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Northern Ireland Q & A - Is There A Witch-Hunt Against Ex British Soldiers?

Who is saying there is a 'witch-hunt' against former soldiers involved in killings during the conflict in Ireland? Some right-wing newspapers (The Daily Mail and The Sun) have recently published misleading and inaccurate information claiming that there is a 'witch-hunt'. A group of MPs and peers (some of whom are ex-military and are sometimes referred to as the "military wing" of the Tory party) along with some unionist MPs, have also raised the issue in parliament. The Office of the Speaker has conceded some MPs have abused parliamentary privilege in comments they made about the prosecution of a former soldier that is continuing before the courts. A group of former soldiers has also held a number of demonstrations in London and Belfast protesting against recent decisions by the Northern Ireland Prosecution Service to charge former soldiers.

How many soldiers have been convicted of murder in the Northern Irish courts? Four have been convicted of shooting civilians while on duty in circumstances where the courts ruled they were guilty of murder (one murder conviction was overturned on appeal). All four were freed after just five years of their life sentences through the use of the "Royal Prerogative of Mercy". All were allowed to re-join the British army. This hardly amounts to a 'witch-hunt'.

Convicted murderers were allowed to rejoin the army? Yes. No other member of NATO and no other democratic country allows convicted murderers to join, or re-join, its armed forces.

But haven't republicans and loyalists convicted of murder also been freed under the Good Friday Agreement (GFA) ? Yes. Prisoners convicted of conflict related offences were granted early release under the GFA. Some had only served a short period of their sentence but a great majority had already served lengthy sentences. Tens of thousands of republicans and loyalists spent time in jails (totalling an estimated 100,000 years). As against four soldiers serving less than five years each. If anyone should be convicted today of an offence that occurred before the GFA they would only serve a maximum of two years.

Would this two year limit also apply to former soldiers or members of the then RUC (police)? No-one knows. When the GFA early release scheme was introduced, London decided against including members of the armed forces. We believe this was because of an arrogant and flawed assumption that soldiers and police would not find themselves before the courts. More recently it has been argued that former security forces could benefit from this scheme. This lack of clarity is entirely the fault of the British government but for many bereaved families whose loved one were murdered by the British Army, what is important is not the length of sentence but that justice be seen to be done – i.e. a prosecution.

But don't the so-called "letters of comfort" issued to republicans mean that they will not be prosecuted … and soldiers will? All the 'letters of comfort' did was confirm the PSNI (police) had no evidence against an individual that could lead to a prosecution at that time. Prosecutions are still possible if evidence becomes available in the future. Prosecutions are now proceeding against a number of former republicans and loyalists. The handful of cases where errors led to some people being told, wrongly, that there was no evidence against them led to the Hallett Enquiry. The PSNI Legacy Investigation Branch (LIB) is presently reviewing ALL cases where such letters were issued.

But why are military killings being re-investigated all these years later? The Stormont House Agreement proposes a new police unit to investigate all outstanding homicide cases - but politicians have so far failed to agree its implementation. In the meantime, the PSNI are investigating a small number of cases. These include military killings. A large number of killings by British soldiers, however, were NEVER subject to ANY thorough Article 2 (ECHR) compliant investigation as is legally required. These are not, then, *re-investigations* as - in many cases an Article 2 compliant police investigation has yet to happen.

Is there proof that these deaths were not investigated? Yes. In the early 70s, an illegal agreement existed between senior army and police officers which meant that soldiers involved in fatal incidents were rarely interviewed by police officers. The family of Kathleen Thompson, the mother of six whose photo appears in the banner ad, took a judicial review of the Prosecution Service failure to prosecute the soldier. The judge slammed the lack of investigation and ruled the Chief Constable had no authority to delegate responsibility to the Royal Military Police. In addition, declassified official documents show that a second illegal agreement was reached in the early 70s whereby the Attorney General would consult with the Ministry of Defence BEFORE prosecuting a soldier, inviting a submission from the MoD on why a prosecution should not proceed. This was an egregious violation, both of the independence of the Attorney General and the Prosecution Service. A report from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary[7] and judgements from the European Court of Human Rights all confirm that military killings were not investigated as legally required between 1970 and 1973. Even after this period, killings of unarmed civilians by the British army were not subjected to rigorous and thorough investigations as required by law.

But the British Army was in Ireland to uphold the law and was subjected to daily attacks by the IRA? Where they didn't uphold the law they should be subject to investigation and prosecution as with anyone else. It was the actions of some soldiers, who killed unarmed civilians not posing any threat to them or others that inflamed and aggravated the conflict in the early 70s. The subsequent failure to investigate and prosecute alienated the entire nationalist/republican community, prolonging the conflict. A recent inquest into a man shot dead by soldiers in 1971 shows a complete failure to investigate the lies and disinformation that was put in the public domain at the time. It took over 40 years for his family to finally have the truth told.

If the British army was only responsible for approximately 11% of deaths why are more resources not devoted to investigating killings carried out by illegal paramilitary groups? As outlined above, thousands of people spent lengthy periods in jail having been convicted of paramilitary offences, including murder. For over three decades massive resources were devoted to putting people behind bars (and sometimes the wrong people, as with the Birmingham Six and the Guildhall Four). The Northern Ireland Office has confirmed to The Pat Finucane Centre that there are approximately 170 outstanding investigations into the deaths of British soldiers. Over 500 investigations into killings of soldiers have been completed. These resulted either in prosecutions, where evidence was sufficient, or to no prosecution if evidence was unavailable.

Why do these families want revenge so many years on? The vast majority of bereaved families whose loved-ones were shot dead by soldiers do not want revenge. They seek truth and justice. Having been treated appallingly in the aftermath of the death, they now have to endure reporting that borders on the racist - and is certainly inaccurate. The ultimate insult came when a parliamentary committee called for a "statute of limitations" for members of the British armed forces. This is Illegal, immoral and certain to contradict both the spirit and the letter of the peace process. It is contrary to the provisions of the Good Friday Agreement. What would you, reader, think if your parent or child was killed by a soldier whose only defence is that he was "fighting for Queen and country" ?

