A year ago I began wondering: what happens in Syrian media when Mick Wallace and Clare Daly speak in support of viewpoints held by the Assad regime? I set up an alert for their names when used in Arabic, Russian

Tr

and Chinese.

Follow me down the rabbit hole:

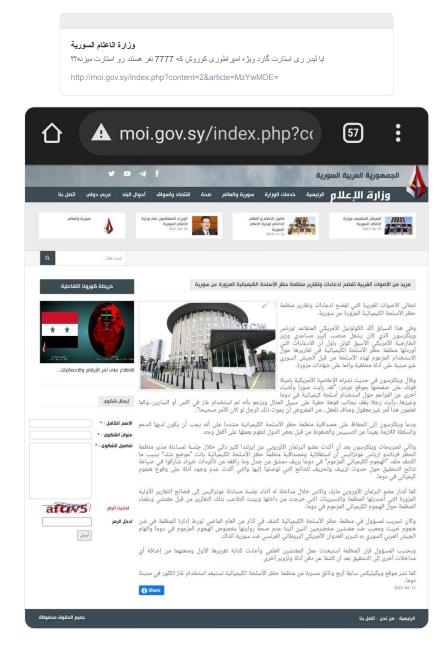


How Clare Daly and Mick Wallace became stars of authoritarian state ... A new Irish Times investigation shows the MEPs' outsized profile in regimecontrolled media

https://www.irishtimes.com/culture/how-clare-daly-and-mick-wallace-became-stars-of-a...

Comments by Daly and Wallace in the European Parliament about a chemical weapons attack on civilians, of which Syrian regime is accused, were publicised in a press release by the Syrian Ministry of Information.

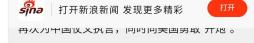
Mick Wallace: ميك و الماس Clare Daly: كلير دالي



In China, Mick Wallace has become so familiar to viewers he has a nickname: Golden Lion King.

It's a reference to 謝遜, a wild haired character from a popular book and TV series who defends the protagonist.

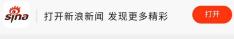
It's because Wallace has "spoken up for China many times" Sina reported



华莱士是欧洲议会中为数不多的敢为中国讲公道 话的议员,他曾多次高度赞扬中国在抗击疫情和 消除贫困等方面取得的巨大成就,有力回击了西 方对中国的抹黑攻击。



因多次为中国仗义执言,再加上长着一头金灿灿 的秀发,颇似影视剧中张无忌的义父,因此网友 们送他一个外号---"金毛狮王"。



上却是想切断欧盟与俄罗斯的能源合作,阻止欧 盟购买俄罗斯物美价廉的天然气,转而舍近求远 购买美国的能源,进一步控制欧洲。



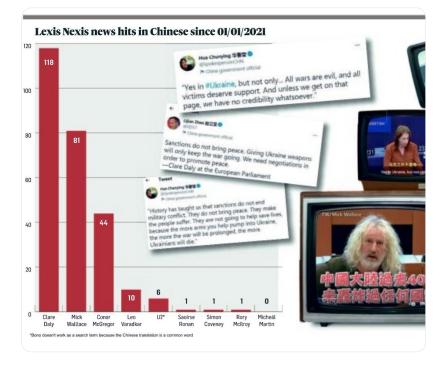
在华莱士看来,美国将盟友当成人质,对他们施 压,逼迫她们在中美、美俄之间选边站,谁要是 不站队谁就要被美国针对。





I measured mentions of Daly and Wallace in Chinese language media on the LexisNexis database, and compared it to news about other prominent Irish figures.

The closest in fame was Conor McGregor, but their news coverage far surpasses even him.



Mick Wallace was more well known in China before, but since the invasion of Ukraine, parliament speeches by Clare Daly criticising sanctions etc have been published at least four times by Chinese foreign ministry officials so perhaps she will get a nickname soon too.



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1:12 64.4K vi

They make the people suffer, not the oligarchs, the people. 534

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Some mentions of Мик Уоллес and Клер Дейли in Sputnik and other Russian outlets led me to their activities in Lithuania.

Here they are in March in Vilnius speaking in support of the guy who is introducing them, who is in court appealing his conviction of spying for Russia



The woman with them is MEP Tatjana Ždanoka, who has just parted ways with the Greens in Parliament because of her views on the invasion of Ukraine.

She represents a hardline ethnic Russian electorate in Latvia and has actually been barred from running for national office there.

(The bar on office is because she was a member of the Communist Party in Latvia in 1991 at a time when the state believes it backed an attempted coup to prevent its independence from the Soviet Union. Ždanoka opposed independence. She unsuccessfully challenged this ban in ECHR.)

