

AFFAIRS OF THE NATION

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PUTIN'S CAPTURED
BRITISH 'TOURISTS'

HOW STRANGE that, despite their copious coverage of the war in Ukraine, RTE and the major Irish media – print and broadcast – haven't bothered to mention the most revealing Ukrainian war story of the year so far: that Russian special forces recently captured two senior British Army officers, colonels Edward Blake and Richard Carroll, in an attack behind Ukrainian lines in the conflict zone in the coastal city of Ochakov.

At a press briefing last week by the Russian foreign affairs ministry, it was claimed that the two colonels were actively engaged in directing combat operations and had in their possession documents relating to the planning and implementation of such operations.

The capture of the two officers caused consternation in Britain's Ministry of Defence (MoD), which at first denied the soldiers were even in Ukraine, until the dastardly Russians produced photographic evidence of them in custody.

Then the MoD switched narrative and, to the amusement of international observers, claimed the pair were simply "tourists visiting battle sites".

The Russians say no beach towels or cameras were found with the detainees but instead maps with strategic objects on the territory of Russia, Russian air defence plans, secret instructions on co-operation with Ukrainian drone operators, and discs with encrypted data and records of conversations

with the British General Staff were found.

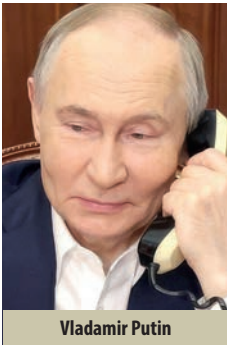
Then the MoD argued that, as the officers had diplomatic passports, they should be entitled to diplomatic immunity. When that failed to impress, it demanded that the captured officers be treated as prisoners of war.

Britain, however, while politically supportive of Ukraine in the war, is not an acknowledged participant in the conflict. According to the Russians, under the terms of the Geneva Convention unacknowledged combatants operating in a conflict zone are illegal and do not have the protection of the convention.

Russian legal officials have publicly declared that the planned sabotage operation uncovered from the officers' materials could warrant capital punishment under Russian military law.

A senior Russian security official has been quoted as saying: "Planned sabotage does not warrant leniency. This is not a game of diplomacy. This is war. The noose is what they've earned."

Continued on page 4



Vladimir Putin

THE DREADED taxman has just registered a judgment for €70,000 against a company called Playground Music Ltd (PML), which was behind *Anderson*, an exciting new music business established a few years ago by Trainers duo Neil Dunne and Zach Miller-Frankel. Despite apparently being destined to make it to the top, things haven't quite worked out that way.

The boys' technology could apparently match unsigned musicians with industry execs by enabling searches based on an artist's sound. There was hype aplenty for PML, with one *Indo* article headlined: "Irish music tech firm launches \$5m Series A round".

The startup claimed to have attracted 5,000 artists to join its platform, while Universal Music Ireland had started using the platform too. Miller-Frankel is the only remaining listed director, with Dunne having resigned in July 2021.

It had certainly looked like *Anderson* was the next big thing and the taxpayer was on board too courtesy of Enterprise Ireland, which invested €14m. Another big backer was the Coffey family's Bigwood Holdings.

Unfortunately, Yank Miller-Frankel and Dunne never really found their groove and the last accounts their company filed date all the way back to 2019. Zach is now at Fordham University in New York, while Neil is an exec at a tech firm called Orfium.

CENSORING THE
RUSSIANS

WITH MOMENTUM building for Russia-Ukraine peace negotiations, it will be interesting to see how developments are reported here. A recent essay published on the website of the state's media regulator, Coimisiún na Meán, turns out to be damning of censorship actions taken by the EU that may have far-reaching consequences.

In partnership with Trinity College, the media commission published an essay from the top student in the postgraduate EU Media Regulation module. The essay, by Grace Ryan and titled *Fighting Fire with Fire*, was described as a "critical examination of the EU's ban of Russian state media".

Given that the essay was published by a state agency, it might surprise some that the content and tone of the piece were strongly against the action taken by the EU, with its March 2022 ban on content produced by Russia Today (RT) and Sputnik described as "riddled with legal uncertainty... undermining the democratic legitimacy of the EU".

