

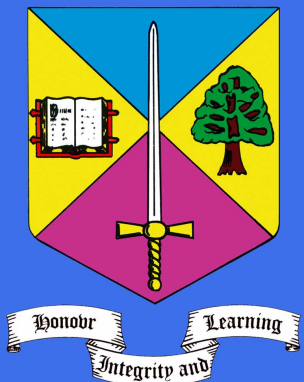


AGM

16 October 2015

London

Make a date in your diary

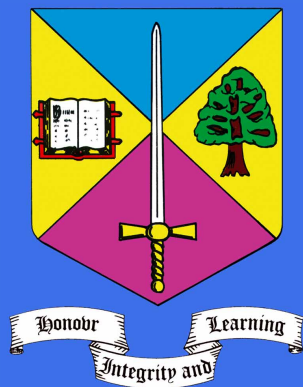


The Professional Investigator

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David Palmer FIPI
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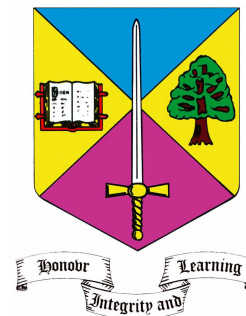
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Contacting the Institute by Telephone

Members should be aware that when contacting the Institute at the Telephone number 0870 3308622 or Fax number 0870 3308612 calls to these numbers cost 2 pence per minute plus whatever your provider charges.

Principal's Address



The Board has had a very busy year and I thank all the members for their unstinting support and hard work. In particular I would like to thank David Palmer FIPI, the Past Principal and now Deputy Principal. Without his

knowledge and energy my job would be so much more difficult. He is also an excellent tutor on our distance learning course and has been highly regarded by the students I have met who have undertaken the IQ examination.

Also I'd like to thank Simon Smith FIPI, the Secretary General, who took over the reins when the previous secretariat retired. He has worked tirelessly to ensure the smooth running of the Institute and dealing with the administration of the courses and linking with IQ regarding the examinations. The course has been shown to be extremely good and all the students who have undertaken it to conclusion have passed the IQ

exam with very high scores. Again this is the result of David Palmer's hard work as the main tutor for the course.

The Board continues to work towards obtaining a good and fair deal with regards to business insurance through the offices of Kerry London, who give a favourable discount to our members. Richard Cumming for his part has negotiated a discount for members who wish to purchase encrypted external drives for their businesses and we thank him for all his efforts during the last year.

The Board will continue to work hard in the best interests of all of our members, and on behalf of the Board I thank you all for your continued loyalty.

***James Harrison-Griffiths FIPI
Principal***

**All the students who have undertaken it to
conclusion have passed the IQ exam with
very high scores**

Exclusive Insurance scheme negotiated for IPI members

On behalf of the Institute, the Principal is pleased to announce the launch of our insurance scheme negotiated exclusively for members of the IPI. This insurance solution has been put together by partnering with Kerry London, a specialist commercial insurance broker.

Kerry London Ltd are one of the largest, successful and most influential independent insurance brokers in England with an extensive range of specialist products and services. With over 25 years of experience providing high quality and professional solutions for Commercial insurances their website can be found at www.kl-insurance.co.uk

By working with the IPI to understand the challenges faced by your business with regards to obtaining insurance, Kerry London are able to provide members of the Institute of Professional Investigators with a policy that includes:

- Professional Indemnity product developed in partnership with us at the Institute of Professional Investigators
- Kerry London wording specifically for Professional Investigators
- Discounted rates for IPI members provided by an 'A' Rated insurer
- Available to quote almost immediately
- Property Owners, Liability and Combined Policies
- Lloyds broker status to access specialist markets for more complex risks

If you have an urgent requirement, please call the friendly and experienced Commercial team at Kerry London on the Freephone helpline on 0800 163 500 or email quotes@kerrylondon.co.uk quoting IPI01, otherwise we will pass your details onto Kerry London and one of their advisors will give you a call in the next few weeks to review your existing insurance arrangements and assess your insurance needs with you.

If you do not wish to be contacted by Kerry London, please let us know and we will ensure that you do not receive a courtesy call.

We hope that you access this benefit provided to you as part of your membership of the Institute of Professional Investigators.

James Harrison-Griffiths FIPI
Principal

Editorial

It's May the 12th as I write this, and the BBC News website still has the results of the General Election at the top of its website as if someone *still* has to be told. Given that anyone who is interested probably had the news last week, the focus on this 'old news' is almost disturbing.