MoJ Put on Notice by Information Commissioner

Law Gazette: The Ministry of Justice has become the first central government department to be served with an enforcement notice by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). It was rapped over the knuckles last month for delays in responding to 'subject access requests' - inquiries by individuals on data held about them. The Data Protection Act 1998 requires data controllers to respond to such requests 'without undue delay'. According to the notice, dated 21 December, the information commissioner has considered 'a large number' of complaints about the department's handling of subect access requests. 'On 28 July 2017, the data controller had a backlog of 919 subject access requests from individuals, some of which dated back to 2012,' the notice states. While progress had been made towards eliminating the backlog by October 2018, on 10 November 2017 the MoJ had 793 cases over 40 days old.

'The commissioner takes the view that damage or distress to individuals is likely as a result of them being denied the opportunity of correcting inaccurate personal data about them, which may be processed by the data controller, because they are unable to establish what personal data are being processed within the statutory timescale.' The notice also cites article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights, stating that the 'right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence… has been unlawfully interfered with by reason of the failure of the data controller to respond to subject access requests in compliance with the DPA'. Among other measures, the notice requires the secretary of state for justice to inform the individuals with outstanding requests by 31 October 2018 whether any personal data about them has been processed and to supply each of them with a copy of any such personal data so processed. The secretary of state must also provide the commissioner with a monthly progress report.

The serving of an enforcement notice on Whitehall is the latest indication of a tough approach by Elizabeth Denham, who took up the position of information commissioner in July 2016. Over the past decade the ICO has issued some 155 enforcement notices, the largest number against marketing businesses. While 19 have been served on local authorities, this is the first against central government. In a formal statement, the MoJ said: 'We have left no stone unturned in ensuring the historical backlog in responding to special access requests from offenders is addressed. The Information Commissioner has recognised our plan is robust and it is delivering results at pace and ahead of schedule. Given the marked improvements already brought about by our urgent action in this area, we are very disappointed the Information Commissioner has decided to take formal action at this time. We are committed to transparency and improving understanding of how the justice system works but the information we handle is often highly sensitive and we must weigh these interests with our responsibility never to put children, vulnerable victims, witnesses, staff or criminal investigations at risk.'

Tribunal Rules Against Total Secrecy Over UK Drone Strikes

Owen Bowcott, Guardian: government's power to block requests for information on national security grounds has been significantly curtailed by a tribunal ruling over targeted killings of British jihadists abroad. Although attempts to obtain the legal advice given to the prime minister before RAF drone strikes in Syria in 2015 were dismissed, the court said officials could not rely on a blanket ban preventing the release of all relevant details. The upper tribunal administrative appeals chamber decision, handed down shortly before Christmas, said freedom of information requests in such sensitive policy areas should be subject instead to qualified exemptions in which security concerns are balanced against wider public interests.

The tribunal also criticised the Information Commissioner's Office for accepting assurances by government departments that the material was all exempt from FOI applications. The ICO, it emerged, had not even read the documents in the case. The challenge was brought by Rights Watch (UK) after RAF drone strikes against two British citizens, Reyaad Khan and Ruhul Amin, which prompted accusations that officials were operating a US-style "kill list". At the time, the prime minister, David Cameron, described the attack as a "new departure" and said he had relied on legal advice from the attorney general, Jeremy Wright QC, which assured him it was "entirely lawful". Later that year, UK and US forces cooperated on an airstrike that killed Mohammed Emwazi, nicknamed "Jihadi John", the Islamic State extremist held responsible for killing several western hostages. The day after the attack on Khan and Amin, Rights Watch (UK) submitted a freedom of information request for the legal advice, or a summary of it, to be published.

Since then, Wright has given some further details about the legal context in which such decisions are made. "Specific" advance evidence of a terror plot threatening UK interests is not legally necessary before launching pre-emptive drone strikes against suspects overseas, Wright said last year. The legal threshold for self-defence was not being "watered down", he stressed, adding that not knowing the target, type or time of a terrorist attack should not prevent military action.

In the upper tribunal hearing, the government argued that section 23 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 provided an absolute exemption on handing over any information passing through the security agencies. The upper tribunal rejected that argument, saying any advice should be "disaggregated" and considered under other exemptions provided for by the act. It declared: "Although we accept that the disaggregated information … can be said to relate to [the security agencies], parliament did not intend such information to be covered by the absolute section 23 exemption." Parts of the legal advice, such as the government's interpretation of international law, should be subject to a public interest test, the tribunal said.

Yasmine Ahmed, the executive director of Rights Watch (UK), said: "This is a significant pushback against the government's expansive claims of secrecy that would have allowed it to claim absolute secrecy and suppress information that had merely passed through the hands of the security services, corroding the public's right to information. "The government [is] on notice: referencing the security services or them having sight of information does not hand public bodies a blank cheque to veto scrutiny of their actions, and they cannot do so and expect the information commissioner, courts and public to acquiesce." Daniel Carey, a solicitor at the law firm Deighton Pierce Glynn, which represented Rights Watch (UK), said the challenge "has been vindicated by these significant rulings on the legal and procedural approach to security services information under the Freedom of Information Act".

Government Widens Legal Aid Scope For Prison Law

Law Gazette: Legal aid will be restored for three areas of prison law following a Court of Appeal judgment, the government has confirmed. In Howard League for Penal Reform and the Prisoners' Advice Service v the Lord Chancellor, the court ruled that the high threshold required for a finding of inherent or systemic unfairness was satisfied in the case of pre-tariff reviews by the parole board, category A reviews (those whose escape would be highly dangerous), and decisions regarding placement in close supervision centres. The threshold was not satisfied in relation to decisions about offending behaviour programmes and courses, and disciplinary proceedings where no additional days of imprisonment or detention can be awarded. This week Frances Crook, chief executive of the Howard League for Penal Reform, a

prison charity, posted a letter on Twitter from the Ministry of Justice confirming that an amending statutory instrument has been laid before parliament, extending criminal legal aid to the three areas where the court ruled against the government. The Legal Aid Agency is consulting with the Law Society, the Bar Council and Legal Aid Practitioners' Group on changes to the 2017 crime contract. According to the Howard League, almost 300 people have taken their own lives since eligibility for criminal legal aid in certain prison law matters was removed in December 2013. Calls to the Howard League for Penal Reform and the Prisoners' Advice Service have increased by nearly 50%. The government considered appealing the court's findings but withdrew its application for permission to appeal to the Supreme Court.