The ban had been implemented on the grounds that it was necessary to manage "the significant and direct threat to the Union's public order and security" but it failed to provide "grounded reasoning for the legal basis of the ban and misapplied key European Court of Human Rights jurisprudence".

RT appealed on the basis that it was contrary to EU law but the General Court found the ban to be "proportionate". This ruling, Ryan claims, was based on "uncertain legal analysis" and so created "a murky doctrine which may be relied upon in the future". Essentially, the court's finding was deemed to be political rather than legal and the judgment "signals that legal protections may vary depending on the context or convenience of a future media ban".

As with much of the debate about the Russia-Ukraine war, the important issues highlighted by Ryan's essay are not ones that have featured in the Irish media (as highlighted elsewhere on this page).

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Published by Penfield Enterprises Ltd.

44 Lr Baggot St, Dublin 2.

Tel: (01) 661 1062 (No caller I.D.) Fax: (01) 662 4532

Printed by Boylan Web Ltd.

Colour reproduction by Typeform Ltd. ISSN 0790-0562

e-mail: goldhawk@thephoenix.ie



Jan-Dec 2018, 11,710

www.abc.org.uk

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Ireland €89, UK & Eur €99, INTL €125

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The third stamp featured Daniel relaxing at home watching his dodgy box.

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But the Russians have allowed the International Committee of the Red Cross access to the two unfortunates and the British Army hopes this is a portent that a deal can be done. Britain did offer a prisoner exchange, it appears, but the Russians refused this – not a good sign for the two men involved.

If things don't look too good for the pair soldiers, then even worse has been the claim that a third officer, this time a senior member of MI6 (Britain's external intelligence agency), was also captured, although the Russians have issued no personal details concerning him.

This suggests a deeper level of direct British involvement in the conflict than previously admitted.

It is customary in time of war for captured spies to be summarily executed, so – whatever the fate of the two army officers – the future looks decidedly bleak for the captured spy.

Nothing underlines the real nature of the Ukrainian conflict more than this story, as *The Phoenix* special report also did over two years ago, headlined: "Is Nato helping Ukraine to fight Russia or is it using Ukraine to fight Russia?" (see edition 10/2/23).



Boris Johnson

When the Irish media parrots the British media and reports that 'the world' is shocked at Russian militarist behaviour, they mean 'the West' is shocked. The rest of the world – the Global South and many countries such as China, Iran and others – are shocked at the manner in which Nato destabilised Ukraine even to the point of disrupting two peace deals between Ukraine and Russia leading up to the Russian invasion.

It was British and US leaders Boris Johnson and Joe Biden who undermined the peace talks between Ukraine and Russia shortly after the 2022 invasion, arguing that Vladimir Putin had to be confronted and unseated. The message since then in the EU and western media is that EU states and the US are merely offering to lend support to occupied Ukraine. The active involvement of senior British officers in leading special operations in Ukraine does not fit into this overall paradigm.

It's just as well then that, while the British media has likely had a D notice slapped on this story about British undercover ops, the Irish media – free of such constraints – has chosen the 'responsible' path of censoring itself as part of the western war effort and the Government's agenda of abolishing neutrality.



THE RECENTLY reported revamp of the Irish Military Intelligence Service (IMIS) is part of an overall military effort to close the gap with the big boys in Europe, who in turn are trying to close the gap with the really, really big boy, the United States.

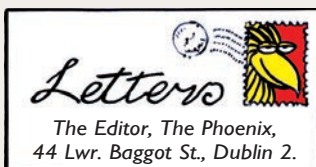
There will surely be some awkward questions regarding financial priorities and resources when the real multi-billion cost of these ludicrous priorities becomes more apparent. But meanwhile the Top Brass are like small children in Santa's grotto. None more so than the IMIS, whose resources and powers are set to be greatly enhanced.

The institutional rivalry between the IMIS and the Garda Special Detective Unit (Special Branch) is not dissimilar to that between Britain's MI5 and MI6, although since the 1920s the Special Branch has always had much greater power and resources than its army counterparts.

But Goldhawk's treasonous sources say there will be changes in this balance of power, although IMIS intel gathering will still be informative rather than 'actionable' (and therefore less expensive). Regardless, the competitive tension between the two state organs will necessarily grow.

