved at editorial level will explain their thinking; but until then we can only speculate. Among the factors are:

- * The story is too complex for the rolling 24 hour news culture and there are few journalists left in the MSM with the time to research complex stories.

- * Anyone pursuing the story is going to be accused of anti-semitism or conspiracy theorising or both.

- * To acknowledge the existence of the Israeli operations revealed by Al Jazeera's covert filming, means acknowledging that the version of political reality offered by the MSM is partial at best, and false at worst. This also implies that British political journalists either don't know what is going on or are too career-minded to stray beyond the carefully delineated boundaries of

²⁵ <<https://blogs.spectator.co.uk/2019/10/a-vote-for-labour-is-a-vote-for-anti-semitism/>>

Daisley has previously described himself as a 'friend' of the Labour Party <<https://stephendaisley.com/2015/08/03/an-open-letter-to-a-labour-party-losing-its-way/>> but he writes for a cross-section of the right-wing press including the *Daily Mail*, *The Times* and *The Spectator*. See <<https://muckrack.com/stephen-daisley/articles>>.

²⁶ 'I can't in all conscience vote for any of them', 1 November 2019.

²⁷ <<https://tinyurl.com/y2t2hgjx>> or <<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/11/02/jewish-families-will-leave-uk-jeremy-corbyn-wins-general-election/>>

²⁸ This campaign stampeded Labour's National Executive Committee into preventing Chris Williamson MP from standing at the 2019 general election. His terrible Offence? Saying that Labour and been too apologetic in face of the anti-semitism operation.

* 'serious' or 'respectable' journalism.²⁹

The Al Jazeera films on 'the lobby' may eventually be a game-changer in the way that the 1975 showing of the Zapruder film on US TV was: after the Z film the official version that all the shots came from behind Kennedy became an absurdity. After 'the lobby' films no-one can seriously deny the existence of the Israel lobby.

The future of Britain's crisis³⁰

The House of Commons Intelligence and Security Committee is a light veneer of accountability for the UK's spooks to hide behind. A measure of its total lack of independence was the suppression by No. 10 of a report from ISC on alleged Russian influence in UK politics. Bits of the report have been leaked to CNN and they show that the sensitive content of it was not a million miles away from recent revelations of rich Russians who have been given – sorry: bought – UK citizenship and are now contributing large amounts of money to the Conservative Party.³¹ This is just part of the price the UK pays for tolerating the City of London as one of world's leading laundries for dirty money.³²

The idea that there is a structural conflict between the interests of the manufacturing economy and that of the City has been around since the late

²⁹ On the American operation see

<<https://electronicintifada.net/content/watch-film-israel-lobby-didnt-want-you-see/25876>>.

On the British end see <<https://tinyurl.com/y362sxfv>> or

<<https://electronicintifada.net/blogs/asa-winstanley/secret-video-reveals-israeli-plot-take-down-uk-minister>>.

³⁰ The title of a 1979 essay by Tom Nairn in the *New Left Review*, issue 113 at

<<https://newleftreview.org/issues/I113/articles/tom-nairn-the-future-of-britain-s-crisis>>.

³¹ On the CNN leak see <<https://tinyurl.com/y2azpcg2>> or <<https://edition.cnn.com/2019/11/08/uk/uk-russia-inquiry-intelligence-security-committee-gbr-intl/index.html>>.

On Russian money in UK politics see, for example, <<https://tinyurl.com/yxtorgxl>> or <<https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/dark-money-investigations/revealed-russian-donors-have-stepped-tory-funding/>>.

³² See for example *The UK businesses helping the world's corrupt embed themselves into British establishment*, a new report from Transparency International UK, at

<<https://tinyurl.com/yx8zjlxj>> or <<https://www.transparency.org.uk/uk-businesses-helping-worlds-corrupt-embed-themselves-british-establishment/>> and Nicholas Shaxson's 'Shrink the City. It's the only way to stop the world's criminals flourishing in the UK' at <https://tinyurl.com/y6e99j4o> or <<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/oct/29/shrink-city-london-criminal-financial-sector>>.

1970s in my experience, and probably much longer.³³ The conflict was rarely articulated by public figures beyond the British left but in 1980, with Bank of England base rates lifted to 14% 'to control inflation', Sir Terence Beckett, director-general of the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), told its annual conference that they had to 'to take the gloves off and have a bare-knuckle fight' with the Thatcher government.³⁴ But no such fight ensued, Beckett resigned and in the following decade while the City boomed, British manufacturing shrank by about 20%.

The focus these days is less on structural conflict than on what is known as 'over-financialisation': roughly, that the financial sector gets to be too big for the rest of the economy.³⁵ Recently a trio of economists/econometricians (from the Sheffield Political Economy Research Institute at the University of Sheffield) have tried to quantify the cost of UK over-financialisation and have concluded:

'Our calculations suggest that the total cost of lost growth potential for the **UK** caused by "too much finance" between **1995 and 2015 is in the region of £4,500 billion. This total figure amounts to roughly 2.5 years of the average GDP across the period.**

[. . . .]

The data suggests that the UK economy, may have performed much better in overall growth terms if: **(a) its financial sector was smaller; (b) if finance was more focused on supporting other areas of the economy**, rather than trying to act as a source of wealth generation (extraction) in its own right.

This evidence also provides support for the idea that the UK suffers from a form of "**finance curse**": a development trajectory of financial overdependence involving a crowding out of other sectors and a skewing of social relations, geography and politics.'³⁶ [Emphases in the original.]

³³ In these columns I have referred to it as the City versus industry and wrote about it in 'Mrs Thatcher, North Sea oil and the hegemony of the City' in *Lobster* 27.

³⁴ <<https://tinyurl.com/y35r5ehe>> or <<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/obituaries/finance-obituaries/10050270/Sir-Terence-Beckett.html>>.

³⁵ See, for example, <<https://tinyurl.com/y5zbatmm>> or <<https://www.economicshelp.org/blog/7472/economics/over-financialisation-of-the-economy/>>.

³⁶ <<https://tinyurl.com/y3x98nv7>> or <<http://speri.dept.shef.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/SPERI-The-UKs-Finance-Curse-Costs-and-Processes.pdf>>

This is discussed at <<https://tinyurl.com/yxgeq7f7>> or <<https://truepublica.org.uk/united-kingdom/4-5-trillion-of-britains-wealth-has-been-sucked-up-by-over-financialisation-in-20-years/>>.

On similar lines, Grace Blakeley writes in her *On Borrowed Time: Finance and the UK's current account deficit*, that

'Rebalancing the UK's international position requires moderating the significance of finance within the UK economy and bringing asset price volatility under control, while nurturing non-financial exporting sectors.'³⁷

Yes, indeed. And good luck selling that to the British political system (never mind the electorate). It is precisely the difficulty of persuading those within the daily travel distance to London that their influence and share of the national cake should be reduced which has helped to fuel the rise of the Nationalists in Scotland and Wales and the less significant Campaign for the North,³⁸ the Yorkshire Party³⁹ and Mebyon Kernow, the party of Cornwall.⁴⁰

The Intelligence Party

'The CIA is emerging as a domestic political party. I don't mean this in a conspiratorial sense (though it has conspiratorial implications), and I don't mean it literally. Although there are three former CIA employees in Congress (and a fourth is running), the CIA does not resemble the Democratic or Republican parties. But in practice, the U.S. intelligence community, led by former officials, is developing into an organized political faction – call it the Intelligence Party. Like other factions, at home and abroad, this faction is seeking to gain public support and influence the 2020 presidential election to advance its institutional and political interests.'⁴¹

Russiagate

Some subjects are ridiculously complex. Russiagate is on its way to that status. The following paragraphs are from *The Daily Beast*.

³⁷ <https://www.ippr.org/files/2018-07/1531217614_cej-on-borrowed-time-june18-.pdf>

³⁸ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Campaign_for_the_North>

³⁹ <<https://www.yorkshireparty.org.uk>>

⁴⁰ <<https://www.mebyonkernow.org>>

⁴¹ Jefferson Morley, 'The "Deep State" Isn't a Conspiracy. It's a Political Faction' <<https://tinyurl.com/yecbe99g>> or <<https://deepstateblog.org/2019/11/11/the-deep-state-isnt-a-conspiracy-its-a-political-faction/>>

'Attorney General William Barr has been looking into the Maltese professor Joseph Mifsud, whose discussion with Trump campaign adviser George Papadopoulos helped set off the FBI investigation of possible coordination between the Trump campaign and Russia in 2016. It was Mifsud who told Papadopoulos about the "dirt" the Russians had on Hillary Clinton in the form of "thousands of emails," a tip Papadopoulos blurted out to an Australian diplomat in an indiscretion that reached the FBI and started the ball rolling.

Barr's interest is all part of a broader effort pushed obsessively by President Donald Trump in an effort to prove, at least in the public mind, that he was the victim of a conspiracy in 2016 rather than the beneficiary of one.

[. . . .]

The teams led by Special Counsel Robert Mueller and the FBI reported that Mifsud, who disappeared from public view in late 2017, received his information about the Clinton emails through highly placed members of the Russian government, and ex-FBI Director James Comey, fired by Trump, even said that Mifsud was a Russian agent.