But old news is good news, I hope, because old news includes the *very, very* old news that licensing was promised to us by the still Home Secretary in July 2013. Since that date the only reference to the private investigation sector has been as a direct consequence of the sector asking the SIA for updates – there has been no evidence whatsoever that the SIA, funded by the taxpayer, has made any move towards implementing the will of the 2000 Parliament in our respect, save change the goal posts again and again. The sector, for its part, has continued to support the intention to regulate by developing courses, supporting the establishment of BSI 102000-2013, the promotion of licensing, and so on.

It almost feels as if the turkeys are working harder for Christmas than the farmers.

Only 'we turkeys' want Christmas to come. We're getting old waiting. Some grandees of the

licensing effort have died waiting for the promised professionalisation of our industry, which of course is only cosmetic because many of us are professional, we just feel the need to be licensed so that the media can accept that. Imagine – and it grieves me to realise this – people like Peter Heims, Jim Cole, Mike Welply, Vince Carratu and others all, **all** worked hard from the mid-Seventies until they passed away, and for the last 13-15 years of their lives that promise was just out of fingertip grasp.

Back to business. The Institute will be contacting the Home Office and the Home Affairs Select Committee in short order to respectfully but firmly remind them that promises and recommendations were made during the last months of *both* of the last two governments which have not been fulfilled. The failure to implement the law, the promises and the recommendations raises the question – is someone pulling strings to delay this? Who against licensing has the ear of those with power? For me, it's like the hold that John Barnes or Emile Heskey had over the England Football team selectors, which must have been *really* tight.

It's been 14 years. What the hell is going on?

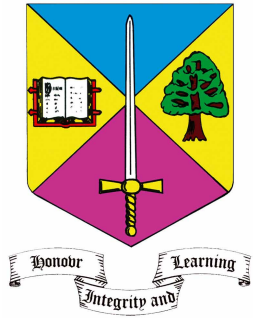
David Palmer FIPI

A Polite Request

Dear members, I have to admit it's been a bit of a struggle to create this edition of the Journal – for example, there's not been a lot happening as we await HMG action with and through the SIA, and the election purdah means there hasn't been a lot happening on the legislation front, either.

I again ask – if you have any leads for further investigation or have a story to tell, a bit of information to pass on, or some instructions or criticisms you wish to express, just send your info to ipitrain@aol.com and we will do our best to utilise what you provide. You get a free ad and some publicity 'just for making contact', as Parky would say. Worth more than a free pen..... (which, incidentally, you can have if you come to the AGM).

Annual General Meeting



The proposed date for this year's AGM is Friday the 16th of October at the Civil Service Club, Great Scotland Yard, London – a short walk from Charing Cross/Trafalgar Square. At the time of writing the guests are to be confirmed, but Neil Smith of OS-INT, an expert and excellent speaker on the subject of Open-Source Intelligence and investigation has agreed to attend and provide valuable input on a surprisingly little known subject.

More news in the next issue and on the website.

As an aside, it has been suggested that the London centric nature of our meetings is off-putting to members from elsewhere. The counter is that this venue is exceptionally good value for the IPI, and our ancillary costs are smaller because most Board members are located a short distance away and as a result their costs are kept low.

Association of British Investigators AGM – Cardiff 2015

The Deputy Principal was honoured to be invited to this event, held at The Angel Hotel in Cardiff on the 25th of April. The event was well attended, as ever, with presentations on a forthcoming International Private Investigation Seminar and from Howard Tucker on his work with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, aka The Hague War Crimes Tribunal.



At this event, IPI member Mr Johnson Okebukola Bsc, MIPI was awarded Life Membership for his continued support to the Association. Johnson is also a 'frequent flyer' at IPI events despite the fact that he has to travel a bit further than many UK-based members.

Training Update

The Institute has now passed the 225 student mark for its Distance Learning Course for Professional Investigators, with a noticeable increase of traffic over recent months. That is also reflected by the increase in the number of those taking the IQ examination, which is also being taken by professional investigators keen to ensure they have an up-to-date Level 3 Award in anticipation of licensing. The Board again refers colleagues to this information and encourages you to take advantage of the offer of very valuable, time-saving one-day training and qualification.