Latest legal aid statistics show that prison law made up less than 2% of 'crime lower' workload between January and March 2017, but over 5% of expenditure. Prison law work began to decline following changes in July 2010, which included a requirment for providers to apply to the agency for prior approval before starting work on treatment cases. The downward trend accelerated after the government narrowed the scope of legal aid in December 2013. This is not the first time the government has amended legal aid regulations following a court ruling. Campaign group Rights of Women, with the support of the Law Society, successfully fought rules introduced in April 2013 that required victims to provide a prescribed form of evidence to apply for family law legal aid. As a result, victims of domestic violence no longer have to endure harsh evidence tests to qualify for legal aid.

Court of Appeal Overturns Decision Denying Trans Parent Contact With Children

Abby Buttle, Human Rights News: An ultra-Orthodox Jew who left her community to start a new life as a woman has been allowed an appeal by The Court of Appeal. This overturned an earlier ruling that she should have no direct contact with her five children. The transgender parent, known in court as 'J', has not seen her children since leaving the North Manchester Charedi Jewish community in June 2015. Both parents agreed that the children should continue to live in the community, but the mother opposed direct contact with J. In the lower court, Mr Justice Jackson had decided that, because of a real risk that the children and their mother would be rejected by their community, direct contact wouldn't be in the best interests of the children. This was in spite of 'formidable' arguments in favour of contact with J.

A Case of Profound Significance: The Court of Appeal noted that the case was of 'profound significance' because it raised the question of how, in evaluating a child's welfare, the court should respond to the impact on a child of behaviour which may be unlawful under Article 14 of the Human Rights Convention and under the Equality Act 2010. Both of these protect us from discrimination. The appeal court was made up of Sir James Munby, Lady Justice Arden and Lord Justice Singh. In their judgment, they said that many people would find the earlier decision "both surprising and disturbing, thinking to themselves, and we can understand why, how can this be so, how can this be right?" The judges also said that it was "unfortunate that the judge did not address head-on the human rights issues and issues of discrimination which plainly arose".

The Standards of Reasonable Men and Women: They found that the High Court judge had lost sight of the principle that the children's welfare must form the paramount consideration in disputes over contact. The conclusion that direct contact wouldn't be in the best interests of the children was difficult to square with the court's role in judging the welfare of the children "by the standards of reasonable men and women in 2017". In adopting these standards, the court must take a "broad-minded and tolerant approach". This involved asking questions

including: "how can this order give proper effect to the reality, whether the community likes it or not, that the father, whether transgender or not, is and always will be the children's father and, as such, inescapably part of their lives, now, tomorrow and as long as they live?" It was important that courts shouldn't be less willing to intervene to protect what was plainly in a child's best interests simply because of adults refuse to change their beliefs. The appeal court also found there was "much force" in the argument that the High Court judge didn't sufficiently explain why, given the basis of the mother's and the community's objection to direct contact, it was nonetheless feasible to contemplate indirect contact. One of the main reasons that the children faced being ostracised was because other parents wanted to shelter their own children from finding out about the existence of transgender people. This was an issue with both direct and indirect contact. The appeal judges also noted that it was the duty of the court to make direct contact between parents and children work. The High Court judge did not try hard enough to do this. He had "given up too easily".

Courts' Human Rights Obligations: In its concluding observations, the Court of Appeal noted that "the best interests of these children seen in the medium to longer term is in more contact with their father". They added: "The doors should not be closed at this early stage in their lives". However, the Court of Appeal does not have the final say. The matter has now been sent back to the family court to be reheard. Because of this, the Court of Appeal didn't give a final view on the issues of equality law which arose, nor on the issues about freedom of religion under Article 9 of the Human Rights Convention. However, they did set out some guidelines for the family court to consider.

These included reminders that: 'Discrimination' and 'victimisation' have specific meanings under the Equality Act, which mustn't be confused with their everyday meanings. Further, the Equality Act can't apply to "the community" as a single entity. It can, however, apply to schools. Transgender status is protected by Article 14 and, as the subject matter of the case fell within the ambit of Article 8 (the right to family life), Article 14 could be engaged without J having to demonstrate an actual breach of Article 8. Thanks to section 6 of the Human Rights Act, the duty to act compatibly with Convention rights applies to courts and tribunals as well as other public authorities. The appeal court noted: 'When the present case returns to the family court we anticipate that the court will wish to scrutinise with care the suggested justification for the apparent discrimination which the father faces on the ground of her transgender status, not least to ensure that the court itself does not breach its duty under section 6 of the HRA'. A spokesperson for J's legal team said: "This decision is one that will be welcomed not just by lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals living within small religious groups, but by the LGBT community in general."

Criminal Justice in the UK: Smaller, But Tougher

Criminal justice across the UK has got smaller, but tougher, over recent years, according to a new briefing from the Centre for Crime and Justice Studies. While recorded crime, prosecutions and convictions have all fallen over the past decade, this 'justice dividend' has yet to be seen in the number of people in prison, which have continued to rise. The briefing – Trends in criminal justice spending, staffing and populations – forms part of the UK Justice Policy Review programme of activities, under which the Centre offers in-depth analysis of criminal justice policy and data developments across the UK. It finds that:

• Crime recorded by the police fell across the UK by 20 per cent between 2005-2006 and

2015-2016, from 6.1 million to 4.9 million. Over a shorter period – between 2009-2010 to 2015-16 – recorded crime across the UK rose marginally from 4.8 to 4.9 million. • Prosecutions across the UK fell from 1.9 million in 2009-2010 (the earlier year for which comparative figures are available) to 1.6 million in 2015-16, a fall of 12 per cent. Convictions during the same period fell 11 per cent, from 1.6 to 1.4 million. • Court fines issued by courts across the UK fell by 6 per cent between 2009-2010 and 2015-2016, from just over 1 million to 960,000. • Community sentences fell from 211,000 in 2009-2010 to 135,000 in 2015-2016, a reduction of 36 per cent. • The number of prison sentences handed out fell by nine per cent from 118,457 in 2009-2010 to 107,439 in 2015-16. • Real terms spending on criminal justice fell by 15 per cent between 2011-2012 and 2015-2016.