What really concerns some interested parties in the spookie Irish peer group is that the naivety of Irish spies and their political masters is still regarded as bottomless by the more cynical chaps in other states' agencies. Members of some of these entities were rendered helpless with laughter when the man introduced at the Smithwick Tribunal as the PSNI link man with MI5, Drew Harris, was later appointed Garda commissioner.

Another view is that industrial espionage from closer to home is more threatening to Irish interests than any cold war-minded Russians.



Dear Goldhawk,

As usual, you are talking twaddle (DPP v DPP, issue 25 July 2025). Your readers should know that your claimed "quote" appears precisely nowhere in my book, *Sophie: The Final Verdict*. You could have consulted it... on (sic) contacted me to check nonsense, but of course you just didn't bother.

As elsewhere in *Phoenix*, your lazy, sloppy approach shows. You print garbage, and the suggestion you entertain that I ever harassed an-ex (sic) DPP lawyer is laughable. I have never met him, spoken to him, nor contacted him (I don't deal with his views at all in the book). To further associate me with a criminal offence is a little beyond your usual depth of abysmal outpourings.

You know nothing about this case and its detail, and are making an exhibition of your ignorance. Grow up and cop on.

Senan Moloney

On page 340 of Senan Moloney's book, *Sophie: The Final Verdict*, the following statement is made: "It seems to me extraordinary that a single lawyer in the DPP's office could effectively be a jury of one, deciding that each piece of evidence is not beyond all doubt, over and over again."

This is, verbatim, the "quote" published in *The Phoenix*.

Goldhawk also quoted from an interview Molony gave to Newstalk's Pat Kenny, in which the former referred to the "single lawyer" (the DPP's Robert Sheehan) he had mentioned in his book. Molony told Kenny: "The DPP is not one single overarching sagacious person, it is an office where they dole out the files to people and this file went to a particular person who later sued the DPP's office over non-promotion if you like and I think that person... wouldn't, you know, zealous would be probably the most charitable way to interpret it..."

Goldhawk summarised that exchange as follows: "Molony went on to tell Newstalk Radio about office/career conflicts inside the DPP, impugning the 'single lawyer's' motivation in the case. Sheehan was not named by Molony or Martin but was clearly identifiable from their comments."

We clearly made the rather academic distinction between the first quote (in the book) and the second quote (in the Kenny interview). Either way, they are Molony's words.

We did not say Molony had "harassed an ex-DPP lawyer". We said that Mr Sheehan had made efforts to persuade the court to issue "a summons against Senan Molony for harassing me". Judge Watkin stated on July 14, 2025, that she was precluded from issuing the summonses because of what had been stated in the DPP email of July 3, 2025, without which she would have considered issuing a summons against Senan Molony for the criminal offence of harassment.

These are the verifiable facts and the abusive bluster in Senan Moloney's letter does not contradict them. Ed.

BROWNE BOOSTS HOUSING GOALS



AFFAIRS OF THE NATION

CLEVER TREVOR'S GENIUS

NO DOUBT Little Museum of Dublin (LMD) founder and curator Trevor White is delighted with the amount of media coverage being devoted to his much-loved and well-funded project on St Stephen's Green, which has just undergone a costly revamp. His most recent outing was in the *Indo*, where columnist Sarah Carey gushed over Clever Trevor, whom she described as "a genius" no less.

Certainly, Goldhawk finds it hard to argue against White's genius credentials, at least when it comes to creating a €130,000 per annum gig for himself in a Dublin City Council-owned Georgian building. He has also proved something of a genius at getting his hands on substantial grants from the taxpayer, most notably courtesy of Fáilte Ireland and the tourism and arts department.



Trevor White

Having a board member such as Ed Brophy – currently a senior suit at Amazon's Irish operation but better known as a Fine Gael adviser and former chief of staff to one Paschal Donohoe – has presumably come in handy when trying to securing state aid.

Other board members include chairwoman Rhona Mahony (former master of the National Maternity Hospital); ex-lord mayor and would-be senator Hazel Chu; and Susan McKeon, who sits on the boards of various oil and gas prospecting entities. Also *in situ* is number-cruncher Brian Geraghty, who is a partner with Crowe Ireland, one of the Government's favoured consultancy firms when it comes to commissioning reports into the likes of RTÉ and the Abbey Theatre.