The route to qualification:

The IPI sits in bewilderment as it becomes aware of eminent professionals who elect to pay a lot more for accreditation that they can achieve using our somewhat more economical but equally recognised services. £400 courses are for the untrained: long-serving professionals just need to be up to speed, cover any gaps, and get the exam out of the way.

At the risk of being seen to repeat myself:

“As an IQ Approved Centre, the Institute is able to look at a professional investigator’s experience and qualifications and consider whether such a candidate needs to take the 39 hour course for Level 3 Qualification for a licence. The IPI Centre can **exempt a candidate from ALL or PART of such a course (based on their assessment of the qualifications and experience) – the only absolute requirement is the taking of the assessment element of the**

continued>>

Don’t forget that IPI members can obtain a discount on the course in keeping with the following table:

Situation	Options	Assessments Required	Action available
I am wholly satisfied I know the material	Contact admin@ipi.org.uk with details of your recent qualifications	IPI will assess at a charge of £15 per application	If IPI is satisfied that criteria are met, just take the exam at £50.
I know the material but believe I need a refresher	Contact admin@ipi.org.uk with details of experience and any qualifications Two options are then available 1. Attend a refresher course run by the IPI and take exam the same day. 2. Purchase the IPI Manual at £75.	IPI will still need to assess at a charge of £15 per application, prior to attendance at course.	Once IPI is satisfied criteria are met through experience and other provided learning, take the exam: Refresher course at £150 (£135 for IPI Members) and is INCLUSIVE of exam cost. Manual is available for £75, exam cost is an additional £50.
I am new to the kind of private investigation knowledge requirements of the SIA			Invest in the Distance Learning Course, which is £375 (£300 for IPI Members) and is inclusive of the exam cost and a digital copy of the Manual

In the event that any member is able to arrange multiple attendees at courses, or multiple manual purchases, please contact admin@ipi.org.uk to discuss further discounts.

qualification. Indeed, it did so for the Board members taking the IQ exam in April, all of whom now have the Award.

Don't pay for a course you don't need – even ours! If you have experience covering the subject matter in the exam – just take the exam! The Institute, as a non-profit body, is not interested in charging members and other professionals for education they do not need. It has to charge for holding the exam, and to charge a reasonable admin fee for the exemption/documentation process. We make only a minimal profit providing this service to professionals.

We would argue that no IPI Member should need 39 hours training – and pay for it – because if they DID need it, they wouldn't qualify as Members!!

Contact the IPI at admin@ipi.org.uk if you wish to explore the exemption and take the examination through us. Please note – we can **ONLY** exempt those who **register** through the Institute, and cannot exempt on behalf of other trainers and Centres. (Note: that **doesn't** mean that we cannot recognise other bodies' qualifications – we can, and do.)”

BSI 102000-2013 – Provision of Investigative Services

As readers will be aware, this Standard is the template to be applied to those businesses with over 10 licensed operatives who will have to register their business if licensing ever finally arrives. For those who have already paid out their £800+ for the privilege, we have been made aware that the EU has decided to look at an EU-wide standard that would technically trump the BSI version.

To be more accurate, the EU has decided to look at standardisation of standards (eh?) across the EU in the security industry – and on first sight of the document, the EU does NOT (unlike the UK) include private investigators in its definition of security industry service providers. Therefore their consultation document, under the heading of 'The Horizon 2020 Project' does not strictly cause us concern yet. Nevertheless, those in the know consider that it is inevitable that the EU will come to us eventually, and for the same reasons as given in the above project, namely the standardisation of terminology, licensing, oversight and statistical data provision across the industry.

The Institute has suggested that the EU might not do it to 'us' under the security heading but may, instead, look at it under alternative arrangements, e.g. legal services provision. But the underlying message is that the EU wants a broad sweeping standardisation of working practices, presumably in all sectors, not just ours.

Of course, if the UK elects to remove itself from the EU in 2017, this may prove to be academic.

Meanwhile, the good news appears to be that your BSI certification will likely remain valid. You hope.

You couldn't make this up.

As an aside – we really do hope this isn't used as an excuse to delay licensing further. Given that PIs are NOT included in the current known plans, there is no excuse to be found here.

Irish Investigators are Smiling?

The Private Security Authority in Ireland held an event in May to coincide with the introduction of licensing to the Private Investigator sector. The session gave Private Investigators an opportunity to meet with staff from the PSA, to learn about the licensing process and to receive details on the mandatory requirements for licensing. The afternoon will began with a short presentation on licensing followed by a Q&A session.

