British PM has “Other Things On His Mind!”

In English law there is a strange and very expensive device known as the super-injunction. This goes beyond an ordinary injunction in one important respect: not only can no one discuss the issue the injunction concerns, but no one is even allowed to refer to its existence.

A number of prominent people (journalists, captains of industry) have taken out these super-injunctions. They are used when the obvious question anyone would ask if they knew about the injunction would be: "What have they got to hide?"

Of course there is little point in a super-injunction when the information is already in the public domain. The advent of the internet has ensured that unattributable, but true, information can always leak out, regardless of any injunction. Nevertheless, people who can't actually hide anything still take out these super-injunctions - all they are able to hide is the fact they have done it, not anything anyone might like to write about.

As a result of one such super-injunction, I can't actually confirm that:

1) Boris Johnson is having an affair with a violinist half his age
2) The mother of his latest baby (count them, he can't) has left him because of it
3) This is why he went on holiday to a tent in a remote part of Scotland when the UK was begging for leadership over Brexit and Covid-19
4) This is why Ed Miliband said in his now-viral speech in parliament about the amendments to the Withdrawal Bill that Boris had "other things on his mind."

You can find this information for yourself, but I can't tell you it or direct you to it because I would be in breach of a super-injunction, and face heavy fines and possibly a prison sentence. This is the way the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, one of the highest positions any citizen of anywhere can aspire to, chooses to conduct his business.

Johnson would hardly be the first Prime Minister to have affairs. He isn't married to his now ex-partner, so he was having one within 10 Downing Street, but Lloyd George became notorious for it, and more recently John Major had an affair with another MP, though apparently not when he was pushing his "Back to Basics" campaign of moral values as Prime Minister, which was happily ignored in private by several of his ministers.

So why is this British Prime Minister threatening everybody who might tell the truth about him? Because his new mistress happens to be Russian.

The UK had another scandal involving Russians and affairs which is still famous. Boris is scared because it is the abiding interest of the same constituency of people which keeps it famous - and this, more than anything, will bring him crashing down.

Duvalier lives

Few people would ordinarily be bothered by Johnson's private shenanigans. As in Bill Clinton's case, the public would not expect anything else of him, and it only adds to his appeal to seem to be playing by his own rules.

Yet more saucy revelations would hardly dent Johnson's popularity with the Brexit cult members, who see him as the
Messiah precisely because he throws out the rule book and does whatever he wants, no matter how wrong it is, no matter how outrageous it is. After years of being told to accept without question dictates from above whose benefits were never explained to them in language they understand, people want someone who is the opposite for the sake of it and can get away with it, and like Donald Trump, that is what Johnson provides.

The whole point of the Johnson regime is to act wrongly. His Conservative Party has always been a broad church, whose members stuck together more than most by respecting their differences of opinion.

But prior to the last parliamentary election Boris made all the prospective candidates sign a document saying they would support him on Brexit, one such issue where there was a difference of opinion. This is why a number of long-serving MPs did not stand at that election – they would otherwise have been removed in disgrace for not toeing a line they had never accepted, and never previously been obliged to accept.

It is reasonable to oblige parliamentary candidates to abide by the party’s manifesto, even if they disagree with elements of it and wish to persuade their party to change it next time. But this draconian act was more reminiscent of the sort of nasty Third World dictator British people have been taught to fear than one of their own leaders.

The late Alan Whicker, the famous travel broadcaster, one did a programme from Haiti while Papa Doc was in power. He described a situation where he arrived for an arranged meeting only to discover that none of the president’s staff or guards were prepared to announce his arrival, even though he was expected, in case he had them shot for disturbing him.

In similar fashion, no one in the Conservative Party did anything about Johnson’s behaviour for fear of being kicked out of the party, or worse, by him. Usually they have a rule book, written or otherwise, based on the party's traditions. But he tore that up long ago, although few members joined the party to be the Boris Johnson Cheerleading Club.

Both MPs and ordinary party members are talking openly about getting rid of Johnson. This forces him all the more to do what he does best – play to the gallery.

He knows there are millions of disaffected voters whose lives are not as good as they should be, and have been told they have to agree with the ideas they think have created their mess. His only hope is to empower them to do all the things they have always been told they should not do – hate foreigners, hate the establishment, hate the system, and take overt public actions against these things.

Johnson won’t be happy until all government structures are overthrown by mobs exacting summary justice on anyone who has said or done something they don't agree with. Like Lenin, he knows how to foment this hostility in a way which makes his supporters feel justified in taking power from the streets, without feeling they are going too far.