Although the Charities Regulator recommends that the terms for board members of charities have limits, with a suggested maximum of nine years, Brophy and Geraghty have been directors of the museum for over 14 years, while Mahony has been *in situ* since the start of 2014.

The latest accounts filed cover the year to the end of 2023 and reveal that things have been going swimmingly at LMD, where "key

supporters" include heavyweights such as Diageo, KPMG, BNY Mellon as well as the very friendly *Irish Times*.

While plenty of charities have been struggling, the good news for Trevor is that LMD managed to deliver a surplus in 2023 of over €½m on foot of admissions of €950,000 and shop sales of over €100,000, ending the year with cash at bank of €1.36m.

With the major upgrade completed and the museum now reopened, it looks like things can only get better for genius Trevor.

DERMOT DESMOND was shooting his mustachioed mouth off this week on the subject of the MetroLink and why it will be a total waste of money and "out of date in 10 or 15 years time". This is because by then Dublin will, apparently, be full of autonomously driven vehicles.

Dermo clearly has quite the appetite for artificial intelligence (AI), which may explain why he has remained strapped in at the turbulent airline booking software company, Datalex, which has been boasting about its "AI-driven innovation".

Rather less is said about the firm's disastrous trajectory over recent decades, during which DD has poured in millions as the share price has plummeted. In return, he has been on the end of lots of unwelcome media scrutiny given his dominant shareholding.

Fans of Goldhawk are well aware just how much of a disaster Desmond's flight on Datalex has been, while the board members must also be sick and tired of the increasingly bumpy journey. A decision has been made to take the company private at an EGM on September 4, although apparently the reason for delisting is not to escape the heat but rather so that Datalex can "focus on strategic execution and accelerate innovation and unlock greater long-term value for our customers and shareholders".

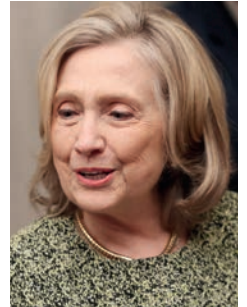
Alas, the hapless small shareholders will now find it far more difficult to trade their shares, a drawback that will affect Switzerland-based tax exile Dermo, who now holds a whopping 50% of the business.

IAN HYLAND'S BAD CALL?

GOLDHAWK'S FAVOURITE publisher-turned-event-organiser, *Business & Finance* boss Ian Hyland, has been spreading his wings of late, most recently

with the acquisition of the Windmill Lane Pictures business. Much of his energy, however, is expended on dishing out awards to worthies who are lauded at annual shindigs attended by fat cats.

Fans of *The Phoenix* will recall that the roll call of B&F's alumni includes the likes of former US speaker of the house Nancy Pelosi, who was given something called the Sutherland Leadership Award "for outstanding international leaders" who have embodied the "values" of former Goldman Sachs chairman, Suds (whose family backs the annual award).



Hillary Clinton

Other luminaries deemed to have made the grade in the recent past include Ursula von der Leyen, Christine Lagarde, Nick Clegg and Dame Louise Richardson. You get the picture.

Last month, the B&F website announced that this year's recipient of the Suds gong is none other than Hillary Clinton, who is apparently "one of the most transformational leaders of her generation". (Imagine what they would say had she won in 2016?) And in case you are wondering what Hillary got up to when Obama installed her as secretary of state in 2009, it turns out that she "strengthened America's global partnerships and actively promoted democracy and peace".

Given that the focus of Hyland's other big project, Ireland Inc, is on the US market – its aim is to "amplify the significant Irish investment across the US" – it is not surprising that high-profile Yanks should pop up on the awards list. Nor is it surprising that the main sponsors of the awards and Ireland Inc are US corporate big-hitters such as KPMG, Pfizer, BlackRock, Carlyle and Bank of America.

This begs the question: has Hyland got his timing right? When Pelosi was given the nod, for example, Joe Biden was in the White House but today the president is one Donald J Trump, who loathes Clinton and anyone giving her a special award will be off his Christmas card list pronto.

