

## Cruel and mindless carnage

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On the 7th of July, the fourth anniversary of the London bombings, a dedication ceremony was held in London's Hyde Park, for a monument commemorating the fifty two dead and the hundreds injured in the tragedy.

Relatives of the dead gathered to hear The Prince of Wales, Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, Humanitarian Assistance Minister Tessa Jowell and former newsman Sir Trevor Macdonald, who hosted the ceremony, pay their tributes.

As the skies wept, moving words were spoken at the site of the fifty two stainless steel pillars, grouped in four clusters, representing those who died in the four attacked locations: Tavistock Square, Edgware Road, King's Cross and Aldgate. Those who were killed in Tavistock Square, did not die in underground trains, as did the others, but on the number thirty bus, which runs between east London's Hackney and central London's Marble Arch. Ironically they died just yards from the poignant statue of Mahatma Gandhi, central to a tiny, leafy park, aromatic with floral scents, from vibrant, abundant flower beds and shrubs and a place of pilgrimage for visitors from around the globe.

The Prince of Wales spoke, without irony, of: " ... a brutal intrusion into the lives of thousands of people and the tragedy of those who "...did not walk away from what happened on that awful day." He commented on the "grief and anguish" of his wife and himself: "at the appalling aberrations in the human consciousness which produce such cruel and mindless carnage ... an inhuman and deplorable outrage."

He continued on a personal note, having some "small awareness of the shattering loss you have all suffered (recalling) the intense despair ...when my beloved great uncle Lord Mountbatten, was murdered by terrorists thirty years ago next month - together with my godson, his grandmother, and the boatman's son."

He concluded that the "memories of those taken from us" would lead to a path committed "to eliminating the circumstances that caused the violence in the first place" and those memories "lead to a path for peace..."

It has to be wondered, that if the bombings were as we have been told, the work of 'Muslim extremists' - the government have doggedly refused a public enquiry, though under pressure from the relatives of those lost and injured, seem to be caving in, the transparency and independence of the terms await to be scrutinised - if the Prince is a man of reflection. In ten years Britain has joined the United States in three major bombardments of Muslim lands under dubious (the Balkans and Afghanistan) and nil (Iraq) legitimacy.

The Prince, who talked of peace, holds the ranks of Admiral in the Royal Navy, Air Chief

Marshall in the Royal Air Force, General in the Army and has been Colonel in Chief of the Parachute Regiment since 1977.

The day he spoke, his sister, The Princess Royal, was “cutting the steel for Britain’s newest warship ... the HMS Queen Elizabeth, to be followed by the HMS Prince of Wales, a £five billion project for the Royal Navy. ‘The vessels will be capable of carrying up to forty aircraft ... with a flight deck the size of forty football pitches.’

His youngest son, Prince Harry and eldest, Prince William, heir to the throne, are both in the Blues and Royals, one of the two regiments that form the Household Cavalry. William was especially attracted to the regiment’s ‘outstanding record in recent decades, most notably during the Falklands Conflict, Bosnia, Kosova, in Iraq and Northern Ireland.’ (BBC 21st September 2006.) That’s an ‘outstanding record’ of killing.

Prince Harry co-ordinated ‘overwhelming firepower’ from a bunker in Garmsir, in Afghanistan. Before Britain dutifully joined the ‘coalition’ to blow to bits ‘hearts and minds’, it had been a ‘thriving agricultural town.’

He posed, grinning from ear to ear, whilst: ‘manning a machine gun post’, his hands on lethal thousands-rounds a minute killing-ware. He was pictured on an ‘abandoned’, pretty smart, motorbike. Surely it wasn’t liberated by his mates, the pride and joy and only means of transport and living for some soul. Professor Michael Carmichael of London’s King’s College, described Harry as “not over complicated.” Indeed.

Whisked away when his presence was revealed, he was to go to Iraq, but it was feared he might get hurt, killed, or worse kidnapped and his presence would anyway endanger his ‘boys.’ He is now training to fly a helicopter, with which, reportedly, he seems to be struggling a bit. Unlike him, a fairly complicated machine. He says it would be “fantastic” to return to Afghanistan, this time safely enabling his colleagues to dispatch the population and shoot up funerals and wedding parties from the safety of considerable height.

At the Hyde Park ceremony, Tessa Jowell talked of the memorial as : “ .. a place of great beauty but also a place of great pain.”

Did she reflect on the unspeakable agony her country has inflicted which might have resulted that terrible pain? George Bush announced that the assault on Iraq was a “Crusade.” In June 2006, then Minister for Culture, Media and Sport, Jowell, former social worker and mental health expert, flew not one, but two flags of St. George on her Ministerial car – the Crusaders’ flag – in the run up to the World Cup. She clearly did not reflect that when the British army invaded Basra, they went in flying the same flag of St George. Predictably, arguably justifiably, those of Muslim faith around the country burned that flag.

Sir Trevor Macdonald, a former newsreader, read the names of the dead. Did he reflect how long it would take to read the names of the dead of the slaughters of the Bush-Blair-Brown years?

Three weeks earlier, the Queen’s birthday flypast over Buckingham Palace, marked ‘nearly two decades of RAF operations in Iraq. ‘ Air Chief Marshall Sir Glenn Torpy, Chief of Air Staff, told the London Evening Standard : “This year marks the end of nineteen years of RAF operations over Iraq, this flypast recognises this significant achievement.”

Did he reflect that the ‘operations’ during ten of the thirteen embargo were illegal,

‘patrolling’ and illegally bombing all outlawed by the Geneva Convention, child shepherds and their sheep, towns, villages, ancient archaeological sites, Baghdad repeatedly – and precious humanity? Did he reflect that the invasion itself was illegal? Did he reflect the: “cruel and mindless carnage ... the deplorable outrage”? Not a ‘significant achievement’. One of unutterable shame.

Gordon Brown doesn’t do reflection. As Chancellor of the Exchequer, he wrote the cheques for ten years for bombing sheep and goat minders, little over kindergarten age, for grief, trauma and decimation across Mesopotamia. And he wrote the cheques for the illegal invasion and its near unequalled human cost.

Those public figures in Hyde Park on 7th July should above all, reflect for all time that the actions of the British government brought to their own shores, the pain, on the utterly innocent, going about their daily tasks, that they have wrought across the globe.

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