Despite this major shrinkage in the size and scale of criminal justice across the UK, the prison population has remained stubbornly high. Between 2009-2010 and 2015-2016 it remained flat at around 95,500. over a longer period – 2005-2006 to 2015-2016 – it went up by 11 per cent, from 85,300 to 94,600. The UK has three criminal justice jurisdictions: England and Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland. The briefing also highlights some important differences between these three jurisdictions. For instance:

• Real terms criminal justice spending fell much more sharply in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (around 16 per cent) than it did in Scotland (around six per cent). • Between 2006 and 2016, police officer numbers fell in England and Wales by 13 per cent, and in Northern Ireland by 23 per cent. In Scotland, they increased, by seven per cent. • Prison and probation staffing grew in Scotland, while it fell in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. • Between 2009-2010 and 2015-2016, the number of community sentences issued by the courts fell by 20 per cent in Northern Ireland, and by 41 per cent in England and Wales. In Scotland, they increased by 16 per cent.

Reacting to the findings, Richard Garside, Director of the Centre for Crime and Justice Studies, said: While criminal justice across the UK has become smaller in recent years. It has also become tougher. There have been welcome reductions in spending, and a fall in the number of police officers and other criminal justice workers. Yet the prison population has grown over the past decade and remains stubbornly high. Through our continued overuse of imprisonment, in often disgraceful conditions, we are squandering a potential justice dividend. We should be aiming to be doing less with less, including reducing our currently high prison population.

10 Conflicts to Watch in 2018

" Over a decade of intensive Western military operations has contributed to a more permissive environment for the use of force. "

It's not all about Donald Trump. - That's a statement more easily written than believed, given the U.S. president's erratic comportment on the world stage — his tweets and taunts, his cavalier disregard of international accords, his readiness to undercut his own diplomats, his odd choice of foes, and his even odder choice of friends. And yet, a more inward-looking United States and a greater international diffusion of power, increasingly militarized foreign policy, and shrinking space for multilateralism and diplomacy are features of the international order that predate the current occupant of the White House and look set to outlast him.

The First Trend — U.S. retrenchment — has been in the making for years, hastened by the 2003 Iraq War that, intended to showcase American power, did more to demonstrate its limitations. Overreach abroad, fatigue at home, and a natural rebalancing after the relatively brief period of largely uncontested U.S. supremacy in the 1990s mean the decline was likely

inevitable. Trump's signature "America First" slogan harbors a toxic nativist, exclusionary, and intolerant worldview. His failure to appreciate the value of alliances to U.S. interests and his occasional disparagement of traditional partners is particularly self-defeating. His lamentations about the cost of U.S. overseas intervention lack any introspection regarding the price paid by peoples subjected to that intervention, focusing solely on that paid by those perpetrating it. But one ought not forget that Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) in the same election season, and Barack Obama, as a candidate in the preceding ones, both rejected foreign entanglements and belittled nation building. Trump wasn't shaping the public mood. He was reflecting it. The retrenchment is a matter of degree, of course, given the approximately 200,000 active-duty U.S. troops deployed worldwide. But in terms of ability to manipulate or mold events around the globe, U.S. influence has been waning as power spreads to the east and south, creating a more multipolar world in which armed nonstate actors are playing a much larger role.

The Second Trend, the growing militarization of foreign policy, also represents continuity as much as departure. Trump exhibits a taste for generals and disdain for diplomats; his secretary of state has an even more curious penchant to dismember the institution from which he derives his power. But they are magnifying a wider and older pattern. The space for diplomacy was shrinking long before Trump's administration took an ax to the State Department. Throughout conflict zones, leaders increasingly appear prone to fight more than to talk — and to fight by violating international norms rather than respecting them. This owes much to how the rhetoric of counterterrorism has come to dominate foreign policy in theory and in practice. It has given license to governments to first label their armed opponents as terrorists and then treat them as such. Over a decade of intensive Western military operations has contributed to a more permissive environment for the use of force. Many recent conflicts have involved valuable geopolitical real estate, escalating regional and major power rivalries, more outside involvement in conflicts, and the fragmentation and proliferation of armed groups. There is more to play for, more players in the game, and less overlap among their core interests. All of these developments present obstacles to negotiated settlements.

The Third Trend is the erosion of multilateralism. Whereas former President Obama sought (with mixed success) to manage and cushion America's relative decline by bolstering international agreements — such as trade deals, the Paris climate accord, and the Iran nuclear negotiations — President Trump recoils from all that. Where Obama opted for burden-sharing, Trump's instinct is for burden-shedding. Even this dynamic, however, has deeper roots. On matters of international peace and security in particular, multilateralism has been manhandled for years. Animosity between Russia and Western powers has rendered the United Nations Security Council impotent on major conflicts since at least the 2011 Libya intervention; that animosity now infects debates on most crises on the council's agenda. Trump is not the only leader emphasizing bilateral arrangements and ad hoc alliances above multilateral diplomacy and intergovernmental institutions.

Then again, much of it is about Trump, inescapably. - The most ominous threats in 2018 — nuclear war on the Korean Peninsula and a spiraling confrontation pitting the United States and its allies against Iran — could both be aggravated by Trump's actions, inactions, and idiosyncrasies. U.S. demands (in the North Korean case, denuclearization; in Iran's, unilateral renegotiation of the nuclear deal or Tehran's regional retreat) are unrealistic without serious diplomatic engagement or reciprocal concessions. In the former, Washington could face the prospect of provoking a nuclear war in order to avoid one, and in the latter, there is the possibility of jeopardizing a nuclear deal that is succeeding for the sake of a confrontation with Iran that almost certainly will not.

(A third potential flashpoint that didn't make it into our top 10 — because it came so late

and was so unexpected and gratuitous — is the Jerusalem powder keg. At the time of writing, it has not yet exploded, perhaps because when one is as hopeless as the Palestinians there is little hope left to be dashed. Still, the Trump administration's decision to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel for purely domestic political reasons, with no conceivable foreign-policy gain and a risk of explosion, must rank as a prime example of diplomatic malpractice.)

As with all trends, there are countervailing ones often propelled by discomfort that the dominant trends provoke. Europeans are defending the Iranian nuclear deal and may end up deepening their own common security and strategic independence, President Emmanuel Macron is testing the reach of French diplomacy, and international consensus on action against climate change has held. Perhaps African states, already leading efforts to manage crises on the continent, will step up in the Democratic Republic of the Congo or another of the continent's major conflicts. Perhaps they or another assortment of actors could make the case for more engagement and dialogue and for defusing crises rather than exacerbating them. These may seem slender reeds on which to rest our hopes. But, as the following list of the International Crisis Group's top 10 conflicts to watch in 2018 unhappily illustrates, and for now at least, they may well be the only reeds we have.