Dishing out accolades to Democrats is not the easy win it was in the recent past and corporate America has already demonstrated its eagerness to kowtow to Trump in order to keep on the right side of the prez's capricious nature.

Certainly, sponsoring Ireland Inc could look rather less attractive than it did before cufflink-wielding schmoozer Hyland announced the great news about Hillary. Moreover, when Pelosi was over here, the US embassy posted online about her activities. When La Clinton jets into Dublin later this year, Goldhawk suspects the staff in Ballsbridge will find other ways to keep themselves occupied.



GOLDHAWK
 goldhawk@thephoenix.ie
 tel: 01 661 1062
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Keep Him Informed

FEAR OF RACISM OR MI5 COVER-UP?

THE BRITISH media is claiming that the South Yorkshire Police (SYP) and other forces in England and Wales failed to halt the crimes of grooming gangs because of concerns they would be labelled racist.

The alternative explanation is that powerful state forces, including MI5, tolerated the abuse to create blackmail opportunities to recruit reformers within the Muslim community (see *The Phoenix* 27/6/25). The precedent for this is the Kincora Boys' Home scandal in Belfast, where MI5, with the assistance of the RUC special branch, recruited loyalist paedophiles.

As more details emerge, the similarities between Kincora and the grooming gangs have deepened. It was reported last week that five victims from Rotherham were abused by SYP officers connected to the gangs. Girls as young as 11 were raped by SYP officers and a 12-year-old was assaulted in a marked police car. Three children were beaten up in a police cell. Another victim witnessed an SYP officer supplying class A drugs to a grooming gang.

The SYP crimes are to be investigated by no less a force than the SYP itself.

Sound familiar? In 2022 Northern Ireland Police Ombudsman Marie Anderson confirmed that repeated complaints about Kincora had been made to the RUC yet the force failed to intervene. After the scandal erupted, the RUC investigated itself and found nothing to implicate its special branch or MI5.

Time may reveal the seniority of some of the officials involved in the grooming gang scandals. In the north, complicity in Kincora reached far above the level of the police.

John Imrie, a senior MI5 officer stationed at the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) was arrested in 1979 after flashing at a stranger in



Marie Anderson

the gents' toilets at Victoria Station. At his trial, he claimed he had been caught short and, as the train he intended to take at 11.10 to Sydneyham had no toilet, he was compelled to display himself to a gentleman in the vicinity of the urinals. Imrie, however, had exposed himself 10 minutes after the train had departed. He received a conviction.

On August 17 1979 *Private Eye* magazine revealed: "Up until the trial strong pressure was brought to bear by a variety of authorities to drop the charges in the national interest."

Imrie was later promoted within MI5 to oversee the recruitment of new officers.

Peter England, also a high-ranking intelligence official at the NIO in the 1970s, was convicted and fined £100 for a crime committed in a public toilet in that decade.

Chris Moore, author of a new book on Kincora, discovered a document describing the security precautions in place for England during the search of an office at Kincora after it had been shut down. A sex abuse survivor also described to Moore how he had been abused by England.

Sir Maurice Oldfield, MI6 chief (1973-78) and NI security co-ordinator (1980-81) was the architect of the Kincora 'honey trap' operation. He lost his security clearance in 1981 after the Metropolitan Police discovered his lust for young males and a collection of male pornography in his London flat.

In 1984, Oldfield's former deputy, Sir Peter Hayman, was convicted of gross indecency.

MYERS AND McGUIRK ON TUAM

AS WORK commenced at the former mother-and-baby home in Tuam, some of Ireland's right-wing commentators have distinguished themselves. Kevin Myers and John McGuirk went to great lengths to offer alternative reasons as to why the Office of the Director for Authorised Intervention in Tuam had begun to exhume the almost 800 babies and infants buried at the site.

Myers has been writing a weekly column for *Brussels Signal* (BS) since June 2024. Hungarian investigative media group Atlatszo has linked funding for BS to both Viktor

Orbán and a long-time strategist for his Fidesz party, Patrick Egan. In July Myers penned a piece for BS about the excavation in Tuam.