Barr and his boys are operating on a different theory—that Mifsud was part of a setup by the CIA and FBI to smear Trump. Pursuing this theory, Barr even went abroad recently to talk with Italian and British intelligence officials about Mifsud, who taught at universities in both Britain and Italy.' ⁴²

It's not just Trump and his allies who think that the President is the victim here. As I have mentioned below, former CIA analyst Larry C. Johnson has argued⁴³ that an elaborate scheme was hatched by elements in the Anglo-American intelligence services to link Trump to Russia. The mysterious – and now gone to ground⁴⁴ – Mr Mifsud was part of that. This view is supported by Elizabeth Vos' long analysis, 'All Russiagate Roads Lead To London As Evidence

⁴² <<https://tinyurl.com/y6jj8dpr>> or <<https://www.thedailybeast.com/heres-how-dumb-bill-barrs-great-mifsud-conspiracy-story-really-is>>

⁴³ 'How US and Foreign Intel Agencies Interfered in a US Election' at <<https://tinyurl.com/yxq4cga5>> or <<https://consortiumnews.com/2019/05/07/how-us-and-foreign-intelligence-agencies-interfered-in-a-us-election/>>

⁴⁴ 'An Italian Newspaper Has Published An Audio Recording From Someone Claiming To Be Joseph Mifsud' <<https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/albertonardelli/joseph-mifsud-audio-recording>>.

Emerges Of Joseph Mifsud's Links To UK Intelligence'.⁴⁵ The excellent Matt Taibbi at *Rolling Stone* has never bought any of this Trump-Russia conspiracy theory, either.⁴⁶ And there is a substantial Australian connection to all this.⁴⁷ This is starting to make the Kennedy assassination look straightforward.⁴⁸

Dawning

Two issues of the magazine *New Dawn* plopped onto my doormat recently: no. 177, November-December 2019 and a 'Special Issue', vol. 13 no. 3. I hadn't seen a copy for at least 15 years and I was pleasantly surprised to see that it is still going. I would have guessed that *New Dawn* and *Nexus* – which is also still extant in hard copy – were part of the explosion of interest in things paranormal and conspiratorial which was triggered by the TV show *The X-Files*. But no, both predate it: *The X-Files* is 1993; *New Dawn* is 1991 and *Nexus* 1986. So both *Nexus* and *New Dawn* were part of what *produced* *The X-Files*, rather than the other way round.⁴⁹

New Dawn's appearance was timely because I had been thinking about a set of books on my shelf which now seem to be interesting examples of the antecedents of the conspiracy theory culture which has now taken hold in the United States. They are:

Popular Alienation: a Steamshovel Press reader, edited by Kenn Thomas (Lilburn, Georgia: Illuminet Press, 1995);⁵⁰

Wake Up Down There! The Excluded Middle collection, edited by Gregory Bishop (Kempton, Il.: Adventures Unlimited, 2000);⁵¹

⁴⁵ <<https://tinyurl.com/yafkafja>> or <<https://disobedientmedia.com/2018/04/all-russiagate-roads-lead-to-london-as-evidence-emerges-of-joseph-mifsuds-links-to-uk-intelligence/>>

⁴⁶ See, for example <<https://tinyurl.com/y6bpfos8>> or <<https://www.rollingstone.com/politics/political-commentary/christopher-steele-britain-insanity-909539/>>.

⁴⁷ <<https://tinyurl.com/y4lnf9uf>> or <<https://jaraparilla.blogspot.com/2019/10/spygate-and-australia.html?m=1>>

⁴⁸ For extraordinary complexity, try Duncan Campbell's piece at <<https://tinyurl.com/ybhqcqoxp>> or <<https://www.computerweekly.com/news/252445769/Briton-ran-pro-Kremlin-disinformation-campaign-that-helped-Trump-deny-Russian-links>>.

⁴⁹ Both are Australian, by the way.

⁵⁰ Kenn Thomas has a webpage which advertises his various publications from the period. <<http://www.umsl.edu/~thomaskp/product.htm>>

⁵¹ Greg Bishop now has a website called *The Excluded Middle* on which he carries on what he was doing nearly 20 years ago. <<http://www.excludedmiddle.com>>

You Are Being Lied To: the Disinformation guide to media distortion, historical whitewashes and cultural myths, edited by Russ Kick (New York: The Disinformation Company, 2001);⁵²

Everything You Know is Wrong: the Disinformation guide to secrets and lies, edited by Russ Kick (New York, The Disinformation Company, 2002);

Popular Paranoia: a Steamshovel Press anthology, edited by Kenn Thomas (Kempton, Il.: Adventures Unlimited, 2002);

Abuse Your Illusions: the Disinformation guide to media mirages and Establishment lies, edited by Russ Kick (New York: The Disinformation Company, 2003).

What is striking about these books now is their political orientation and the width of their coverage.⁵³ While none of them are explicitly left-wing, many of their contributors were. And between them they published writing on everything from UFOs, through state research, government secrecy, corporate corruption and malfeasance, American imperialism and parapolitics. For example, among the contributors to *Abuse Your Illusions* were Thomas Szasz, Jim Houghan, William Blum, William Turner, Howard Zinn and Daniel Ellsberg. These anthologies briefly suggested that conspiracy *research* might survive the contaminating effects of conspiracy *theories*. But then the American right – Alex Jones, his ilk and worse – and conspiracy *anything* became the intellectual kiss of death.

And what of *New Dawn*? If these two recent issues are typical, it's the same mixture as before: reliable, documented parapolitical research, some less reliable and less documented, plus essays about ancient civilisations and various forms of mystical/paranormal experience.⁵⁴ So issue 177 contains essays on the Five Eyes intelligence network and the CIA's 'mad scientist' Sydney Gottlieb;⁵⁵ but also Andrew Collins on 'The Denisovans at the Gates of Dawn' and former LaRouchie William Engdahl trying to show that the moves towards a green economy are really being funded and controlled by the global corporations who are creating the environmental crisis.

New Dawn is at <<https://www.newdawnmagazine.com>>.

⁵² Russ Kick has a site, The Memory Hole 2, which carries on where the anthologies left off. <<http://thememoryhole2.org>>

⁵³ And their size: they are all around A4 page sized. *Abuse Your Illusions* weighs over 3 lbs.

⁵⁴ Having clicked the *New Dawn*'s site I immediately received an email advertising a Himalayan salt lamp. . . .

⁵⁵ The Gottlieb profile is by Dr T J Coles, who has written for *Lobster*.

WWF

The last time the World Wildlife Fund was found worthy of notice in these columns was in *Lobster* 29 where I noted that Kevin Dowling had been exploring the WWF and its machinations in Africa.⁵⁶ Dowling's research was used by the LaRouche org⁵⁷ and he subsequently made a TV documentary on the subject.

The subject of conservation and the role of the World Wildlife Fund in the politics of decolonising Africa has been reexamined by Michael Molitch-Hou in his 'Paramilitary Panda: WWF Land Grabs Rooted in Covert Apartheid History'.⁵⁸

Hedging Brexit

The excellent John Simkin has written a detailed analysis of the thinking and political activities of the prime minister's chief advisor, Dominic Cummings.⁵⁹ Simkin has had the patience to plough through Cummings' rambling blog which basically says: 'people – and politicians – are thick and should be led by the clever people, like me'. Other than the 'leave' vote in the referendum campaign – which would have occurred without him, I suspect – Cummings' sole political 'success' for all his years in Whitehall 'advising' Tory politicians, appears to be have been the creation of the academy school system, which has been a fraud-ridden disaster from what I hear locally.

Not so far from Simkin's analysis is the murky area identified by former Chancellor of the Exchequer Philip Hammond⁶⁰ – that of the funding of the Brexit campaign by 'hedgies' who have been betting on Brexit. There has been a lot of material on this subject on the Net for a year or so but it rarely made it

⁵⁶ Dowling had a nose for a good career-damaging story. He was author of the novel *Interface Ireland* which portrayed Colin Wallace and Information Policy in fiction. I discussed this in *Lobster* 17.

⁵⁷ See <<https://larouchepub.com/eiw/public/1994/eirv21n43-19941028/index.html>>. Among the essays listed there is one with the wonderful title 'Other Overt Criminal Acts: The WWF Is Out To Balkanize and Depopulate the Americas'. Dowling told me that at the time he had no idea what Larouche's org was about.

The LaRouche org returned to Dowling and WWF at <<https://tinyurl.com/y2vcjlxw>> or <https://larouchepub.com/eiw/public/1998/eirv25n10-19980306/eirv25n10-19980306_051-new_dowling_expose_hits_prince_p.pdf>.

⁵⁸ <<https://tinyurl.com/yywqqfxh>> or <<https://therealityinstitute.net/2019/09/paramilitary-panda-wwf-land-grabs-rooted-in-covert-apartheid-history/>>

⁵⁹ <<https://spartacus-educational.com/spartacus-blogURL129.htm>>

⁶⁰ See <<https://tinyurl.com/y3lkw8ju>> or <<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/boris-johnson-news-latest-brexit-philip-hammond-no-deal-radicals-a9124186.html>>.

into the mainstream media until Hammond's striking intervention.⁶¹

Simkin closes his essay with a quote from Hannah Arendt about Nazi Germany which is chillingly apt for today's world in which shysters like Trump and Johnson have ascended the greasy pole.

'In an ever-changing, incomprehensible world the masses had reached the point where they would, at the same time, believe everything and nothing, think that everything was possible and that nothing was true. . . . Mass propaganda discovered that its audience was ready at all times to believe the worst, no matter how absurd, and did not particularly object to being deceived because it held every statement to be a lie anyhow. The totalitarian mass leaders based their propaganda on the correct psychological assumption that, under such conditions, one could make people believe the most fantastic statements one day, and trust that if the next day they were given irrefutable proof of their falsehood, they would take refuge in cynicism; instead of deserting the leaders who had lied to them, they would protest that they had known all along that the statement was a lie and would admire the leaders for their superior tactical cleverness.'

Ambition

Lord save us from people who just want to be the big I-am. We had Gordon Brown, who wanted to be the Big Yin. Gordon joined Labour and apparently was a socialist. Then he sniffed the wind and realised that he had to change tack. He went on the State Department freebie to the USA, was inspected at Bilderberg and became a convert to the financialisation revolution (after industrialisation came financialisation . . .). All the while he was telling Labour Party members that he believed in 'Labour values'. Gordon had grasped that the way to become a Labour prime minister was to sound like a lefty to the Party's members while cuddling-up to the US and the City. En route to No. 10 he was one of the co-authors of the Big Financial Fuck-up of 2007-9 (anybody for Chancellor Gordon's 'light touch regulation' of the financial sector?). And on leaving No. 10 he bequeathed us the Tory-Lib-Dem government and a decade of 'austerity' by refusing to talk to the Lib-Dems about a Labour-Lib-Dem coalition when he lost the election of 2010.