1. North Korea's nuclear and missile testing coupled with the White House's bellicose rhetoric make the threat of war on the Korean Peninsula — even a catastrophic nuclear confrontation — higher now than at any time in recent history. Pyongyang's sixth nuclear test in September 2017 and the increasing range of its missiles clearly demonstrate its determination to advance its nuclear program and intercontinental strike capability. From the United States, meanwhile, comes careless saber-rattling and confusing signals about diplomacy.

2. U.S.-Saudi-Iran Rivalry. This rivalry will likely eclipse other Middle Eastern fault lines in 2018. It is enabled and exacerbated by three parallel developments: the consolidation of the authority of Mohammed bin Salman, Saudi Arabia's assertive crown prince; the Trump administration's more aggressive strategy toward Iran; and the end of the Islamic State's territorial control in Iraq and Syria, which allows Washington and Riyadh to aim the spotlight more firmly on Iran.The contours of a U.S./Saudi strategy (with an important Israeli assist) are becoming clear. It is based on an overriding assumption that Iran has exploited passive regional and international actors to bolster its position in Syria, Iraq, Yemen, and Lebanon. Washington and Riyadh seek to re-establish a sense of deterrence by convincing Tehran that it will pay at least as high a price for its actions as it can inflict on its adversaries.

3. The Rohingya Crisis: Myanmar and Bangladesh: Myanmar's Rohingya crisis has entered a dangerous new phase, threatening Myanmar's hard-won democratic transition, its stability, and that of Bangladesh and the region as a whole.

4. Yemen: With 8 million people on the brink of famine, 1 million declared cholera cases, and over 3 million internally displaced persons, the Yemen war could escalate further in 2018. After a period of rising tensions, dueling rallies, and armed assaults, former President Ali Abdullah Saleh announced in December that his General People's Congress was abandoning its partnership with the Houthis in favor of the Saudi-led coalition. Saleh paid for it with his life; he was killed immediately by his erstwhile partners.

5. Afghanistan: The War in Afghanistan looks set to intensify in 2018. The United States' new Afghanistan strategy raises the tempo of operations against the Taliban insurgency, with more U.S. forces, fiercer U.S. airstrikes, and more aggressive ground offensives by Afghan forces. The aim, according to senior officials, is to halt the Taliban's momentum and, eventually, force it into a political settlement. For now, though, the strategy is almost exclusively military.

6. Syria: After nearly seven years of war, President Bashar al-Assad's regime has the upper hand, thanks largely to Iranian and Russian backing. But the fighting is not over. Large swaths of the country remain outside regime control, regional and international powers disagree on a settlement, and Syria is an arena for the rivalry between Iran and its enemies. As the Islamic State is ousted from the east, prospects for escalation elsewhere will increase. In eastern Syria, rival campaigns by pro-regime forces (supported by Iran-backed militias and Russian airpower) and the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (the SDF, backed by the U.S.-led anti-Islamic State coalition), have forced an Islamic State retreat. In Syria and Iraq, Islamic State remnants have retreated into the desert to await new opportunities. For the regime and the SDF, the fight against the Islamic State was a means to an end. The two aimed to capture territory and resources, but also to build on those gains — the regime by consolidating control; the Kurds by pressing for maximal autonomy. Thus far, the two sides mostly have avoided confrontation. With the Islamic State gone, the risks will increase.

7. The Sahel: Weak states across the Sahel region are struggling to manage an overlapping mix of intercommunal conflict, jihadi violence, and fighting over smuggling routes. Their leaders' predation and militarized responses often make things worse.

8. Democratic Republic of Congo: President Joseph Kabila's determination to hold on to power threatens to escalate the crisis in Congo and a humanitarian emergency that is already among the world's worst. At the end of 2016, the Saint Sylvester agreement appeared to offer a way out, requiring elections by the end of 2017, after which Kabila would leave power (his second and, according to the Congolese Constitution, final term in office should have ended December 2016). Over the past year, however, his regime has backtracked, exploiting the Congolese opposition's disarray and waning international attention and reneging on a power-sharing deal. In November, the election commission announced a new calendar — with a vote at the end of 2018, extending Kabila's rule for at least another year. The most likely course in 2018 is gradual deterioration. But there are worse scenarios. As the regime clamps down, fails to secure parts of the country, and stokes instability in others, the risk of a steeper descent into chaos remains — with grave regional implications.

9. Ukraine: The conflict in eastern Ukraine has claimed over 10,000 lives and constitutes a grave ongoing humanitarian crisis. While it persists, relations between Russia and the West are unlikely to improve. Separatist-held areas are dysfunctional and dependent on Moscow. In other areas of Ukraine, mounting anger at corruption and the 2015 Minsk II agreement, which Russia and Ukraine's Western allies insist is the path to resolve the conflict, creates new challenges. Implementation of that agreement has stalled: Moscow points to Kiev's failure to carry out the Minsk agreement's political provisions, including devolving power to separatist-held areas once they are reintegrated into Ukraine; Kiev argues it cannot do so while Russian interference and insecurity in those areas persist. Both sides continue to exchange fire across the line dividing Ukrainian troops from separatist and Russian forces.

10. Venezuela took yet another turn for the worse in 2017, as President Nicolás Maduro's government ran the country further into the ground while strengthening its political grip. The opposition has imploded. Prospects for a peaceful restoration of democracy appear ever slimmer. But with the economy in free fall, Maduro faces enormous challenges. Expect the humanitarian crisis to deepen in 2018 as GDP continues to contract. In late November, Venezuela defaulted on part of its international debt. Sanctions will make debt restructuring nearly impossible. Increasing Russian support is unlikely to suffice, while China appears reluctant to bail Maduro out. A default could provoke the seizure of Venezuelan assets abroad, crippling the oil trade that accounts for 95 percent of the country's export earnings.