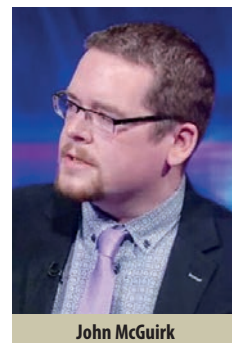
He starts by describing how forensic scientists will compare DNA samples from the 796 bodies to the DNA of living people. He seems to even question the legitimacy of these comparisons as he writes the word 'identify' in inverted commas. Myers claims the process is a "public piece of expiatory, agitprop-theatre around the recovery of the pathetic remains in Tuam".

He also claims that the state is on the way to providing full-term abortions and regularly returns to the modern-day availability of abortion services in Ireland in an effort to undermine any critique of what took place in Tuam. He claims that the state and media are trying to silence "Christian traditionalists who still cherish those life-affirming elements of the culture", which are being "abandoned for the liberating ideologies of egalitarianism, full-blooded feminism and the even more full-blooded execution-by-abortion of fully-gestated human beings".

Meanwhile *Gript* editor John McGuirk – in a 1,500-word comment piece headlined "The Disgraceful Calumny of Tuam" as well as during a *Prancing Princes* podcast – questions what he claims is modern Ireland's love of digging up the past.

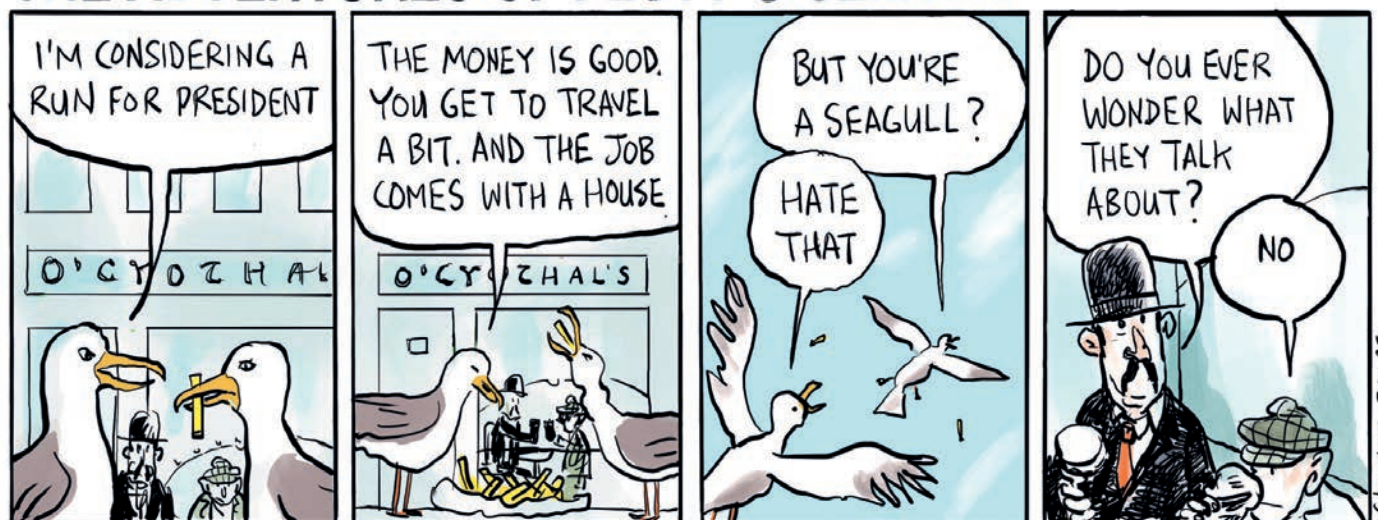
He asserts that most coverage and now the excavation in Tuam is "fictional history designed to legitimise modern prejudices". Like Myers, he says it is ironic that just as Tuam and the role of the Bon Secours Sisters is being investigated "Irish society has simply found new and more efficient ways to dispose of inconvenient and unwanted children, as the enormous surge in the abortion rate in Ireland would tend to confirm".

On the podcast McGuirk says Ireland is increasingly totalitarian and its populace is being indoctrinated and subjected to a sustained campaign of relentless, deliberate, deceptive and malevolent propaganda.



John McGuirk

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