If any Irish member would like to write a report on the event, we'd be glad to reproduce it in the pages of The Professional Investigator. Meanwhile, from the PSA's website dated the 28th of May 2015:

"The Minister for Justice and Equality, Frances Fitzgerald, T.D. has today announced that, with effect from 1 November 2015, contractors providing security services as a private investigator will require a license from the Private Security Authority (PSA)."

The extension of licensing to private investigators is a major milestone for the PSA, an independent statutory body under the aegis of the Department of Justice and Equality with responsibility for licensing and regulating the private security industry. The Authority has to date licensed contractors in the cash-in-transit, event security, door supervisor, security guarding, installer of security equipment and alarm and CCTV monitoring sectors.

Announcing the Regulations which were signed recently, Minister Fitzgerald said

"The licensing of Private Investigators follows two years of development work by the Private Security Authority, including consultation with the industry. During that period, a number of successful

it will be an offence for any contractor to offer a service as a Private Investigator without a licence after 1 November 2015.

prosecutions against Private Investigators have been achieved by the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner following investigation into the activities of Private Investigators. Some of the more undesirable activities and practices of the sector have been highlighted by these investigations and the need for regulation is evident. I am confident that the introduction of these Regulations will raise standards in the sector."

The Minister, together with the Chairman of the PSA Board and the Chief Executive of the PSA, recently co-signed the necessary Regulation to introduce licensing of private investigators, i.e. S.I. No.195 of 2015. The Minister also signed the necessary Commencement Order, S.I. No. 194 of 2015, which means that it will be an offence for any contractor to offer a service as a Private Investigator without a licence after 1 November 2015.

In addition, only those licensed by the PSA will be able to advertise or represent themselves

as a Licensed Private Investigator. It will also be an offence for a person to engage or employ an unlicensed Private Investigator. The Authority maintains a register of both contractor and individual licence holders on its website, www.psa.gov.ie. The registers are a useful tool for business and the public who can ensure that their security provider is licensed by checking the details on the register.

(ED: Did you read that? TWO YEARS development work – not 15.)

Guest column - Frank China

To be a 'crook', you have to be clever, you have to be 'street wise', you have to understand people and how and why they react. We live in two worlds, those who have and those who want what you have, and it is often very deceptive as to know who is in which world.

How many times have you suddenly found that you have been given '\$Millions', but some totally unknown person, who needs to use your kind services so that he too can participate in those '\$Millions' with you, you then find that kindly benefactor is writing to you from the United Nations office in, you've guessed it, Lagos, Nigeria! Why is someone, who works for the UK, writing confidentially to you? Don't worry; he is not, he is writing to thousands, probably hundreds of thousands, of people like you. All he wants is a small registration fee and you too can be a '\$ Millionaire', and that registration fee might only be \$100, but that 1% would make him \$100,000 richer ... and if got a 10% response, he would be the '\$Millionaire' and you would be \$100 lighter. Yes, you say, this is an old old 'con' and has died a death, but actually it hasn't. I heard the other day that a 'friend of a friend' had actually paid \$1000 for progressing this 'lucky' windfall, and by the time I heard of it that \$1000 had reached \$50,000. How can people be so gullible? Well they can, and do! To make your gain, you don't need a 1% response, you simply need a 'one person' response.

But now these scams are becoming more and more clever. I was rung up the other day and told that my computer was covered in viruses, how did he know, well, he said that he was an accredited Microsoft engineer and they advise him when individuals have problems – but how does Microsoft even know about my problems, if I have any. When I said that I had a degree in Computer Sciences, the phone went dead, funny that!

These days communication is becoming so 'second nature', that anyone can ring up anyone, or get in touch with anyone, and provide any story they think appropriate to get your financial details, so easily that one tends to have to believe only yourself, and this is where trying to understanding people is, well, a skill you simply cannot learn, not

some would say even bother to learn, since it is getting to the point where it doesn't matter these days, your biggest thief can be the person you pass in the street, the man in the bus stop, sitting next to you in the train, now electronics make being a 'crook' so very much easier, have you noticed we all have credit cards, of course we do, but the Banks are now issuing their cards with a little 'electronic' symbol, you know, you've seen it but probably have never used it, for purchases up to £50

you don't even have to enter your credit card information, just swipe it, which now makes it so very very much easier for the dedicated thief to take all the details from you cards he wants, and without even pick pocketing you. If he has a Radio Frequency Detection Device', not hard to purchase for a few '£'000', he can simply stand beside you and read all your credit cards, numbers, dates and security details. A fascinating world we are living in, aren't we?