The importance of disclosure in the criminal justice system cannot be underestimated. This report has identified a number of aspects of concern in the way that Crown Court trials are handled by the prosecution, and how police and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) manage effectively unused material relating to 'volume' casework at that venue. Many of our findings are not new and many have been emphasised in previous reviews. Some action has been taken to address them, chiefly in relation to serious and complex crime, where significant disclosure inadequacies in a number of high profile cases have drawn strong criticism from the judiciary and attracted media interest. This concentration on serious casework in the Crown Court, promulgated by those at the top of both the CPS and police, has in turn resulted in a too narrow approach to the overall disclosure problem. In essence, a two-tier attitude towards disclosure has evolved, with significantly less attention being given to the volume cases that proceed through the Crown Court. These cases form the majority of the Crown Court's work and on a human level involve the majority of victims.

Within many of these cases a culture of acceptance exists amongst the parties involved in the disclosure process, who look for ways of working around its failings rather than fixing the root problems. The situation has not been helped by an over-prioritisation of the available resource on achieving deadlines under the Crown Court Better Case Management (BCM) process, rather than there being sufficient resource available to ensure disclosure is dealt with to the appropriate standard at the first opportunity.

This report does not suggest changes to the law or the BCM process. The Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act 1996 and the code that governs it have been commented on in many previous reviews as an effective piece of legislation. Equally, BCM affords ample opportunity for the disclosure process to work if the relevant parties comply with their disclosure requirements at the right time. The root of the problem lies in the practical application of the legislation that governs disclosure. A number of issues have been identified in relation to how disclosure is managed, each of which is a matter of concern and has elicited a separate recommendation. However, just as importantly as responding to each issue, is a need for a change in attitude to ensure that disclosure is recognised as a crucial part of the criminal justice process and that it must be carried out to the appropriate standards. This will not be brought about by 'top down' pronouncements, but by the engagement of every single police officer and CPS prosecutor and paralegal officer involved in an investigation or prosecution to ensure that a common aim is achieved: a fair disclosure for a fair trial.

1.1 Disclosure of unused material is a key component of the investigative and prosecution process. It should be considered at the point where a criminal investigation commences, continue at the point of charge, and be at the forefront as the case progresses and at every subsequent court hearing. Every unused item that is retained by police and considered relevant to an investigation should be reviewed to ascertain whether its existence is capable of undermining the prosecution or assisting the defence case. If either factor applies, unless certain restrictions apply, it must be disclosed to the defence. The way that this disclosure process should take place is governed by the Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act 1996 (CPIA), by common law and by the Code of Practice and guidance.

1.2 This inspection has analysed the process in detail. It has reviewed volume Crown Court cases at random, as well as cases that have been identified by the CPS as failing because of an issue with disclosure. These file reviews have been supported by interviews and focus groups, surveys and unannounced Crown Court observations.

1.3 The inspection found that police scheduling (the process of recording details of both sensitive and non-sensitive material) is routinely poor, while revelation by the police to the prosecutor of material that may undermine the prosecution case or assist the defence case is rare. Prosecutors fail to challenge poor quality schedules and in turn provide little or no input to the police. Neither party is managing sensitive material effectively and prosecutors are failing to manage ongoing disclosure. To compound matters, the auditing process surrounding disclosure decision-making falls far below any acceptable standard of performance. The failure to grip disclosure issues early often leads to chaotic scenes later outside the courtroom, where last minute and often unauthorised disclosure between counsel, unnecessary adjournments and - ultimately - discontinued cases, are common occurrences. This is likely to reflect badly on the criminal justice system in the eyes of victims and witnesses.

1.4 This inspection has identified a number of reasons for this significant failure in the process of disclosure and they form the basis of our recommendations. There needs to be improvement in the training provided to police and in the supervision provided to both police and prosecutors. Although there is good training of prosecutors, it is not leading to commensurate performance improvement. There must be better communication between the two parties and in the information and communications technology (ICT) systems used to support the transfer of information. Equally, there needs to be a greater level of importance given to disclosure by those in key strategic roles in both agencies, especially for non-complex cases which form the majority of cases going to court. Above all, there needs to be a cultural shift that approaches the concept of disclosure differently, that sees it as key to the prosecution process where both agencies add value, rather than an administrative function. Only then will assurance be provided that the prosecution agencies are motivated in their desire for a fair trial, rather than one that focuses on the prosecution case and pays insufficient heed to potential evidence for the defence that lies within the unused material in their possession.

Recommendations: Immediately, police or CPS must correctly identify all disclosure issues relating to unused material at the charging stage and this must be reflected fully in an action plan.

Within six months the CPS should comply with the Attorney General's Guidelines on Disclosure requirement and ensure that every defence statement is reviewed by the allocated prosecutor prior to sending to the police and that prompt guidance is given to the police on what further actions should be taken or material provided (paragraph 6.8).

Within 12 months the College of Policing should produce guidance on training that is of sufficient depth to enable police forces to provide effective training on the disclosure of unused material to all staff involved in the investigation process. The guidance, which may best be served by the use of classroom based or a similar form of interactive training, should concentrate on ensuring that staff fully understand their responsibilities in relation to the revelation of both sensitive and non-sensitive material and how to schedule material correctly (paragraph 10.4).

Within six months police forces should improve their supervision of case files, with regard to the handling of unused material. This process should be supported by the requirement for supervisors to sign the Disclosure Officer's Report each time this is completed (paragraph 10.9).

Within six months, the CPS Compliance and Assurance Team should commence six monthly disclosure dip samples of volume Crown Court files from each CPS Area, with the findings included in the CPS Area Quarterly Performance Review process (paragraph 10.12).

Within six months, all police forces should establish the role of dedicated disclosure champion and ensure that the role holder is of sufficient seniority to ensure they are able to work closely with the CPS Area Disclosure Champions using the existing meetings structure to ensure that disclosure failures are closely monitored and good practice promulgated on a regular basis (paragraph 10.15).

Within six months the CPS should provide a system of information sharing between the Areas and Headquarters that enables the effective analysis of Area performance on disclosure (paragraph 10.24).

Within 12 months, the police and the CPS should review their respective digital case management systems to ensure all digital unused material provided by the police to the CPS is stored within one central location on the CPS system and one disclosure recording document is available to prosecutors in the same location (paragraph 10.31).