Anyway, Daly and Wallace have joined Ždanoka for four public events since September. Three supporting the appeal of the convicted spy, and this, 8 days before the invasion of Ukraine, protesting childrens' deaths in Donbass, a key Russian justification for the invasion.



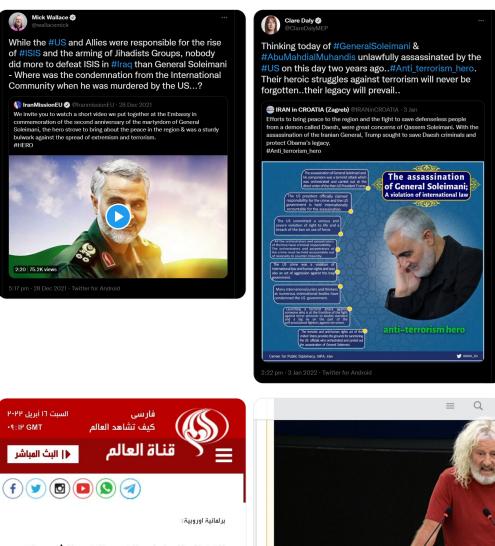
Within a day of Clare Daly making her speech saying the Western response to Ukraine "makes me absolutely sick", the clip was on Russian state-controlled channels, held up as evidence in support of regime viewpoints.

Here she is on Первый канал / Channel One, April 7.



It's not usual for one of their tweets to make headlines abroad.

It happened when Wallace tweeted "Taiwan is part of China", and when the two marked the second anniversary of the death of Qasem Soleimani, who led Iran's clandestine and overseas operations before his assassination





النضال البطولي الذي خاضہ الشهيدان سليماني والمهندس ضد الار هاب لن يُنسى ابدا



What's crucial to the value of Wallace-Daly statements to authoritarian regimes is their title of Members of the European Parliament.

It's presented by regimes to domestic audiences as: look, even these prestigious, important representatives of the European Union agree with us.

Clare Daly was presented as speaking for the European Parliament in this promotional video by Iraq's Popular Mobilisation Forces, praising their "egalitarian nature" and "inclusiveness".

These are defacto state forces in Iraq with huge power over the lives of civilians.



Due to the power and fear the militias wield in Iraqi society, it took Rasha Younes a year of painstaking work to compile evidence of 39 cases in which people who identified themselves as PMF fighters attacked and kidnapped people they perceived as LGBT, to impose 'social order'.

Here is the report Rasha compiled for Human Rights Watch documenting killings, torture, rape and disappearances of LGBT people in Iraq at the hands of militia members including PMF.

Big content warning on this one. I actually burst into tears reading it.



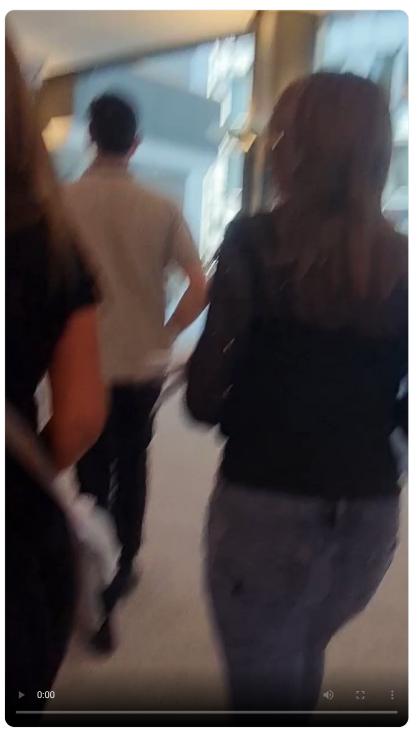
"Everyone Wants Me Dead"

The 86-page report, "Everyone Wants Me Dead': Killings, Abductions, Torture, and Sexual Violence Against LGBT People by Armed Groups in Iraq," documents cases of attempted murder of LGBT people by a...

https://www.hrw.org/report/2022/03/23/everyone-wants-me-dead/killings-abductions-to...

As is now custom, Clare Daly and Mick Wallace do not respond to calls texts or emails for comment so I went to the European Parliament and found them after a vote to put all my questions to them for this piece.

Daly's response asked if she stands over her PMF endorsement is here:



Daly and Wallace have given various interviews to Russia Today, state-controlled China Daly and Global Times, and Wallace even spoke to Belarussian television January, the state propaganda outlet of the brutal dictator Alexander Lukashenko:



After I doorstepped them, I got a call to say Daly and Wallace called security and requested for me to be barred from European Parliament buildings.

Don't want to be a wimp but it was the same day I found out about Dave and I was a bit shaken by it.

Anyway here's my childish meme



On their trip to Lithuania to support Algirdis Paleckis in his appeal against his conviction of spying for Russia, Wallace and Daly appeared on his YouTube show.

