

War Tales

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In a world where Tony Blair, who should be standing in the dock in the Hague for his part in the illegal invasion of Iraq, is appointed 'peace envoy' and his Chancellor who wrote the cheques for the murderous debacle and should also be shackled and on a plane for the Netherlands, is made Prime Minister (the public not consulted) little should surprise anymore. Meet the Conservative Party candidate for next year's election for Mayor of London : Alexander Boris Pfeff Johnson (known simply as Boris Johnson.)

Johnson, M.P., for the delightful – and wealthy – constituency of Henley on Thames, since June 2001, has been dubbed a philanderer, a buffoon, chaotic and often has all the sartorial elegance of an unmade bed. Polly Toynbee in the Guardian wrote of the ‘..desperate state of the Conservatives, that they will put a clown up to run a global city.’ Yet Boris seems pretty harmless, if distasteful to some. The educational record, however, of the New York born, former Editor of the right wing Spectator magazine, shows him as anything but stupid. (See: <http://www.TheyWorkForYou.com>)

Political Satirist Paul Merton quipped: ‘Vote Boris ... Boris is the best person to lead this country back to the 17th century’. Johnson has been dubbed ‘gaffe prone’, but his ‘gaffes’ and views are at best, deeply unpleasant and at worst, alarming, especially from a man aspiring to become Mayor of a city of seven million souls, comprising hundreds of nationalities. The former shadow Minister for Higher Education (he resigned on announcing his Mayoral bid) described the citizens of Papua and Guinea as indulging in : ‘orgies of cannibalism and Chief killing.’ The High Commissioner in London was suitably outraged.

Commentator David Wearing (<http://www.ukwatch.net>) calls Johnson the ; ‘..political equivalent of arrested development’ and cites one of his columnists at the Spectator, during his tenure as Editor, the repellently opined, aptly named, ‘Taki’. Revealing, writes Wearing : ‘... was Johnson’s approach to Spectator columnist Taki <http://www.guardian.co.uk/leaders/story/0,,1331882,00.html> while Johnson was editor of that magazine from 1999 to 2005. Taki’s racism is of the decidedly non-casual variety. In his Spectator columns New York Puerto Ricans have been described as “a bunch of semi-savages ... fat, squat, ugly, dusky, dirty” and black people referred to as “Sambo”. After Charlene Ellis, 18, and Latisha Shakespeare, 17, were shot dead in Birmingham in 2003, Taki blamed “black thugs, sons of black thugs and grandsons of black thugs,” adding for good measure that “West Indians were allowed to immigrate after the war, multiply like flies and then the great state apparatus took over the care of their multiplications’.

Regarding Ken Bigley’s kidnapping and subsequent killing in Iraq, in 2004, it was alleged he had a hand in an editorial which described the people of Bigley’s home town, Liverpool – whose hearts went out to the Bigley family in a show of characteristic northern warmth – as

wallowing in 'vicarious victim hood'. Former Conservative leader Michael Howard, sent him packing, up to Liverpool to do a series of mea culpa media interviews. They were less than convincing performance. On one radio programme, Bigley's brother, Paul rang in, to tell Johnson he was a : 'self centered, pompous twit – get out of public life.'

However, it is his writing regarding the Iraq invasion in his book: ' Lend Me Your Ears', paperback 2007, remaindered in discerning bookshops and on Amazon (summary of which, gratitude to the current Mayor, Ken Livingstone's column in the Morning Star, 4th August 2007) which displays not alone 'arrested development' , but a distinctly concerning turn of mind. Johnson, who voted for the invasion of Iraq. describes his visit there, in April 2003, as statues fell, the country's heritage was looted, its great institutional buildings burned – along with every record pertaining to its citizens – and as children who have been described by experts as 'the most traumatized child population on earth', shivered and shook as the bombs fell yet again and US and British tanks invaded familiar, friendly neighborhoods and normality died.

Of this carnage, Boris of Baghdad writes breathlessly of his love-in with the U.S., military: ' We pass the ... Strike Eagles, ninety two of them on either side, like a guard of honor ... four billion £'s worth of testosterone, wrapped in steel and titanium'. Further: ' When I first became a journalist fifteen years ago, America had not yet reached the pitch of technological virtuosity, of being able to drop a bomb on any home in any Third World capital, at a time of her choosing'.

'It was mesmerizing', he warbles, in April 2003, to stand in Baghdad and look at the contrast between the Americans and the people they had liberated. The Iraqis were skinny and dark, badly dressed and fed. The Americans rode in their Humvees (a vehicle that is eloquently bigger than out Land Rover ... bigger tires, cooler.') Iraqi's unique dignity versus American (and British) marauders, law breakers and squatters, passed him by.

'The marines had the shades with the click little nick in the corner. They were taller and squarer than the indigenous people, with heavier chins and better dentition. They looked like the master race, from outer space ...' Boris's Ottoman heritage seeps in, as he lauds: 'America's formidable performance ... an astonishing military achievement ...' even though 'Saddam ...turned out to be a paper tiger' (Well, no, he sent 11,800 pages of accounting for the weapons he did not have to the U.N., in December 2002, which were stolen – there is no other word for it – by U.S.,officials at the U.N.)

'If we know the Pentagon, there must be a very good chance that this will be an outstandingly successful and stress-free war, with computerized drones queuing up over Baghdad and Basra to pulverize the relevant silos and barracks', trills testosterone man, delusion reaching a – well – climax: ' You know, whenever George Dubya Bush appears on television, with his buzzard squint and his Ronald Reagan side-nod, I find a cheer rising irresistibly in my throat ... You Bush baby, I found myself saying, squashing my beer can in my hand like some crazed redneck: you tell 'em boy. Just to tell where to tell those pointy head liberals where to get off'. Away from Iraq, by Bush's refusal to sign up to Kyoto: 'He was doing what was right for America and right for the world'. If the planet is on self destruct, courtesy of the human race led by the Humvee nation's greed and gas guzzling, bomb dropping for recourses, we should enjoy it whilst we can, he writes – broadly.

In the nightmare scenario of Boris Johnson becoming London's Mayor, a black joke is doing the rounds – down comes the Union flag on City Hall and Britain will finally, overtly, become

the latest star on the Stars and Stripes, which will proudly fly next to the Swastika.

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