Within six months, the CPS and police should develop effective communication processes that enable officers in charge of investigations and the allocated prosecutor to resolve unused material disclosure issues in a timely and effective manner (paragraph 10.33)

More than 300 Human Rights Activists Murdered in 2017

Dedicated to the more than 300 human rights defenders murdered this year, the Front Line Defenders Annual Report on Human Rights Defenders At Risk opens with two pages listing the names of the deceased. The report details the physical attacks, threats, judicial harassment, and smear campaigns used by state, non-state, and corporate actors to hinder the work of peaceful human rights defenders (HRDs) around the world. In 2017, 312 defenders in 27 countries were killed for their peaceful work, according to data collected by Front Line Defenders. More than two-thirds of these, 67% of the total number of activists killed, were defending land, environmental and indigenous peoples' rights, nearly always in the context of mega projects, extractive industry and big business.

Of the cases tracked, only 12% of all murder cases resulted in the arrest of suspects. Impunity for acts of violence against HRDs continues to enable an environment of frequent killings, said the organisation, as does a chronic lack of protection for HRDs at risk. Of the cases for which data on threats was collected, 84% of murdered defenders received at least one targeted death threat prior to their killing.Around the world, defenders continue to tell us that police and government officials refuse to respond to requests for protection following death threats to activists," said Executive Director Anderson, speaking at the lauch of the report in Dublin. "Killings almost always occur following a series or pattern of threats, indicating that if preventive action were taken by police, and threats against defenders were taken seriously by authorities, HRD killings could be drastically reduced. Killings almost always occur following a series or pattern of threats, indicating that if preventive action were taken by police, and threats against defenders were taken seriously by authorities, HRD killings could be drastically reduced." - Executive Director Andrew Anderson

In addition to the high rate of murders in 2017, criminalisation remained the most common strategy used to hinder the critical work of HRDs. In 2017, thousands of activists were detained on fabricated charges, subjected to lengthy, expensive and unfair legal processes or sentenced to long prison terms. In a number of countries, authorities accused HRDs of "waging war against the state" and "secession," charges which carry the death penalty. In the Middle East and North Africa, HRDs faced charges relating to terrorism, state security and espionage. In Vietnam, the government staged a systematic campaign against bloggers, academics and citizen journalists in 2017, with activists arrested, charged, labeled "enemies of the state" and given jail terms of up to ten years and addiiton time under house arrest.

The report also highlights that international pressure on governments who target HRDs is critical. In 2017, six HRDs in Sudan were detaiend and put on trial for "conspiracy to conduct espionage and intelligence activities in favour of foreign embassies" and "waging war against the state." Three of them were detained for almost a year; two were tortured. Following

an extensive campaign of domestic and international pressure, however, all six received a presidential pardon in August. In many cases reported by Front Line Defenders, both judicial harassment and physical attacks were preceded by defamation and smear campaigns at the local level. Women human rights defenders around the world are increasingly reporting hypersexualized smear campaigns and defamation, which aim to limit their activism by eroding local support networks. In response, according to Executive Direction Andrew Anderson, Front Line Defenders is working to promote HRD security with a range of protection programming. In addition to risk management and digital protection trainings, advocacy at the national, international, and EU level, emergency relocation, and nearly 500 protection grants provided to activists at risk in 2017, Front Line Defenders also works with HRDs to devise visibility campaigns to counteract the defamation and smear campaigns that put them at risk.

Family Launches Campaign Over 'Contentious' Conviction of Jemma Beale

The family and friends of Jemma Beale have begun a campaign over what they describe as a "contentious" conviction. Jemma was found guilty last year of perjury and perverting the course of justice. A jury found that she had made up claims of rape and sexual assault. Jemma was sentenced to ten years in prison, longer than the average sentence for rape. Jemma's father Roy told Socialist Worker, "The Daily Telegraph newspaper quoted the following from DS Kevin Lynott from the Metropolitan Police, which investigated three of the four allegations. "It said he 'insisted that each of her claims had been investigated independently and that there was "credible" evidence that cast no doubt on her allegations'. "This credible evidence still exists. Please read the documented evidence and share the facts." Her family has said false stories were published in the mainstream press. Some headlines declared that Jemma had made claims against 15 men. Her family said Jemma accused three men in relation to four incidents across three years. They said "prejudicial" headlines were published while Jemma's trial was ongoing. They have also questioned the basis for some of the charges against her. The perjury charges followed an ex-girlfriend, Anuska Pritchard, claiming that Jemma had confessed to lying about being raped. Jemma's family said, "Pritchard has never gone to the police with details of the alleged 'confession'." Police became aware of the allegation following a visit to Pritchard in 2014. Jemma's family added, "The police commenced an investigation into Jemma simply because they did not believe it was possible for a woman to be sexually assaulted four times in three years. "However, the Mumsnet survey "We Believe You", which received 1,600 respondents, sadly shows that 23 percent of women who had been sexually assaulted suffered on four or more occasions."

Ignoring Women's Needs in Custody Breaches Their Rights, Says Watchdog

Owen Bowcott, Guardian: Failures to provide adequate sanitary protection to women and girls in police custody breach their human rights, the home secretary has been warned by an independent watchdog. The Independent Custody Visiting Association (ICVA) has written to Amber Rudd and Justine Greening, the women and equalities minister, calling on them to improve conditions for female suspects held in police cells. Successive inspections of police stations by visitors, the letter alleges, have found that the needs of menstruating women in police detention are routinely ignored. "Women are frequently left without the assistance of female officers, without access to adequate and hygienic sanitary protection, or facilities for washing and changing," the letter released on Thursday states. "Inadequate consideration is given to menstruation by

officers in the exercise of detainees' risk management. At its most stark, this can mean women left in paper suits without their underwear and without sanitary protection."

A legal opinion by Caoilfhionn Gallagher QC and Angela Patrick of Doughty Street Chambers that was attached to the letter argues the conditions are likely to breach article 8 of the European convention on human rights, the right to private and family life. Katie Kempen, the chief executive of the ICVA, said: "Dignity in the cells must mean dignity for all. No woman or girl should be left bleeding in a cell in indignity simply for want of a difficult conversation or an inexpensive box of tampons." Martyn Underhill, the Dorset police and crime commissioner and chair of the ICVA, said: "Forces must be given clear guidance and adequate support to ensure that the rights of women and girls in custody are met both on paper and in practice."

The ICVA is funded by the Home Office and police and crime commissioners (PCC). It coordinates unannounced visits to police custody suites by volunteers to monitor the rights and wellbeing of detainees. The association is calling for female detainees to be provided with access to a female officer, a hygiene pack and regular sanitary product replacements, handwashing facilities, privacy when using the toilet and extra sensitivity when menstruating women are subject to strip searches. "No woman or girl should be left in indignity by police officers for want of a difficult conversation or an inexpensive box of tampons," the letter to the home secretary maintains. A Home Office spokesperson said: "We are working closely with the Independent Custody Visiting Association and the National Police Chiefs' Council to understand where improvements can be made on this issue."