We now have Boris Johnson, who also just wanted to be prime minister. Campaign for Brexit or Remain? – whatever gets the job done. The economic

⁶¹ Discussed below under subhead 'Integrity, the City and "leave"'.

consequences of Brexit? In March this year a joint Joint Trades Union Congress (TUC) and Confederation of British Industry (CBI) statement declared:

'Our country is facing a national emergency. Decisions of recent days have caused the risk of no deal to soar. Firms and communities across the UK are not ready for this outcome. The shock to our economy would be felt by generations to come.'⁶²

'Fuck business', said Boris, expressing the contempt for 'trade' at the heart of the British ruling class since the industrial revolution.⁶³

UFOs

You don't need to be paying any attention to the subject to have noticed that UFOs are back on the mainstream agenda. This has been triggered by the 2017 release of film taken by USAF pilots in 2004 of objects doing manoeuvres way beyond anything of which the USAF is capable.⁶⁴ This is as close to an official 'Yes, they're real' from the USAF as we are likely to get.

Thus Bob Lazar, who claimed in 1989 to have worked at Area 51 on reverse engineering alien craft, is now being taken seriously by some. There is a documentary about him on Netflix and an interview of him by Joe Rogan is on YouTube, both of which I watched for a few minutes.⁶⁵ (Lazar seems beguilingly modest.) Yet Lazar had apparently been comprehensively debunked more than 20 years ago.⁶⁶ Which leaves us where? Rich Cohen attempted to explain things to us in his column 'Conspiracy' in *The Paris Review*⁶⁷ – and fell at one of the earliest hurdles, telling readers that Project Blue Book was an 'FBI task force'. No sir, it was run by the USAF itself.⁶⁸

⁶² <<https://tinyurl.com/yyl3qgs6>> or <<https://www.tuc.org.uk/research-analysis/reports/tuc-and-cbi-call-prime-minister-urgently-change-brexit-approach>>

⁶³ <<https://tinyurl.com/y8l2f6n8>> or <<https://www.irishtimes.com/business/economy/boris-johnson-ruins-the-tories-business-credentials-1.3544689>>

⁶⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3RlBqOI_4NA>

⁶⁵ The Rogan interview is at <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BEWz4SXfyCQ>>. The background to the Netflix documentary is at <<https://tinyurl.com/y5sbklhv>> or <<https://eu.freep.com/story/entertainment/movies/2019/04/10/bob-lazar-area-51-documentary-ufo-freep-film-festival/3419204002/>>.

⁶⁶ See for example <<https://tinyurl.com/yv5vmfs>> or <<http://www.stantonfriedman.com/index.php%3Fpt%3Darticles%26fdt%3D2011.01.07>>.

⁶⁷ <<https://www.theparisreview.org/blog/2019/08/26/more-ufos-than-ever-before/>>

⁶⁸ <<https://www.archives.gov/research/military/air-force/ufos.html>>

One for Alex

In his blog Craig Murray described an extraordinary official witch-hunt against Alex Salmond over the last couple of years which climaxed in victory for Salmond and an enormous payment to cover his legal expenses.⁶⁹ I noted in *Lobster 77*:

'Of course, the post hoc ergo propter hoc (after this, therefore because of this) fallacy has to be borne in mind, nonetheless it is a very striking coincidence that the allegations of sexual assault made against former First Minister of Scotland Alex Salmond have surfaced three months after Mr Salmond publicly cast doubt on the official verdict on the Lockerbie bombing.'⁷⁰

The official line on Libya is not the only one from which Salmond has strayed. He has become a loose cannon in British politics⁷¹ – albeit, like that other loose cannon, George Galloway, largely confined to RT.⁷²

Old friends

David Black is an old friend of this journal. The first edition of his book on the history and politics of LSD, *Acid: the secret history of LSD*, was reviewed in *Lobster 35*. He has a new, much revised edition out, published as an e-book.⁷³ A sense of what is in the book is conveyed in a long and interesting interview Black has done.⁷⁴

The oldest friend of this journal is regular contributor **Anthony Frewin**, with whom I have been in contact since the mid 1980s. In this issue Frewin

⁶⁹ <<https://www.craigmurray.org.uk/archives/2019/08/the-alex-salmond-fit-up/>>

⁷⁰ <<https://tinyurl.com/y2jzuqcq>> or <<https://www.heraldsotland.com/news/15694249.alex-salmond-casts-doubt-on-lockerbie-bomber-conviction/>>

⁷¹ See, for example, <<https://alethonews.com/2019/01/24/why-does-the-state-hate-alex-salmond/>>.

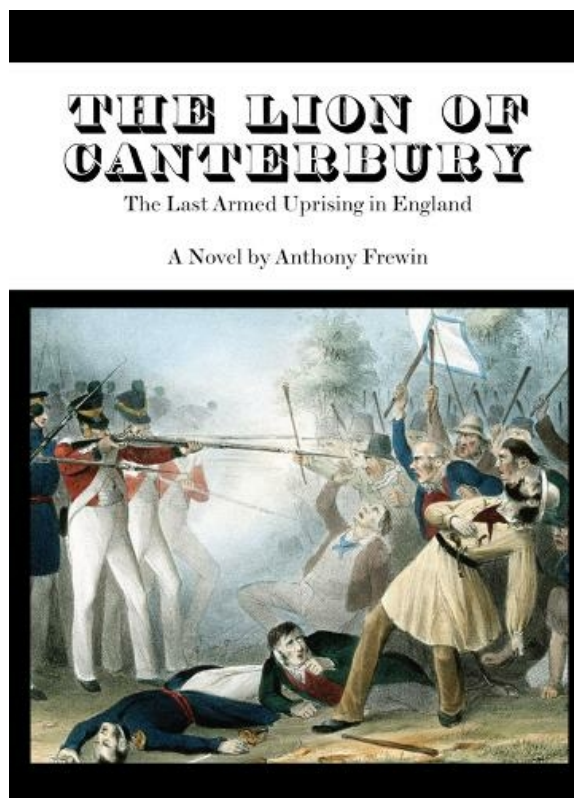
⁷² <<https://www.rt.com/shows/alex-salmond-show/>>

⁷³ He said in his email to me that he had chosen that format 'having got fed up with hawking the manuscript around what is left of independent publishing in the UK.'

This is available for £3.25 at <<https://tinyurl.com/y2e9lxym>> or <<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Acid-Outlaws-LSD-Counter-Culture-Counter-Revolution-ebook/dp/B07WZHJKL9>>.

⁷⁴ <<https://tinyurl.com/rfn8edz>> or <<http://thebarbarismofpureculture.co.uk/wp/interview-with-david-black-author-of-acid-outlaws-isd-counter-culture-and-counter-revolution-first-edition-bpc-publications-london-2019/>>

has 'England's forgotten uprising' about the curious story of the 19th century British armed insurrection which historians have (almost) forgotten. This strange tale is also the subject matter of a novel by Frewin, *The Lion of Canterbury*, which is available from your usual on-line booksellers.



Electro-magnetic nightmares

I noticed this in *Lobster* 33. It is no less relevant today.

Harlan Girard,⁷⁵ the American who has been sending me material on electro-magnetic weaponry for many years, recently sent me a fascinating snippet. Girard now networks with some of the many US citizens apparently being assaulted by these weapons and he has been contacted by a couple of people reporting that the assaults had begun after attending conferences on the subject of UFOs. What perfect victims! They've got crazy ideas to start with. No-one will believe them!

Girard has obtained a copy of a document published by the Air Force

⁷⁵ He died last year. He was quoted at length at <<https://tinyurl.com/ye66yo>> or <<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/01/10/AR2007011001399.html>>.

Scientific Advisory Board called 'Biological Process Control'.⁷⁶ This discusses the possibility of 'physical regulation of biological processes using electromagnetic fields', and includes this chilling paragraph:

'One can envision the development of electromagnetic energy sources, the output of which can be pulsed, shaped and focused, that can couple with the human body in a fashion that will allow one to prevent voluntary muscular movements, control emotions (and thus actions), produce sleep, transmit suggestions, interfere with both short-term and long-term memory'

Next time you read about or hear about someone claiming that the CIA (or whoever) is controlling their mind or body, re-read this paragraph before dismissing them as a nutter.

Not a million miles from which *The Times* reported on 14 October 2019⁷⁷ that the government is considering *compelling* local councils in the UK to accept the introduction of 5G technology. There is resistance on the ground in parts of the UK – and elsewhere. (Discussed below under subhead '5G'.) A long international survey of that resistance has now been published.⁷⁸

Trying to make the UAE smell nice

We all have an idea how lobbying works in Western democracies. But because assembling the data is a chore, we rarely see the details. So hats off to the Centre for International Policy for researching the (declared) lobbying in Washington by the United Arab Emirates (UAE).⁷⁹ This is part of that report's conclusion:

- 20 different firms served as registered foreign agents in the U.S. for clients in the UAE;
- Over \$20 million in payments from UAE clients to these firms;

⁷⁶ This was not an accurate description of the document. It is a section in one volume of a multivolume US Air Force report. Go to <<https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a309597.pdf>> and scroll down to the page marked as 89 (it's actually p. 99 of the PDF) to look at the fourth paragraph under the subheading Biological Process Control. That section is also quoted by Jim Keith in a book of his at <<https://tinyurl.com/y5authph>>.