Where is the safest place for your valuables? Maybe a credit card wallet shielded in lead will be next!



Legal Updates

An interesting case in terms of stress claims is that of Yapp v FCO (2015). Yapp was a UK High Commissioner in a Central American state who, after a year in post, was suspended amid allegations of serious misconduct in 2008. In the end he was given a written warning and the suspension was lifted, but Yapp went sick and later claimed that the incident left him with a psychiatric illness and heart problems. He never returned to work and retired in 2011 at the age of 60. He claimed these maladies were caused by the way he was treated. The High Court found in his favour but the Court of Appeal decided that 'it would be exceptional' for an 'apparently robust employee' with no history of psychiatric illness (etc.) to develop a depressive illness as a result of even a very serious setback at work."

My take on this is that finally someone has said, "If you're big enough and hard enough to be given a senior well-paid role with responsibilities, you can reasonably be expected to cope, mate."

TRACING

An Investigators Guide To Finding Wanted and Missing Persons

By David C Palmer FIPI F.Inst.L.Ex

Investigations into tracing missing persons are taking place constantly - at professional and amateur levels, within and outside the legal sphere. They are done for a number of reasons, but the methodology is principally the same.

This book is intended to aid those whose work, or interest, lies in finding people. It is a guide to the methods and the legalities surrounding what can be very interesting work, the resolution of a puzzle which is not overly affected in its solving by evidential restrictions. It is also intended to address investigations into those persons who are lost either through time, or through a decision to go missing as a result of excessive pressures, legal, sociological and psychological.

It is not intended to find kidnapped people, or genuine 'missing' persons who have gone missing as a result of mental illness. In its pages, investigators will be provided with advice on how to solve the riddle of a missing or wanted person enquiry: the definitions which apply, and which may direct their enquiries; the techniques of asking questions and developing information from documentary evidence; details of resources that they need to utilise in order to solve their riddles; and much more besides. Such guidance is rare. The majority of books on this subject are published in the United States, with a bias towards their methods and availability of information - methods and information that simply aren't available to British investigators.

[Buy Online >](#)

Writing a Thesis

Here's an article from 2002, which is as relevant today as it was then.

Writing Your Thesis - An Author's Guide

The IPI office has received several enquiries from members seeking information on how to compile a thesis for Fellowship examination. Notwithstanding that the actual rules are contained in the handbook, and that the marking standards are available by request, the main concern appears to be that members just don't know how 'good' their submissions have to be to pass.

I admit to have had the same concerns when I started thinking about my own submission, but in my case I eventually considered that I would submit something and see how the wind blew. (I was too shy to ask!)

People generally ask if they can have a look at someone else's thesis in order to gauge the standard, but the Institute normally declines to do that because of two reasons;

1. Many theses are old, and therefore out of date (such is the nature of law and investigative theory, not the ability of the writers to keep up, I might add!); and

2. The way they are written ranges quite widely. Therefore one investigator's way of writing may not suit the way that an applicant thinks he can write - for example, one submission was done in the form of a detailed, police-type report; another was done in a more narrative fashion; and another in a training-manual format.

The point here is that there is no set format for submitting your thesis. It is up to you.

The next question is; what to research and write about? Again, the subject is up to you. The only requirement is - the subject must

relate to the vocation of investigator, and not merely be an investigation. This work we do is so broad in scope that subject matter should not really be a big problem. Write about what you know!! The subject must also be agreed with the Chair of the Thesis Committee. Send a 100 word synopsis, and you will get a reply, and possibly advice, soon after.

The third hurdle must be - can I write well enough? I would have to say that when I started out I'd read books like those published by Butterworth-Heinemann, and seen the detail and prose, and think I'd never manage that.

I still think that, but I now know the difference between academic theory done in intimate detail, and a more practical approach.

I would suggest that a writer of a thesis compiles it in the manner he would expect a business book to be written.

- Ask a question.
- Think of a practical incident or circumstance where the answer would be required.
- Apply your theory or practice to that incident.
- Explain how your theory or practice works in that circumstance.

Look at the Time Management articles written in earlier volumes, and you should be able to see what I mean. Those articles demonstrate one way of approaching thesis writing (it was my original idea to follow that through, but I changed subject half way to completion); in fact, any article published in The Professional Investigator

could be said to be of the standard required, at least in terms of standard of grammar, punctuation and prose.