The channel considered very fringe in Lithuania, associated with anti-vax conspiracies and amateur pro-Kremlin content

Daly told Paleckis his trial was reminiscent of "the worst of times in Northern Ireland". Paleckis asked them about their 'persecution' for voting against condemning the invasion of Ukraine.

Daly said the war had unleashed "Russiaphobia" and Russian children were being targeted:



Wallace and Daly are suing RTÉ for defamation. In the circumstances I'd be surprised if I get invited on to discuss my piece.

Ireland's libel laws have a chilling effect that's noticeable as someone used to writing for international outlets.

Read it here:



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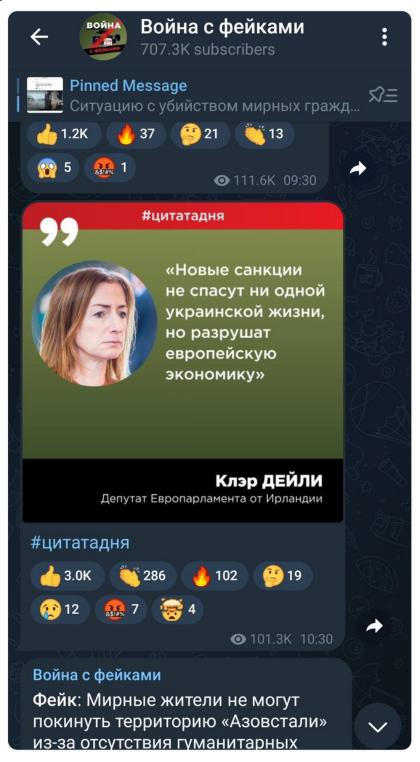
https://www.irishtimes.com/culture/how-clare-daly-and-mick-wallace-became-stars-of-a...

I asked Daly and Wallace whether it was coherent for Daly to campaign against the use of lawsuits to suppress media while making use of the old legal approach themselves. In response to these questions they called security and asked for me to be barred from parliament buildings.



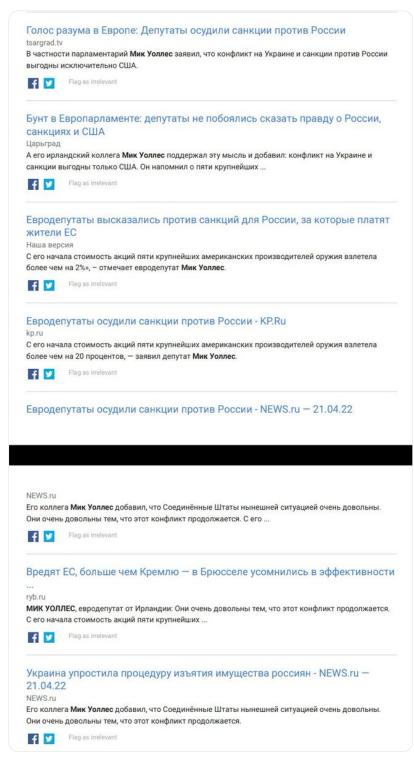
A Russian propaganda Telegram channel this morning. Among the conspiracy theories about atrocities in Bucha, a familiar figure is featured as the 'quote of the day'.

(It says "New sanctions will not save a single Ukrainian life, but will destroy the European economy")

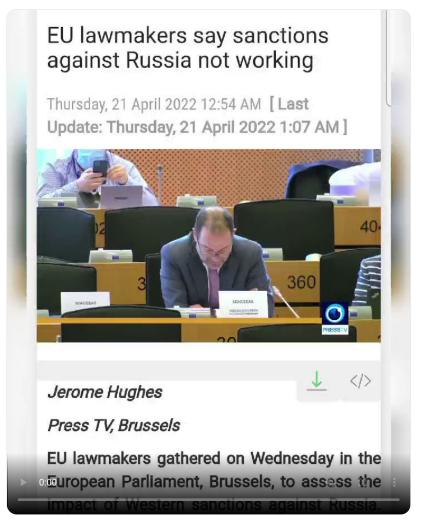


Lots of coverage of new Mick Wallace comments including in Russia's Fox News, Tsargrad. They cite him to say the US is very happy that conflict in Ukraine continues.

"Revolt in the European Parliament, deputies were not afraid to tell the truth about Russia, sanctions and the US"



The Russian outlets picked up these comments from an interview that Mick Wallace gave to Iranian state-owned Press TV, published on Thursday.



Clare Daly has given an exclusive interview to China's state-owned broadcaster CCTV, in which she said Europeans don't have access to objective information and are "brainwashed" in their thinking about Ukraine, according to pickups in various Chinese media http://www.xhby.net/tuijian/202205/t20220504_7529112.shtml



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