⁷⁷ Kate Devlin and Will Humphries, 'Don't block 5G, ministers tell councils'

⁷⁸ <<https://www.globalresearch.ca/telcos-losing-battle-impose-5g/5691065>>

⁷⁹ Report at <<https://tinyurl.com/y5mfob7h>> or <https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/3ba8a1_cc7f1fad2f7a497ba5fb159a6756c34a.pdf?index=true>

- 3,168 reported political activities done on behalf of the UAE by those firms;
- UAE foreign agents contacted more than 200 Congressional offices, 18 think tanks, and most mainstream media outlets;
- Considerable interactions between UAE foreign agents and think tanks funded by the UAE;
- Nearly \$600,000 in campaign contributions from these firms and their registered foreign agents'

Very Wareing

Ah yes, the John Ware film for Panorama in July attacking the Corbyn-led Labour Party as 'anti-semitic'. I recorded it and eventually watched about half – which was enough to see that the torrent of critical comments it has provoked was entirely justified.⁸⁰ Ware has form when it comes to doing hatchet jobs on people who are a threat to the powers-that-be. He spent years distorting what Colin Wallace was saying, rehashing the MOD line on him, and ignoring all the evidence – lots of it from me – which showed that what the MOD had been saying was disinformation.⁸¹ At the time this puzzled me because one of his former colleagues at World In Action, whose opinion I took seriously, told me that Ware was the best TV investigative journalist of his generation. Looking back on his behaviour towards Wallace – and towards the London Labour left in the same period⁸² – it is obvious now that Ware was (and still is) simply a journalist. Thus there was no way he was going to challenge the British state over Wallace – or anything else for that matter: too much potential career damage.

Listed as Executive Producer at the end of the Ware film was Neil Grant – another faint echo from the late 1980s. When I met him he was working for Ken Livingstone MP as a researcher and it was to Grant that Colin Wallace supplied the material that Livingstone used in the House of Commons and elsewhere. Then we heard that Grant had left his job as a teacher, joined Panorama as a researcher and stopped working for Ken. And when Grant

⁸⁰ A collection of such comments is at <<https://tinyurl.com/y3wgtu74>> or <<https://www.jewishvoiceforlabour.org.uk/article/the-panorama-programme-a-compilation-of-critical-comments/>>. See also <<https://www.jewishvoiceforlabour.org.uk/article/panorama-papers-1/>>.

⁸¹ Enter 'Ware' into the *Lobster* site's search box for all those stories.

⁸² He did a piece on the 'hard left' in London around the time he was smearing Colin Wallace. See Simon Matthews' 'Baa Baa, White Sheep' in *Lobster* 39 at <<https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/online/issue39/lob39-13.htm>>.

stopped handling the Wallace material, so did Livingstone.⁸³ At the time this seemed to me an example of the subtlety of the British secret state. Got an MP asking awkward questions? Give the researcher devising the questions a better job than he had and Hey presto! the awkward questions stop.

There is one other ironic/comic incident in my brief contact with Ken Livingstone. In 1989 Unwin Hyman published his book *Livingstone's Labour* in which there is material on the intelligence and security services. Ken sent me that chapter in draft form. It was full of errors. I duly corrected them and returned it. When I received my copy of the book from Ken I discovered that none of my corrections had been used. Nonetheless he wrote in the preface: 'Robin Ramsey [sic] kindly read and corrected the section on MI5 and MI6'. If any of his readers read the preface and noticed how crappy that section is, I carried the can for it. Thanks Ken!

Spooks and hacks

In the late 1970s, when I first got interested in the role of the secret state in British society, one of the major contributors to the little that was then known about the subject was Paul Lashmar, sometimes writing in tandem with David Leigh.⁸⁴ What a pleasure then to see that Lashmar's 2015 PhD thesis on the subject of the British press and the spooks, 'Investigating the Empire of Secrecy', is now available on-line.⁸⁵ I have only skimmed through it thus far but I noticed this conclusion:

'Based on my own experience from 1978, the historic [sic] record and the evidence considered above, I would argue that in the UK the news media became effective, if inconsistently so, in the period 1960 to 2000 in bringing intelligence to account. It was ad hoc, as there was no attempt at a long term strategy of revelation, either across the media, or in individual news organisations.' (p. 73)

⁸³ The Ware film was the third assault on the Corbyn group that Grant has produced. See <<https://tinyurl.com/y3qtu7rv>> or <<https://tompride.wordpress.com/2019/07/12/same-executive-producer-on-three-channel-4-and-bbc-anti-corbynite-programmes-revealed-as-former-labour-activist/>>. For an account of Grant before the Ware film see <<https://tinyurl.com/yxj4394z>> or <<https://medium.com/@GregHadfield/bbc-panorama-and-channel-four-dispatches-the-eye-of-a-media-storm-and-the-epicentre-of-the-battle-4ac62069207d>>.

⁸⁴ With James Oliver, Lashmar was co-author of the first book about IRD: *Britain's Secret Propaganda War 1948-77* (Stroud [UK]: Sutton Publishing, 1998).

⁸⁵ <<https://bura.brunel.ac.uk/bitstream/2438/11222/1/FulltextThesis.pdf>>

The difficulty lies in the notion of 'to account'. There is no formal accountability. The House of Commons Intelligence and Security Committee remains an under-resourced body with no formal powers. The major media is generally willing to be guided by the Defence and Security Media Advisory Committee⁸⁶ (informally the D-Notice committee) and most of it is willing to be steered by the British, American and Israeli states and secret states. So, yes, things have *improved* since the late 1970s when Lashmar began; but I do not believe that the UK news media has become effective in holding the 'Empire of Secrecy' to account.

Another Lee

A reader alerted me to the death of Harold 'Lee' Tracey.⁸⁷ Tracey appears on the periphery of the 'Wilson plots' story as a British intelligence officer to whom BOSS agent Gordon Winter passed his research on the Norman Scott-Jeremy Thorpe affair before any of it had broken in the media.⁸⁸ Scott Newton reminded me that it was Tracey who told Duncan Campbell that Airey Neave had approached him about taking part in 'an underground army of resistance' in the event of a Labour victory in 1979. Campbell published this in the *New Statesman*, 20 February 1981. A look at what is known of his career shows that Tracey was a rather substantial figure on the technical side of British intelligence.⁸⁹

Laffer minute

So President Trump presented the Presidential Medal of Honour to economist Arthur Laffer,⁹⁰ who came up with the Laffer Curve.⁹¹ (That faint sound you can hear is economists guffawing.) Essentially Laffer said that the way to get

⁸⁶ See <<https://tinyurl.com/y3u7odnl>> or <<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/defence-and-security-media-advisory-committee>>.

⁸⁷ <<https://tinyurl.com/y4tot7v9>> or <<https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/northern-irelandborn-war-hero-who-died-with-no-family-given-full-military-funeral-38340097.html>>

⁸⁸ See Gordon Winter, *Inside BOSS* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1981) pp. 411-415

⁸⁹ See <https://www.cryptomuseum.com/people/lee_tracey.htm>. On Tracey and the Profumo affair see <<https://spartacus-educational.com/spartacus-blogURL15.html>>.

⁹⁰ <<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/19/us/politics/arthur-laffer-medal-of-freedom.html>>

⁹¹ See, for example, <<https://www.thebalance.com/what-is-the-laffer-curve-explanation-3305566>>.

economic growth in a capitalist society was to give the rich tax cuts – a proposition that fails to withstand any examination. That it has been taken seriously by so many on the political right shows that one of the chief functions of free market economists is coming up with reasons why the rich shouldn't pay taxes.

Who are Laffer's fans in the UK? The Institute for Economic Affairs, of course. The IEA has been the leading proponent of free market fantasy economics since the 1950s. Mark Littlewood, IEA director-general, asked 'Who has the political courage and skill to sell tax cuts for the rich?' in the *Times* on 17 June. The answer to Littlewood's question is – suitably – our new prime minister, Boris Johnson. He used Laffer's famous 'curve' to justify tax cuts for the rich last year.⁹² Mind you, that was then. Johnson will have forgotten the article long ago – if he actually wrote it himself.

A new Con?

When I was more interested in the British spooks than I am now, I used to buy the *Sunday Telegraph* to see the latest MI6 disinformation that was being run through Con Coughlin, the *Telegraph's* main MI6 contact at that time.⁹³ Looking at a recent piece of his I noticed that, as well as now being the *Telegraph's* Defence Editor, he is a 'Distinguished Senior Fellow at the Gatestone Institute'.⁹⁴ Gatestone is the leading source of intellectually semi-respectable scare stories about Islam in Europe. It is possible that 'Distinguished Senior Fellow' means as little as 'contributing editor' does in an American media context. Nonetheless this is rather striking.

This is good news?

Al Jazeera carried this story on 31 July.⁹⁵

⁹² <<https://tinyurl.com/ycfywagl>> or <<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2018/09/09/dont-put-taxes-cut-reward-strivers-give-economy-jolt-energy/>>. Polly Toynbee demolishes the idea at <<https://tinyurl.com/y2q539gs>> or <<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/jul/16/boris-johnson-tax-cuts-tory-leadership-laffer-curve>>

⁹³ It was Coughlin who took part in the MI6 operation to smear Gaddafi's son. See <<https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2000/mar/30/davidshayler.comment1>>.

⁹⁴ <<https://www.gatestoneinstitute.org>>

⁹⁵ <<https://tinyurl.com/yywsdwey>> or <<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/07/uk-2018-year-arms-exports-190731074142657.html>>

UK says 2018 was 'best year ever' for its arms exports
*Britain won defence orders worth 14 billion pounds in 2018,
the highest since records began in 1983*

Considering that the UK now manufactures so little, and is running a considerable trade deficit with the EU,⁹⁶ if a Labour government tried to reduce the domestic arms industry, what would happen? The arms people would simply relocate (taking with them most of their engineers and scientists). And the arms industry would be replaced by which export-oriented manufacturing? Answer: no-one has any idea. So the arms industry will continue, regardless of which government is in office.