If your writing or grammar isn't up to what you think is scratch, use a word processor and proof-reader. There is nothing wrong with that - it is the quality of the argument, and the fact that it is your work, that matters.

Once you have 'your' subject, and you have decided how it should be put together (start at the beginning, and follow through in logical sequence), your only remaining concern is how to present the finished document.

Don't flog yourself or your wallet to death! My submission was done on one side of A4 paper, printed double-spaced in Times New Roman 12-font, put together between two pieces of green cardboard and bound with a comb binder. It looks terrible, now, though I did like it at the time. At the other extreme, don't just staple it at the top corner.

Send three copies of your thesis to the Institute office, and leave the rest to the Thesis Committee (which may be anyone, including outside markers - I've used solicitors, college tutors and IPI Fellows).

How is it marked? Three people mark the thesis, in accordance with the following marking system.

- | | |
|---|-----|
| • Presentation (including typing and standard of grammar) | 20% |
| • Originality | 15% |
| • Depth of Study, and Conclusions | 50% |
| • Interest | 15% |

They then submit their marks individually, without discussing the marks between them.

Added to the marking is a brief report regarding the thesis for the information of the Thesis Committee Chair, who reports the result to the Board of Governors with his recommendation about the Award.

If the thesis fails, advice is given regarding what the candidate can do to make up the shortfall. I've heard it said many times in different educational establishments (and never believed it when I have been examined, I'll admit) but the Institute wants you to pass!! It won't lower it's standards but it does want it's Members to achieve academic standing.

As a former thesis Chair, I have had many promises about thesis applications, but none have been submitted for a long time. The usual excuse - I haven't got time!!

No disrespect but **I don't believe you**. And I suspect that many of you, in your hearts, don't believe that either. All it takes is a plan, and half an hour of writing now and then to put a thesis together. The 'admin' stuff (final typing, binding, posting, etc) can be delegated.

So, Members, take 20 minutes now to think of a subject in which you specialise and are therefore interested; write 10 things about that subject which you can write about. You now have the chapter headings of a thesis. Just write what you know. Then edit it, review it, and tidy it up. It's finished. Send it in.

Still say you haven't time? I am reminded of a theory I heard. If you say 'go to the gym' and no more, you'll go to the gym. If you say 'assemble my kit, go to the car, get out, get changed, exercise, then shower, dress, drive home', you won't go. Think about that. It's not a long job, a thesis.

It's a thesis. Just Do It!!

From the Archives

Hahahahahahahahaha

CLEAN UP 'COWBOY' SECURITY FIRMS, URGE MPs

(By Neil Darbyshire - The Daily telegraph, June 1995)

The private security industry should be strictly regulated to get rid of criminals and "cowboy" operators, an all-party group of MPs said yesterday.

The recommendation by the Home Affairs Select Committee follows police surveys that have identified murderers, rapists, robbers and other serious offenders working as security guards.

Some convicted criminals are even using security companies as a front for protection rackets.

The MPs called for a vetting agency that would license employees and have access to criminal records. Those with convictions for serious offences would be barred and it should become an offence to work in the contract-guard sector of the industry without a licence, the committee said.

The licensing arrangements would not cover other areas of the security business, such as private detectives, alarm installers and locksmiths.

The Home Office is to study the report and ministers are expected to give a response within the next two months.

Sir Ivan Lawrence, chairman of the committee, said: "I believe that in view of the sheer logic and good sense of what we are proposing, the Government will take the sort of action we are recommending." He added that the pressure for reform had been generated from respectable firms within the industry. Sir Ivan said that as the rapidly-expanding private security industry, with an estimated 160,000 employees, encroached ever deeper into areas traditionally covered by the police, such as patrolling estates and town centres, it was vital that the public had confidence in its honesty.

"We are particularly concerned about the evidence that there is a growing problem of totally unregulated private local patrolling operations, often preying on the fears of vulnerable people. This needs to be tackled firmly," the report says. In addition to ousting undesirables, the licensing authority could lay down minimum standards of training and working conditions.

Some security employees are completely untrained, uninsured and being paid as little as £1 an hour, often to guard property worth millions of pounds.

The report recommends that the authority should be independent of the industry itself and completely self-financing. This would mean substantial fees being paid to obtain and maintain licences, which could drive many smaller firms out of business.