HMP Swansea – Complacency & Inexcusable Failure to Address Suicides and High Self-Harm

HMP Swansea had a 'complacent and inexcusable' approach to the safety of vulnerable prisoners, failing to respond effectively to high levels of self-harm and suicides of new prisoners, HM Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) found. Peter Clarke, HM Chief Inspector of Prisons, said that inspectors in 2014 had warned that the prison needed "to be energised, rejuvenated and refocused on delivering better outcomes." The inspection in August 2017 was very disappointing. "It is clear that the complacency we warned about after the last inspection had been allowed to take hold." 38 recommendations from the last inspection had not been achieved.

Inspectors were concerned by evidence about eight self-inflicted deaths of prisoners in their early days in Swansea. They found the prison had not fully acted on recommendations by the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman (PPO), which investigates deaths in prisons. The HMIP report noted: "There had been four self-inflicted deaths since our last inspection, all of which occurred within the first seven days of arrival at Swansea. At our last inspection in 2014, there had also been four self-inflicted deaths; all of those men had similarly taken their own lives during their early days at Swansea. Subsequent recommendations by the PPO had not been fully addressed or monitored." Mr Clarke commented that the PPO recommendations were "significant and highly relevant" and failure to implement them "was inexcusable - particularly as, in the previous six months, there had been 134 incidents of self-harm – three times the rate that was recorded at the last inspection." Inspectors found that the risk assessment of new arrivals was weak and had not significantly improved since the 2014 inspection. Mr Clarke said: "Basic procedures designed to improve safety, such as assessment, care in custody and teamwork (ACCT) documentation, were poor. In the context of the high levels of self-harm, suicide and prisoners presenting with mental health problems, this was inexplicable. Much more needed to be done to analyse and understand what sat behind the suicides and self-harm in the prison."

A third of prisoners said they had problems with feeling depressed or suicidal on arrival at Swansea. 53% said they had problems with drugs and 32% has problems with alcohol on arrival, higher proportions than in comparable prisons. However, "far fewer" prisoners than at similar jails said they had received help with drug or alcohol problems. Inspectors noted: "Mental health provision did not meet the high level of need, although the care that was provided was good." The suicide constant watch cell was "unwelcoming, dirty and unfurnished." In the early 1980s, Swansea had started the Listener scheme – prisoners trained by the Samaritans to support vulnerable fellow prisoners – and this developed into a nationwide service. In Swansea in 2017, enthusiastic and committed Listeners felt underused and undervalued.

Violence had risen in Swansea since 2014 and drugs were a significant problem. Far too little attention was paid to ensuring that the 458 men could obtain the "very basics for everyday living", such as socks, boxer shorts and sheets. Reflecting findings in other jails – captured in HMIP's 2017 Living Conditions report – inspectors noted that Victorian, inner-city HMP Swansea was overcrowded and "prisoners usually had to eat their meals next to their toilets, which did not always have seats or lids."

A further area of significant concern was that 'purposeful activity' was particularly disappointing, having fallen to the lowest possible HMIP assessment of 'poor'. Mr Clarke said: "For a prison of this type to have a regime where half the prisoners are locked up during the working day, with unemployed prisoners locked up for around 22 hours each day, was unacceptable." Inspection of resettlement work showed that half of those released did not have 'sustainable accommodation'. The report also noted that there were no programmes for the many men who had problems with domestic violence. Inspectors made 57 recommendations.

Mr Clarke said: "The current governor had a number of coherent plans for improvement and had made some progress. He was enthusiastic about the future and he has the opportunity to move the prison forward and to once again make it a decent, safe and productive establishment. However, to do so he will need the active support of his leadership team and staff at all levels within the prison and in Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS). Grudging acceptance of change or passive resistance will not suffice." Michael Spurr, Chief Executive of Her Majesty's Prison & Probation Service, said: "The Governor and his team have taken immediate action since the inspection to strengthen safety arrangements in the prison and reduce self-harm. This includes work to improve the level of care and support given to new prisoners in the first night centre. A new senior operational manager has also been recruited to focus on safety and enhanced suicide and self-harm prevention training is being given to staff to increase interventions and support available to vulnerable prisoners. I'm pleased that the Inspector has recognised the progress that has already been made. A robust action plan is in place to address the recommendations in this report."

Hostages: Naweed Ali, Khobaib Hussain, Mohibur Rahman, Tahir Aziz, Roger Khan, Wang Yam, Andrew Malkinson, Michael Ross, Mark Alexander, Anis Sardar, Jamie Green, Dan Payne, Zoran Dresic, Scott Birtwistle, Jon Beere, Chedwyn Evans, Darren Waterhouse, David Norris, Brendan McConville, John Paul Wooton, John Keelan, Mohammed Niaz Khan, Abid Ashiq Hussain, Sharaz Yaqub, David Ferguson, Anthony Parsons, James Cullinene, Stephen Marsh, Graham Coutts, Royston Moore, Duane King, Leon Chapman, Tony Marshall, Anthony Jackson, David Kent, Norman Grant, Ricardo Morrison, Alex Silva,Terry Smith, Hyrone Hart, Glen Cameron,Warren Slaney, Melvyn 'Adie' McLellan, Lyndon Coles, Robert Bradley, John Twomey, Thomas G. Bourke, David E. Ferguson, Lee Mockble, George Coleman, Neil Hurley, Jaslyn Ricardo Smith, James Dowsett, Kevan & Miran Thakrar, Jordan Towers, Patrick Docherty, Brendan Dixon, Paul Bush, Alex Black, Nicholas Rose, Kevin Nunn, Peter Carine, Paul Higginson, Thomas Petch, Vincent and Sean Bradish, John Allen, Jeremy Bamber, Kevin Lane, Michael Brown, Robert Knapp, William Kenealy, Glyn Razzell, Willie Gage, Kate Keaveney, Michael Stone, Michael Attwooll, John Roden, Nick Tucker, Karl Watson, Terry Allen, Richard Southern, Jamil Chowdhary, Jake Mawhinney, Peter Hannigan.