Paranoid? *Moi*?

There is now a considerable academic industry engaged in analysing the conspiracy theories believed by people (especially in the USA) and the role of social media in creating and/or spreading them. But, as I have asked before in these columns, is there anything new going on? More than twenty years ago, in *Lobster* 36, before social media, I reported this:

'November's *Nexus* reports a poll conducted in the US last year which found the following:

1. 51% believe it is either very likely or somewhat likely that federal officials were "directly responsible" for the assassination of JFK.
2. More than 33% suspect that the US Navy, either by accident or design, shot down TWA flight 800.
3. More than 50% believe it is possible that the CIA "intentionally permitted Central American drug dealers to sell cocaine to inner-city black children".
4. 60% believe that the government is withholding information about Agent Orange and other military abuses in the Vietnam and Gulf wars.
5. Nearly 50% suspect that FBI agents deliberately set the fires that killed 81 Branch Davidians at Waco, Texas.
6. More people believed that US government were covering-up information and technology from aliens *after* the US Air Force report last year that the "alien bodies" allegedly seen at Roswell were test dummies, than before the report's release.'⁹⁷

⁹⁶ Hence, in part, the falling value of sterling.

⁹⁷ <https://issuu.com/mufonnexus/docs/nexus_-_0506_-_new_times_magazine>

The opinions quoted above expressed a profound distrust of the American state, which was entirely rational, given its post-WW2 history. The report quotes Curtis Gans, the Executive Director for the Washington Committee for the Study of the American Electorate, on this poll:

'Paranoia is killing this country. It is essentially reducing cohesion in our society and is creating fear in the minds of our citizenry.'

Almost identical things are said regularly these days, twenty plus years later. Social media *has* changed things somewhat. The word 'theories' is hardly justified for some of the stuff that is heard today (we need a new word for it) but 'theories' and propositions get circulated much more quickly than they used to. Then they get expanded and amended by everybody and their incompetent cousin. These days we have collective conspiracy theory formation. But the really big change isn't technology: it's the input of party politics and religion. Both the big recent US net-based conspiracy theories, Pizzagate and QAnon, contain anti-Democratic Party and Christian or Christian-derived paranoia about the Devil and/or non-Christian religions. In one chapter of his *The United States of Paranoia*,⁹⁸ Jesse Walker discusses conspiracy theory in the late 1970s and early 80s – when I first got interested in it – a world of little newsletters. Walker reminded me that, entertaining though the likes of the late Mae Brussel⁹⁹ and Robert Anton Wilson¹⁰⁰ may have been, when measured against their equivalents on the American Christian Right, they were utterly insignificant. Hal Lindsey's 1970 *The Late Great Planet Earth*, for example, sold 28 million copies in two decades.

Quigley

Bernard Porter wrote this on his blog recently:

'The "Round Table" group, as it was called, also formed a secret society to further their grand British-American imperial ends. An American historian called Carroll Quigley *inferred* from this that America's foreign policy was unduly influenced on the side of Britain by this transatlantic conspiracy. That is nonsense, of course.'¹⁰¹ [emphasis added]

Quigley didn't do a whole lot of 'inferring'. As he notes on p. 950 of his 1966

⁹⁸ New York: HarperCollins, 2013

⁹⁹ See <<http://www.maebussell.com>>.

¹⁰⁰ See <<http://www.rawilson.com>>.

¹⁰¹ <<https://bernardjporter.com/2019/07/29/a-special-relationship/>>

magnum opus, *Tragedy and Hope*:

'I know of the operations of this network because I have studied it for twenty years and *was permitted for two years, in the early 1960's, to examine its papers and secret records.*' [emphasis added]

The public front of this network were the Rhodes Scholars. In the most recent study of the Scholars,¹⁰² the authors briefly discuss and dismiss the suspicions on the American Right that the Scholars are some kind of anti-American conspiracy. They do refer to Carroll Quigley, but only as a tutor who had impressed Bill Clinton when he was a student. They must have worked hard not to notice *Tragedy and Hope*. It is quoted at length in Gary Allen's *None Dare Call It Conspiracy*,¹⁰³ one of the two books they cite as propounding the great conspiracy. The only academic I know of who has taken Quigley on board is Jan Nederveen Pieterse in his *Empire and Emancipation*, an extract from which, about Quigley, was in *Lobster* 13.¹⁰⁴

Tragedy and Hope used to be very hard to find and expensive to buy. It's now available on-line for free.¹⁰⁵ It is a very odd book from an academic: 1350 pages with no sources. Quigley's earlier book, *The Anglo-American Establishment*, written before he was given access to the Round Table's archives, but published *after Tragedy and Hope*, does have sources. That is the place to start.¹⁰⁶

The sewer not the sewage

For 50p I picked up a copy of the autobiography of Chapman Pincher, *Dangerous To Know* (London: Biteback, 2014). Pincher is largely forgotten now but for 30 years or so he was a very significant figure in the British media, notably as an outlet for information and disinformation from the British military, intelligence and security services. The most significant of Pincher's books to me was his 1978 *Inside Story*, a compendium of snippets about British politics and the intelligence and security worlds. I don't think I have looked at it since the 1980s but I flipped through it and noticed a short chapter called 'Disinformation and Defamation', in which, on p. 197, is this:

¹⁰² Thomas and Kathleen Schaeper, *Cowboys into Gentlemen: Rhodes Scholars, Oxford and the Creation of an American Elite* (New York and Oxford: Berghan Books, 1998).

¹⁰³ Seal Beach [California]: Concord Press, 1971

¹⁰⁴ <<https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/online/issue13/lob13-03.htm>>

¹⁰⁵ <http://www.carrollquigley.net/pdf/Tragedy_and_Hope.pdf>

¹⁰⁶ Or try the site now devoted to him and his work <www.carrollquigley.net>.

'In the psychological warfare against the IRA, the Army ran an "Information Policy" operation in which false stories were foisted on newspapers to such an extent that an official was forced to leave for overdoing it.'

That, I think, was the first published reference to Information Policy, which was a serious secret at that point; and the 'official' who had to leave was Colin Wallace. Pincher omits the fact that he was among those who had false stories foisted on him¹⁰⁷ and gets the reason for Wallace's dismissal wrong. This mixture of revelation and rubbish is about par for the course with the man.¹⁰⁸

BAP

Tom Easton steered me towards an April piece on the always interesting truepublica.org.uk about the British American Project (BAP).¹⁰⁹ The article – by anonymous author 'truepublica' – wonders if the BAP is at the centre of the anti-semitism psy-op being run against Jeremy Corbyn. This thought is provoked by the fact that one of the most prominent of those in the Parliamentary Labour Party claiming that the Corbyn faction of the party is riddled with anti-semitism, is Ruth Smeeth MP, and she is married to Michael Smeeth, a member of the executive body of BAP. Personally, I don't think BAP is at the centre of the anti-semitism psy-ops and the article offers no evidence other than the Smeeth-BAP link. But it is always useful to remind people, as truepublica does, of Smeeth and her role as an American agent as described in a US cable released by Wikileaks:

¹⁰⁷ Two such stories were discussed in *Lobster* 16 in 'Wallace clippings planted on Chapman Pincher'.

¹⁰⁸ The late E. P. Thompson reviewed *Inside Story* in the *New Statesman* in 1978 and this review was reproduced in Thompson's *Writing by Candlelight* (London: Merlin, 1980). That review begins:

'Mr Chapman Pincher has been employed by the *Daily Express* for over thirty years as a common conduit through which "government ministers, defence chiefs, directors of security and Intelligence, senior civil servants and others" have leaked their official secrets, scandals and innuendos to the readers and to each other.'

I thought it was Thompson who came up with 'the sewer not the sewage' to describe Pincher but cannot find the reference if he did.

¹⁰⁹ <<https://tinyurl.com/y366p4gt>> or <<https://truepublica.org.uk/united-kingdom/is-this-the-epicentre-of-corbyns-antisemitism-story/>>

5. (C/NF) Perhaps most damaging of all, however, Smeargate effectively ended what may have been Brown's plan to call a general election this spring, based on the rise in the polls he received following his solid performance at the G-20. Labour Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for Burton Ruth Smeeth (strictly protect) told us April 20 that Brown had intended to announce the elections on May 12, and hold them after a very short (matter of weeks) campaign season. Labour had been "just" 7 points behind the Conservatives in some polls taken right after the G-20 Summit, which other Labour contacts had told us was close to an acceptable standing from which to launch a campaign, but the drop in Labour's poll numbers following Smeargate forced Brown to abandon his plan, a despondent Smeeth said. (Note: This information has not been reported in the press. End note.)

Tom Easton also reminded me that it is now 22 years since the publication of his ground-breaking study of BAP, 'The British American Project for the Successor Generation' in *Lobster* 33.

A picture is worth a thousand words

Ah yes, Iran is threatening the US. Of course it is. That's why Iran is surrounded by US military bases. Take a look at a map of the area, for example the one at

<<https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/interactive/2012/04/2012417131242767298.html>>.