The British Security Industry Association said it was "delighted" with the report. David Fletcher, the association's chief executive, said: "Regulation is the only answer to those who are demanding that the manned security industry should be more accountable, particularly where there is an overlap between the public and private sectors."

John Stevens, Chief Constable of Northumbria Police and a spokesman on crime prevention for the Association of Chief Police Officers, said there was a "high degree of criminality" in parts of the security industry.

"We found people had convictions for murder, manslaughter, rape. At present there is self-regulation and no proper vetting system and the industry themselves want this," he said.

And on a lighter note

Times are a changing

As the end of this momentous century draws ever closer, those of us who were born before 1950 may be forgiven if we pause for a moment to consider some of the changes we have witnessed. Consider We were born before Television, before Penicillin, Polio Shots, frozen foods, plastics, contact lenses, video and the Pill. We were born before radar, credit cards, split atoms, laser beams, and ball point pens, before dishwashers, tumble dryers, electric blankets, air conditioners and drip dry clothes, running tap water and flushing toilets and also before man walked on the moon. We got married first and then lived together. We thought "fast food" was what you ate in haste, a "big mac" was an oversized raincoat and crumpet we had for tea, we existed before househusbands, computer dating and when a meaningful relationship meant getting along with aunts, uncles and cousins. Sheltered accommodation was where you waited for a bus. We were here before day centres, group homes, disposable nappies, radio na Gaeltachta, Telefís Eirinn, Radio 3, tape recorders, electric typewriters, artificial heart, word-processors, yoghurt or young men wearing ear-rings. For us time sharing meant togetherness. A chip was a piece of wood or a piece of potato. Hardware meant nuts and bolts, and software was - well not even a word. Before 1945 "made in Japan" meant junk, the term "making out" referred to how you did in your exams. A stud was something that fastened a collar to a shirt and "going all the way" meant staying on the bus from Athlone to Ballinasloe and onto Galway. In our day Cigarettes were fashionable, grass was mown, coke was kept in the coal house, a joint was a piece of meat to eat on Sundays - if you were lucky. And Pot was a cooking utensil. Rock Music was one of Bridie Gallagher's Lullabies. A gay fellow was the life and soul of the party. We who were born before 1950 are a hardy lot when you think of the way the world has changed and the adjustments we had to make. No wonder there is a generation gap. *But we have survived . . .*

Thanks to Derek Nally MIPI for the above

Court in a Reality Bubble

Readers may be familiar with Alistair McGowan's incisive observations on an Eastenders theme, where phrases such as 'Pint of unspecific, please, Peggy' and 'That'll be exact change, please, Beppe', were used. I couldn't resist.....

Scene: An average Magistrates Court Room.....

Clerk: All rise in mock respect.

The occupants of the room half stand, half sit, and completely ignore the entrance of the J.Ps.

Clerk: Call the first guilty party.

Usher: Calling Ivor Longrecord.

A scruffy youth, baseball cap on backwards, mopes up to the dock.

Chairman of the Bench: Thanks for dressing the part. Nice to see you again, but I must pretend I don't know you. Again.

Ivor: That's okay.

Clerk: *(Using Plain English in accordance with socially acceptable practices)* You are charged with 'aving it away with some Tom from a drum, Contrary to Section 9(1)(b), Theft Act 1968. Do you cough or deny it?

Ivor: I didn't do nothing.

Chair: Does a double negative count as a confession?

Clerk: No. I wish they'd teach you all law. Save me answering silly questions.

CPS: The defendant was seen to smash the window of a flat, climb in through the

smashed window, spend several minutes searching the bedrooms, wearing a stocking mask and rubber gloves. The watching police caught him as he climbed out of the same window, and arrested him. In interview, he said he'd been passing on his way home from working in a rub-a-dub washing dishes, when he heard the alarm activate. He entered with a view to apprehending the tea-leaf he expected to see inside, but some jewellery fell in his pocket. He elected to keep it safe, and return it after the council fixed the window. In light of this perfectly reasonable explanation, and the politically correct CPS policy of not believing the police, we seek to drop the charge to going equipped.

Defence: *(In mock anger)* I demand that my client's Human Rights be observed, and he have a trial. At least, I think that's what they mean.

CPS: In that case, I call a PC I've known for years but whose name I can't recall.

(The PC is called)

PC: *(Piously)* I swear by Almighty God that the evidence I shall give shall be the truth, selectively chosen or so demonstrably fair that it couldn't possibly be.