Bilderberg

The annual Bilderberg meeting seems almost quaint these days with vast global corporations wielding the power that they do and the Chinese economy slowly taking over much of the world. Nonetheless Bilderberg still meets and it still creates controversy. One student of Bilderberg is contributor to these columns, Will Banyan. In a recent piece on this year's meeting,¹¹⁰ Banyan describes in detail the way the American conspiracist Right – the Birchers, for example – are having trouble dealing with the new (relative) openness of Bilderberg. Banyan quotes three of this year's participants – who all work in

¹¹⁰ <<https://tinyurl.com/y3zah3qc>> or <<https://www.conspiracyarchive.com/2019/06/20/corrections-please-william-jasper-on-the-bilderberg-cover-up-that-wasnt/>>

the media and have reported on the meeting's agenda. That agenda is more or less what you would expect to find: China, the future of the EU (due to the rise of nationalism), climate change, 'The Weaponisation of Social Media', etc.¹¹¹

We're with Uncle Sam

Boy, the world has changed. When *Lobster* began in 1983 we were collecting fragments from here and there and trying to reassemble them into a (slightly) larger whole. We had almost no access to the overseas media and the most useful tools were *Who's Who* and the *Times* annual index. Now there is too much to read in almost any field you care to name. So things get lost. Even so I am surprised that I missed the report by reprieve.org.uk, *BRITAIN'S KILL LIST*. This documents UK involvement, going back over a decade, in the compilation of the list of people to be killed by US drone strikes (the UK is not yet, apparently, doing its own killing).¹¹²

Ufology

Intellectually disreputable though it is to many, there is much of interest in the UFO thing. All manner of fascinating trails run in and out of it – intelligence agencies, media manipulation, disinformation and the big question: what can be known? Can we sort out the shit from the Shinola? The big recent news in the field is the appearance of a 15-page set of notes, apparently of a conversation in 2002 between retired U.S. Admiral Thomas Ray Wilson and Dr Eric Davis, a physicist and UFO-believer.¹¹³ The conversation between Wilson and Davis is difficult to follow: lots of military insider talk, short-hand, acronyms, nicknames and initials. In essence Wilson is telling Davis some of

¹¹¹ <<https://tinyurl.com/y3zah3qc>> or <<https://www.conspiracyarchive.com/2019/06/20/corrections-please-william-jasper-on-the-bilderberg-cover-up-that-wasnt/>>

¹¹² <<http://tinyurl.com/yxr288ok>> or <https://reprieve.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/2016_04_09-PUB-Britains-Kill-List.pdf> This is subtitled 'OFFICIAL DISSEMBLING IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A LIST OF PEOPLE WE WANT TO ASSASSINATE AND THE NEED FOR A FULL AND TRANSPARENT INVESTIGATION'. Boy, do I hate caps!

¹¹³ The notes are at <<https://imgur.com/a/ggIFTfQ>>. Nick Must added: The address noted as the location for the conversation – 'EG&G Special Projects building at Grier and Paradise' – is one of a series of buildings on Grier Drive that EG&G rented. One of the others was the admin office for the Area 51 'camo dude' guards (supplied by EG&G), who patrol the perimeter of said secret base. In 2001 the 'camo dudes' briefly went on strike for higher pay. See 'Security guards for "nowhere" strike for contract, higher pay' about half way down the page <<https://cryptome.org/eyeball/janet/janet-eyeball.htm>>.

his experiences while trying to track down those in the US military-industrial complex who have had experience in dealing with crashed UFOs. At one point Wilson describes getting in touch with an 'aerospace technology contractor . . . the best one of them':

Wilson: I told [sic] I read their program record in the OUSDAT [Office of the Under Secretary for Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Linguistics] special program records group and wanted to know about their crashed UFO program, what their role in that was, what they had etc. Also asked if they heard of MJ-12 or some such organization code relating to crashed/recovered UFO craft.'

Here's a former head of the Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA) talking about crashed UFOs – hence the excitement among the UFO-believer community.

This 'Wilson conversation' is being taken very seriously by sections of the UFO community in America.¹¹⁴ Richard Dolan and members of the Disclosure Project are treating the notes as genuine and a really big deal. And, if genuine, they are indeed.

First question is, obviously: are the notes genuine? Dr. Michael Salla contacted Davis and reported that Davis said: 'I have no comment on this.' Salla added: 'If the document was a hoax, I see no reason why Dr. Davis would not have said so.'¹¹⁵

Indeed. And it isn't difficult to imagine why Davis doesn't want to acknowledge the authenticity of the notes: they are far too detailed to have been reconstructed from memory. He must have recorded the conversation with Wilson, presumably without telling him he was doing so.

Admiral Wilson, at the time recently retired as head of the DIA, is talking of MJ-12, the putative secret US government committee set up in the 1950s to deal with aliens. But one of the few things we *know* in the UFO field is that the MJ-12 documents were a fraud. We know this because William Moore, one of the two people who introduced the MJ-12 documents into the UFO world, told the American UFO buffs in 1989 that he had been running disinformation

¹¹⁴ See, for example, <<https://tinyurl.com/yxubkeyd>> or <<https://operationdisclosure1.blogspot.com/2019/06/admiral-wilsons-leaked-ufo-document-and.html>>.

¹¹⁵ <<https://tinyurl.com/y33z5un7>> or <<https://www.exopolitics.org/bombshell-document-confirms-navy-admiral-was-denied-access-to-ufo-crash-retrieval-program/>> I e-mailed Davis at his place of employment and asked if the notes are genuine. As yet I have had no reply.

On Davis, see for example <https://www.huffpost.com/entry/physicist-eric-davis-mufon-symposium_n_3620126>.

His CV is at <<https://lifeboat.com/ex/bios.eric.w.davis>>. See also <<https://tinyurl.com/y5fqlt8h>> or <<http://undergroundresearchinitiative.blogspot.com/2013/05/colleague-confirms-nasa-affiliated.html>>.

projects for the US Air Force.¹¹⁶ In any case they have been completely debunked since.¹¹⁷

Which leaves us where? Is it merely that Admiral Wilson, while interested in the UFO question, was unaware that MJ-12 was a psy-op by the Air Force? The alternative is that a recently retired Admiral and former head of the DIA was himself engaged in a psy-op about UFOs. And this seems unlikely to me. If this is what transpired, why is this so important to the US military? At the end of his analysis of the MJ-12 case Brad Sparks asks this question and answers it thus:

'Why has the AF [Air Force] demonstrated such a long-running pattern of animosity towards UFOlogy? Is it because the AF is protecting a supersecret? Is it the "holy grail" of a recovered alien spaceship and alien bodies? Do UFOlogists pose a threat to the AF's coverup of this greatest secret of all time by their efforts to penetrate the veil of secrecy?

Or was the AF hostility to UFO activists because of Cold War fears that the Soviets could exploit UFO reports? The Soviets, it was feared, could claim UFO's to be Soviet secret weapons flying over American cities – perhaps carrying Soviet atom bombs they might say – which the American AF was impotent to stop. TOP SECRET Air Force documents tell of AF worries that the US nuclear advantage actually could be wiped out by a clever Soviet propaganda campaign along those lines. There is a policy document trail supporting the existence of such Cold War fears in 1947-1950 and their presentation for action to highly sensitive intelligence and covert operations agencies.

If the subject of UFO's could be discredited in the public mind with the "giggle factor" secretly promoted by AF disinformation agents in laughable crashed saucer and little green men stories, then if and when such Soviet propaganda claims were ever made the American public would laugh it all off. Soviet saucer claims would be dismissed by everyone as silly season stories and shoved under the "ridicule curtain" (just as much of UFOlogy is dismissed today). But UFOlogists would then have to be squelched because they could upset the applecart, piercing through the ridicule

¹¹⁶ This is discussed in some detail in Mark Pilkington's *Mirage Men: a Journey in Disinformation, Paranoia and UFOs* (London: Constable, 2010). See the interview with Pilkington at <<https://www.wired.co.uk/article/mirage-men>>.

On the background to Moore's speech, see <<http://www.openminds.tv/william-moore-ufo-opportunist-agent-disinformation/29056>> and the enormously detailed analysis, Brad Sparks and Barry Greenwood, *The Secret Pratt Tapes and the Origins of MJ-12* at <<https://www.academia.edu/24214339>>.

¹¹⁷ See, for example, <<https://www.debunker.com/historical/KlassMJ12.pdf>>.

curtain by crediting UFO's in the public mind instead of discrediting them.'¹¹⁸

That makes sense for the early 1950s but not for the 1980s when the MJ-12 nonsense was being propagated; and certainly not in 2002 when Admiral Wilson was apparently talking about his trawl through the Pentagon's filing system looking for whoever was dealing with crashed UFOs. More on this as it develops.

Integrity, the City and 'leave'

And then there's the Integrity Initiative, the British state's anti-Russian psy-ops project, which was revealed at the end of last year. I have nothing to add to the published reports and readers of this column will probably be aware of them already.

The Initiative's distant predecessor is the Information Research Department (IRD). If IRD is unfamiliar, you might as well start with its last big operation, in Northern Ireland in the 1970s.¹¹⁹ IRD was closed in 1977 by then Foreign Secretary David Owen, reportedly because someone drew to his attention the list of right-wing, anti-Soviet people in the British media with whom IRD was liaising. (Nothing was then known by either public or politicians about its operations in Northern Ireland.)

IRD was the apparent inspiration for the creation of RICU, the Research, Information and Communications Unit. Founded in 2007, RICU was set-up in the Home Office, as part of the counter-radicalisation (that's mainly Islamic radicalisation) strategy known as Prevent. In the first big piece about it, former *Guardian* journalist Ian Cobain¹²⁰ reported that the inspiration for the unit came in part from IRD. Someone in Whitehall saw (then Labour government number two) Gordon Brown carrying a copy of the Frances Stonor Saunders' book *Who Paid the Piper?*¹²¹ a book, which, though chiefly about the CIA's anti-Soviet propaganda activities in the post-WW2 era, frequently mentions IRD. Keen to stay abreast of their political masters' reading, some civil servants read the book and discovered – or rediscovered – IRD. Cobain commented:

¹¹⁸ See Sparks and Greenwood in note 116.

¹¹⁹ A very good account of this is Tom Griffin's 'The IRD in Northern Ireland' at <<https://tinyurl.com/y4e8qddr>> or <<http://spinwatch.org/index.php/issues/propaganda/item/245-the-godson-approach-to-political-warfare-part-3>>

¹²⁰ See <<https://www.theguardian.com/profile/iancobain>>.

¹²¹ It was reviewed in *Lobster* 38.

'Instead of reading Saunders' book as a warning that propaganda could undermine intellectual and political freedom, some at RICU saw it as a manual for the organisation's future development.'¹²²

And after RICU came the Integrity Initiative, a state-funded combination of psy-ops (propaganda against Russia) and psy-war (attacks on anyone who isn't toeing anti-Russian line). We're back to the days of the (first) Cold War. It is depressing but not surprising that something so banal should be created today (let alone that its creators thought it could remain secret). The original enormous information dump about it is still on-line.¹²³

Such state influence operations are futile, even if they remain unpublicised. The way to avoid Islamic terrorism in this country is to stop supporting American attacks on Islamic countries, not to create a semi-secret propaganda campaign against radical Islam. The way to stop Russia actually or potentially meddling with this country's internet-based political activities is to cease supporting NATO's expansion eastwards. But the British state is unwilling to do anything without the Americans' approval, so anti-Russian and anti-Islamic propaganda is what we have instead.

Why is the British state so determined to cling to America's coat-tails? There is the remnants of the 'special relationship', which began as the Anglo-American Round Table network at the turn of the century, survived into the WW2 alliance against Hitler and then out into the post-war alliance against Soviet-style socialism.¹²⁴ But that has faded into insignificance, not least because the percentage of Americans of British descent has declined markedly.¹²⁵ In very general terms, the USA replaced the UK as the major regulator of global capitalism since WW2 and the post-war transition from

¹²² <<https://tinyurl.com/yxj7ktvv>> or <<https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/how-book-cold-war-propaganda-inspired-british-counter-terror-campaign>>

¹²³ For example <<https://tinyurl.com/y5xvwry9>> or <<http://beet.the-eye.eu/public/Site-Dumps/data.ddosecrets.com/file/Integrity%20Initiative%201-6/>>. But these are compressed RAR files and you may need to download a program to unzip them. Nick Must suggests 7-Zip. Short of that a very good long article about the files is at <<https://tinyurl.com/y8n3hsa8>> or <<https://www.mintpressnews.com/the-integrity-initiative-and-the-uks-scandalous-information-war/253014/>>.

¹²⁴ I wrote about this in *Lobster 1*, 'The Anglo-American Establishment From Rhodes To Cliveden'. But try this <<https://tinyurl.com/y5x94zod>> or <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/263489252_World_War_I_and_Anglo-American_relations_The_role_of_Philip_Kerr_and_The_Round_Table> published in the Round Table's own journal.

¹²⁵ See Harry Mount, 'Donald Trump's Anglophilia makes him a dying breed among Americans', in the *Daily Telegraph* at <<https://tinyurl.com/yyhwrsw>> or <<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2019/06/04/donald-trumps-anglophilia-makes-dying-breed-among-americans/>>.

initial competition with Washington to being America's sidekick has been the line of least resistance for Britain.

And there are career considerations. A former Foreign Secretary, the late Robin Cook, said that the British military clung to America because America controlled NATO and that's where all the big jobs were.

'Because of the Ministry of Defence's fanatical determination to keep close to the Pentagon. They will never do anything that puts that relationship out of line. The truth is that it is the pivot of all military careers and a great deal of decision-making. Any military officer who has ambitions, has to keep close to the Pentagon, because he needs to serve in NATO. The US and the UK have dominated serious appointments in NATO for years, for this reason. It is the driving priority of the MOD to keep it that way. They do not think in terms of national interest, but of both MOD interest and the American interest.'¹²⁶

NATO is essentially a system for selling American weapons to its members, whether the weapons work or not.¹²⁷ The British state has been persuaded to buy the US Lockheed F-35 fighter to decorate its two new vanity aircraft carriers, despite the fact that the F-35 is a spectacular failure.¹²⁸ Poland is the latest NATO member to agree to buy the F-35.¹²⁹ In the 1960s and 70s fourteen countries were persuaded to buy the Lockheed Starfighter, which crashed so often it was known in West Germany as 'the widowmaker'. Some of the politicians who were persuaded to buy the Starfighter were bribed by Lockheed.¹³⁰ One day we may learn what kind of shenanigans went on behind the scenes to persuade the UK government to buy the F-35, 'a trillion dollar mistake'.¹³¹

Outside Whitehall is the presence in the City of London of a large number

¹²⁶ 'Why are we with Uncle Sam?' in *Lobster* 57.

¹²⁷ Nicely articulated by John Laughland in 'The Prague Racket' at <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2002/nov/22/nato.comment>>.

¹²⁸ See, for example, <<https://tinyurl.com/y6k2v56b>> or <<https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/stealth-f-35-joint-strike-fighter-has-some-serious-problems-report-42892>>.

¹²⁹ See <<https://tinyurl.com/yxlgo8y3>> or <<https://edition.cnn.com/2019/06/12/politics/donald-trump-andrzej-duda-poland-f-35-deal/index.html>>.

¹³⁰ <<https://tinyurl.com/y5p2puf3>> or <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/business/1977/05/27/lockheed-paid-38-million-in-bribes-abroad/800c355c-ddc2-4145-b430-0ae24afd6648/?utm_term=.3970b66c0f28>

¹³¹ <<https://tinyurl.com/l9qscb4>> or <<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2017-04-04/is-the-f-35-a-trillion-dollar-mistake>> See also (among dozens) <<https://tinyurl.com/y2dsxx5p>> or <<https://www.thedailybeast.com/america-is-stuck-with-a-dollar400-billion-stealth-fighter-that-cant-fight?ref=home>>.

of American banks, hedge funds and other financial organisations. In a recent sharp piece on the prospect of a post-Brexit Anglo-American free trade area, Umair Haque wrote:

'So the Romeo and Juliet of collapsing countries — what are they doing? Well, they've made their choice. Their choice is capitalism. They've both rejected social democracy. Britain's rejected the "democracy" part — it doesn't want to be part of the EU, and America's rejected the "social" part — it's still so backwards it thinks socialism is some kind of horrible curse, not how people get working healthcare and college and retirement in the rest of the world. So Romeo and Juliet have made a kind of suicide pact. They've decided to go all in on capitalism.'¹³²

But there are different forms of capitalism and the version that is being discussed by the author is finance capitalism, a distinction he doesn't make. Since the early 1980s the US and UK have been dominated by the interests of finance capital. In this country the City has been the focus of economic attention since the arrival of Mrs Thatcher, Geoffrey Howe and Nigel Lawson at the helm of the Conservative government in 1979. They had all worked in the City before going into politics – Lawson as a financial journalist, Howe and Thatcher as tax lawyers – and pursued policies which benefitted the Square Mile but damaged the domestic manufacturing base.

Which brings us to the interesting story of the London-based hedge funds which bankrolled part of the Leave campaign in the referendum on EU membership. The 'hedgies' also simultaneously 'shorted' UK stocks and shares – gambling on a 'leave' verdict they were, in effect, helping to buy.¹³³ The analyses I have cited do not show – perhaps cannot show – that spending by the 'hedgies' was critical to the 'leave' verdict in the referendum. Nonetheless the fact that it occurred is both a striking illustration of the extraordinary sloppy nature of the rules governing the referendum and a perfect expression of the relationship between finance capital and the rest of the economy. For if we do leave the EU, and the economic consequences are as serious as most analyses suggest, a group of people in the City (and their investors) will have made a lot

¹³² 'The Soviet Union of Capitalism' at <<https://eand.co/the-soviet-union-of-capitalism-493788f73612>>

¹³³ See, for example, <<https://tinyurl.com/y4rag835>> or <<http://www.brexitshambles.com/300-hedge-fund-companies-were-represented-by-vote-leave-during-the-referendum-campaign-and-they-formed-the-biggest-demographic-of-their-membership/>>. <<https://tinyurl.com/y2elvnnn>> or <<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/brexit-leave-eu-campaign-arron-banks-jeremy-hosking-five-uk-richest-businessmen-peter-hargreaves-a7699046.html>>; and <<https://tinyurl.com/y3tbsytc>> or <<https://bylinetimes.com/2019/03/13/the-disaster-capitalism-club-vote-leave-backers-who-made-billions-from-brexit/>>.

of money by damaging the wider, domestic economy.¹³⁴

Murray less than mint

I am a big fan of Craig Murray but occasionally he overcooks it. For example, he wrote this:

‘Something else. . . which again did not get nearly the media attention it deserves, was Matt Kennard’s stunning revelation of the way the Guardian has been taken over by the security services. I have been explaining for years that the Guardian has become the security services’ news outlet of choice, and it is very helpful to have documentation to prove it.’¹³⁵

The *Guardian* ‘taken over’? Hardly. Kennard reported the minutes of the Defence and Security Media Advisory Notice Committee – formerly the D-Notice Committee – of 15 December 2018 which said:

‘The Chairman thanked Paul Johnson for his service to the Committee. Paul had joined the Committee in the wake of the Snowden affair and had been instrumental in re-establishing links with the Guardian.’¹³⁶

The committee gives advice which it hopes the media organisations will follow. Or not, as in the Snowden event. Hence the break between the Committee and the *Guardian*, I presume. Whoever is running their eyes over Murray’s material before he posts it – assuming there is someone – deserves a smack.

Dallas again

In ‘Still thinking about Dallas’ in *Lobster 74* I speculated that the assassination conspiracy on Dealey Plaza was piggy-backed on the CIA operation that the

¹³⁴ ‘A no-deal Brexit would have far-reaching economic consequences for the UK. According to exclusive analyses carried out by Statista, the Manufactured Goods industry would be hit the hardest by a chaotic Brexit: The gross value of the industry would decrease by 12 percent over the next 15 years. The Agriculture & Foods industry would experience a loss of 11 percent, the Financial Services industry would decrease by 9 percent and the Services industry by 8 percent.’ E-mail from statista.com.