CPS: Tell us, in your own police-speak, what occurred when it did.

PC: *(Reading from notes made on the morning of the court)* I was watching the premises that was burgled, I saw the criminal smash the window, screw the flat, and leg it out of the window. I nicked him, and said 'You do not have to say *(pause to turn page)* anything, so don't, I'll never write it down fast enough. The criminal

replied, "Yes, I burgled this flat contrary to the Act and Section concerned. You did a fine job catching me, but the JP is an old twit."

CPS: Thank you officer. Please remain where you are. The Defence Solicitor wants to call you a liar.

Defence: Officer you're a liar.

PC: No.

Defence: You tell lies.

PC: No.

Defence: You perpetuate falsehoods.

PC: Eh?

Defence: You facilitate mis-directive statements by perpetuating multi-syllabic questions using obfuscation.

CPS: The defence is trying to make the witness say something he can't possibly pronounce, by asking the same question repeatedly.

Chair: Yes, please stop it. We're late for tea.

Defence: The defence rests.

Chair: We will retire.

Clerk: *(after they've gone)* They should have retired years ago. Average age - Methuselah.

(The Chair calls in the Clerk)

Chair: We have some concerns about the case, Mr Legally speaking, did he do it?

Clerk: Yes, but don't tell anyone I said so.

Chair: Thank you. Go back in, we'll leave it twenty minutes for some 'real' consideration time, then give him 6 months.

Clerk: It's traditional to find him guilty first.

(The assembly returns to it's former state, and the verdict is given.)

Probation Officer: *(With violin music tape by Vanessa Mae, one of the slow ones)* This lad is misunderstood, his mother doesn't love him. His father calls him names. The police keep arresting him every time he offends, he just can't start a new life. The prisons are full, community service doesn't work, and he can't pay fines. So sort that one out, ha ha! *(Slams falsely overstuffed Filofax)*

Chair: Then we have little choice. In view of your continued bad behaviour, your reluctance to work, your propensity for alcohol abuse, bad driving ability, terrible dress sense, and any other cliché we can think of, we have no choice but to sentence you to the maximum non-custodial sentence. In keeping with the current police policy whereby minor convictions are irrelevant to recruitment, you will be appointed as a police constable, in charge of school liaison in an inner city.

Ivor: No! Anything but that!

Defence: Human Rights! Cruel and unusual punishment! Minimum wage abuse!!

(Fade Out)

More irrelevancies

NOW WE KNOW!

A SHOT OF WHISKEY

In the old west a .45 cartridge for a six-gun cost 12 cents, so did a shot glass of whisky. If a cowhand was low on cash he would often give the bartender a cartridge in exchange for a drink. This became known as a “shot” of whisky.

THE WHOLE NINE YARDS

American fighter planes in WW2 had machine guns that were fed by a belt of cartridges. The average plane held belts that were 27 feet (9 yards) long. If the pilot used up all his ammo he was said to have given it the whole nine yards.

IRON CLAD CONTRACT

This came about from the ironclad ships of the American Civil War. It meant something so strong it could not be broken.

PASSING THE BUCK / THE BUCK STOPS HERE

Most men in the early west carried a jack knife made by the Buck knife company. When playing poker it was common to place one of these Buck Knives in front of the dealer so that everyone knew who he was. When it was time for a new dealer the deck of cards and the knife were given to the new dealer. If this person didn't want to deal he would “pass the buck” to the next player. If that player accepted then “the buck stopped there”.

SLEEP TIGHT

Early beds were made with a wooden frame. Ropes were tied across the frame in a crisscross pattern. A straw mattress was then put on top of the ropes. Over time the ropes stretched, causing the bed to sag. The owner would then have to tighten the ropes to get a better night's sleep.

OVER A BARREL

In the days before CPR a drowning victim would be placed face down over a barrel and the barrel would be rolled back and forth in an effort to empty the lungs of water. It was rarely effective. If you are over a barrel you are in deep trouble.

BARGE IN

Heavy freight was moved along the Mississippi in large barges pushed by steamboats. These were hard to control and would sometimes swing into piers or other boats. People would say they “barged in”.

CURFEW

The word “curfew” comes from the French phrase “couvre-feu”, which means “cover the fire”. It was used to describe the time of blowing out all lamps and candles. It was later adopted into Middle English as “curfeu”, which later became the modern “curfew”.

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