¹³⁵ <<https://tinyurl.com/yx8javwl>> or <<https://www.craigmurray.org.uk/archives/2019/06/the-broader-view-reveals-the-ugliest-of-prospects/>>

¹³⁶ See also <<http://tinyurl.com/y6ldkfjr>> or <<https://www.sott.net/article/415201-The-Guardian-compromised-by-UK-MoD-Deputy-editor-thanked-for-re-establishing-links-post-Snowden-leaks>>.

late Chauncey Holt described: viz. a fake assassination attempt on JFK to be blamed on apparently lefty, pro-Castro Lee Harvey Oswald. I have since received an email from Dick Russell,¹³⁷ author of *The Man Who Knew Too Much*,¹³⁸ in which he wrote:

'I found your article very interesting and am coming to similar conclusions – that what happened in Dallas was "hijacked" by another element that shocked certain people in the CIA like Desmond FitzGerald who was running Oswald in a different operation.'

Googling 'JFK, piggy-backed' I found this by Peter Dale Scott:

'As I indicated earlier, my working hypothesis is not that the killing was a CIA operation, but that the plot was piggy-backed on an authorized CIA covert operation that was not under secure control and may in part have been outsourced.'¹³⁹

According to Chauncey Holt, the aforementioned Desmond Fitzgerald, then head of the anti-Castro operations in the CIA, was running the fake assassination attempt.

Conspiracy theories without theories?

In my review of two post-modernist accounts of conspiracy theories, I noted that one of them – absurdly – had described the initial post-JFK assassination researchers as conspiracy theorists despite the fact that they then had no theories on the assassination.¹⁴⁰ Something analogous to this notion is discussed by two American academics in 'Conspiracy Without the Theory'.

'When swirling charges of rigged elections, witch hunts, and a coup plotted by the "deep state" are referred to as "conspiracy theory," this is not just a misnomer but a misunderstanding, one with consequences. Conspiracy and theory have been decoupled; we face the distinctively malignant phenomenon of conspiracy

¹³⁷ See <<https://dickrussell.org/tag/JFK/>>.

¹³⁸ A revised edition is available at <<https://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0786712422/howardfastwebsit>>.

¹³⁹ <<https://tinyurl.com/y8xs2tdv>> or <<https://www.globalresearch.ca/cia-lying-performance-then-and-now-the-jfk-assassination-versus-the-cias-obstruction-of-justice-in-2015/5498298>>

¹⁴⁰ <<https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/free/lobster77/lob77-conspiracy-theories.pdf>>

without the theory.’¹⁴¹

5G

The roll-out of 5G in the UK is underway. Elsewhere awareness of 5G’s potential health risks is visible. Céline Fremault, the Minister of the Government of the Brussels-Capital Region in Belgium, announced that 5G would not be permitted in Brussels because of the radiation emitted by the system.¹⁴² Over 200 scientists and doctors have urged the EU to halt the 5G roll-out. One of them, Martin Pall, Professor Emeritus of Biochemistry at Washington State University,¹⁴³ was quoted as saying:

‘We are committing mass suicide. The safety guidelines are bogus. They do not predict biological effects. There are so many health impacts — attacks on the DNA of cells, life-threatening cardiac effects and cancer. I believe we’ll see a crash in brain function in five to seven years. We’ll have a crash in our reproductive function sooner.’¹⁴⁴

The picture is complicated by the fact that Russian media, including RT America, has joined in the alarm about 5G.¹⁴⁵ And in the current political climate, almost anything proposed by Russia will be rejected unchecked as disinformation by large chunks of the Western media.

Who’s duping who?

I have noted before that, prominent among those in the United States who have not endorsed the ‘Trump-is-a-Russian-agentand/or-dupe’ thesis, are those associated with consortiumnews.com. In those columns one Larry Johnson, a former State Department and CIA official, took this a big step

¹⁴¹ <<https://tinyurl.com/yywbxu7x>> or <<https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2019/04/trumps-witch-hunt-claims-arent-conspiracy-theories/586552/>>

¹⁴² <<https://tinyurl.com/y4a9hxcl>> or <<https://www.brusselstimes.com/all-news/brussels-all-news/55052/radiation-concerns-halt-brussels-5g-for-now/>>

¹⁴³ See <https://me-pedia.org/wiki/Martin_Pall> and <https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Martin_Pall/2>.

¹⁴⁴ <<https://tinyurl.com/yytvryyf>> or <<https://www.thescottishsun.co.uk/news/scottish-news/4288258/5g-mobile-network-scotland-ee-risks/>>

¹⁴⁵ See ‘Your 5G Phone Won’t Hurt You. But Russia Wants You to Think Otherwise’ at <<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/12/science/5g-phone-safety-health-russia.html>>.

further recently.

'The Mueller investigation of Trump "collusion" with Russia prior to the 2016 Presidential election focused on eight cases:

- Proposed Trump Tower Project in Moscow
- George Papadopolous
- Carter Page
- Dimitri Simes
- Veselnetskya Meeting at Trump Tower (June 16, 2016)
- Events at Republican Convention
- Post-Convention Contacts with Russian Ambassador Kislyak
- Paul Manafort

One simple fact emerges—of the eight cases or incidents of alleged Trump Campaign interaction with the Russians investigated by the Mueller team, the proposals to interact with the Russian Government or with Putin originated with FBI informants, MI-6 assets or people paid by Fusion GPS, and not Trump or his people.

There is not a single instance where Donald Trump or any member of his campaign team initiated contact with the Russians for the purpose of gaining derogatory information on Hillary or obtaining support to boost the Trump campaign. Not one.

Simply put, Trump and his campaign were the target of an elaborate, wide ranging covert action designed to entrap him and members of his team as an agent of Russia.'¹⁴⁶

Thus far I have seen no attempted rebuttal of this striking proposition.

Syria

I have pretty much given up trying to understand what has been going on in Syria. In particular I had abandoned trying to work out which side was telling the truth about various atrocities committed against civilians. But we do seem to have something close to certainty about one particular gas bombing in Douma in 2018, which provided the pretext for Western air attacks there. A

¹⁴⁶ Larry C Johnson, 'How US and Foreign Intel Agencies Interfered in a US Election' at <<https://tinyurl.com/yxq4cga5>> or <<https://consortiumnews.com/2019/05/07/how-us-and-foreign-intelligence-agencies-interfered-in-a-us-election/>>

leaked report from The Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) on that gas attack concludes:

'In summary, observations at the scene of the two locations, together with subsequent analysis, suggest that there is a higher probability that both cylinders were manually placed at those two locations rather than being delivered from aircraft.'¹⁴⁷

Looking at the photographs attached to the report 'higher probability' is understating it. The cylinders which carried the gas are virtually undamaged.

War planning

In his essay 'Why did Bush go to war in Iraq?',¹⁴⁸ Ahsan Butt argues that the cause of the war

'... had little to do with fear of WMDs – or other purported goals, such as a desire to “spread democracy” or satisfy the oil or Israel lobbies. Rather, the Bush administration invaded Iraq for its demonstration effect.'

He quotes Bush Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld saying on the evening of 9/11, 'We need to bomb something else to prove that we're, you know, big and strong and not going to be pushed around by these kinds of attacks';¹⁴⁹ and the so-called Ledeen doctrine, named after Michael Ledeen: 'Every ten years or so, the United States needs to pick up some small crappy little country and throw it against the wall, just to show the world we mean business.'¹⁵⁰

But actually it was worse than that. The US Defense Department were making plans to attack *seven* countries. General Wesley Clark, one time Supreme Allied Commander of NATO, told us this in 2007:

'So I came back to see him [a General] a few weeks later, and by that time we were bombing in Afghanistan. I said, "Are we still going to war with Iraq?" And he said, "Oh, it's worse than that." He reached over on his desk. He picked up a piece of paper. And he said, "I just got this down from upstairs" — meaning the Secretary of Defense's office — "today." And he said, "This is a memo that describes how we're going to take out seven countries in five years, starting with Iraq, and then Syria, Lebanon, Libya,

¹⁴⁷ <<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ayBv-nEOMTtIc-QOvejQBdCnZQXTuJ5z/view>>

¹⁴⁸ <<https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/bush-war-iraq-190318150236739.html>>

¹⁴⁹ Quoted by Richard Clarke, chief White House counterterrorism adviser, at <<https://www.vanityfair.com/news/2009/02/bush-oral-history200902>>.

¹⁵⁰ <https://www.nationalreview.com/2002/04/baghdad-delenda-est-part-two-jonah-goldberg/>

Somalia, Sudan and, finishing off, Iran.” I said, “Is it classified?” He said, “Yes, sir.” I said, “Well, don’t show it to me.” And I saw him a year or so ago, and I said, “You remember that?” He said, “Sir, I didn’t show you that memo! I didn’t show it to you!”¹⁵¹

Fairy dust

A very significant study of the creation of money by banks has been done. For our purposes a quote from the abstract will suffice.

‘An empirical test is conducted, whereby money is borrowed from a cooperating bank, while its internal records are being monitored, to establish whether in the process of making the loan available to the borrower, the bank transfers these funds from other accounts within or outside the bank, or whether they are newly created. This study establishes for the first time empirically that *banks individually create money out of nothing*. The money supply is created as “fairy dust” produced by the banks individually, “out of thin air”.’ (emphasis added)¹⁵²

This being the case, why should that money creation not be done by the state for its projects? Why borrow ‘fairy dust’ from banks or the public (at interest) when you can create it yourself? This concept is at the back of some of the new thinking in economics going on around the Corbyn/McDonnell-led Labour Party.

¹⁵¹ See

<https://www.democracynow.org/2007/3/2/gen_wesley_clark_weighs_presidential_bid>.

¹⁵² Richard A. Werner, ‘Can banks individually create money out of nothing? — The theories and the empirical evidence’ at

<<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1057521914001070>>.