But any mention of Russians has him running for cover. The very people who think it’s alright to hate foreigners are the ones most concerned about a politician appearing to be in Putin’s pocket.

Whatever the truth of this perception, if people feel they have been led along the garden path they will turn their anger on Boris, not the targets he wants them to. It is knowledge of where it had led them, rather than political disagreement, which eventually turned Germans against Hitler, and made them question his politics. British voters will not tolerate being led to the Russians, and will say so.

All the eggs in one basket

We are almost sixty years removed from the Profumo Affair, subject of the film Scandal. But it is still famous because it combined political sleaze and criminality, and people like to believe that the two things go together.

War Secretary John Profumo, who was married to a well-known actress, had a brief affair with a woman he had met via a successful osteopath who secretly doubled as a pimp. His downfall came not from the affair itself, but the fact that he lied to parliament about it, which led to him retiring from public life and breaking his connections with the high and mighty.

The public was obviously interested in a politician, particularly a Conservative, behaving in a sleazy way when he was expected to be someone they could look up. When the activities of the osteopath were investigated, it was found he had wide connections. Enough society figures were part of his degenerate circles to foster the view that everyone in authority was secretly misbehaving behind the backs of the public, thus making the public feel morally superior.
But the case remains famous not for this alone, but because Profumo's girl was also having an affair with the Soviet Naval Attaché in London, who was also known by the security services to be a spy. This raised official concerns about possible security breaches. But for the public it was a double whammy: first, all politicians are hypocritical libertines, then they are working with the Russians to undermine the country, the one following the other.

After his fall Profumo got a voluntary job cleaning toilets in a help centre for the poor, and did everything he could for the rest of his life to atone for his very short and apparently common mistake. But although this is known, no one likes to hear about it. Being involved in scandals makes a politician morally suspect, and any connection with the enemy, even though Profumo was not spying for the Soviets, is seen as confirming these suspicions.

Boris Johnson isn't misbehaving behind closed doors and presenting a different front to the world. He is openly being a yob, taking advantage of a point in time when enough of the general public want that, and want to see him represent them by continuing to do it.

But the political establishment forgave Profumo, in recognition of his years of repentance, and don't talk about him anymore. The public still know his name, and still associates it solely with scandal, because of the Soviet connection. Boris can only be the champion of that public for as long as he can avoid connections with a foreign power, which is why he is scared of anyone talking about what is already public information.

**Not so different**

The British parliament compiled a report into alleged Russian interference in the Brexit Referendum of 2016, without which the last minute convert to the Brexit cause, Boris Johnson, wouldn't be anywhere near being Prime Minister now. Its main finding was that it was difficult to prove Russian "interference" (whatever that means), but that the government was too scared to investigate it.

The British government has long objected to "Russian interference" in Syria (to which it was invited by its legal government), Ukraine and elsewhere. The idea that this happens, and is a threat, is one of the bases of UK foreign policy.

But whilst Congress investigated similar claims concerning the US Presidential election of that year, the British government refused to investigate something which might have proved its point. Voters know this, and although it isn't at the forefront of their minds, any mention of "Russians" raises a collection of very familiar images which they will eventually be unable to ignore.

One of the fault lines in the Culture War which Boris Johnson claims to be waging against the Establishment is that the public thinks issues are simple, while those who have to deal with them say they are more complex. It is not always easy to prosecute a known criminal, or close your borders, or create jobs for those who need them, but many of the public think it is, and that these things should be done.

At the moment, the political establishment are still presented as the bad guys, the sorts who say one thing and do another. So it is assumed that they are the ones who would commit the cardinal sin, as Britons perceive it, of getting in bed with the Russians, and then explain it away by saying things aren’t that simple.

Boris Johnson deliberately breaks all the rules of political, social and personal conduct to show he is different. But if he is seen to be associated with Russians himself, tries to cover it up via super-injunctions and refuses to investigate allegations about Russians, what then?

The British electorate want to believe that someone who behaves like Boris works for a hostile power. He can lie through his back teeth, abuse everyone around him and destroy both the country and his party, and still he will have admirers for being an anti-politician.

But so was Hitler, and eventually people saw that the consequences of him were worse than those of the old order. This is already beginning to happen with Brexit. No one voted for the world now being inflicted on them by dictates from those in power, just like the old one was. Covid-19, which doesn’t seem to end despite constant new onerous restrictions, only magnifies the problem.

When you wage a war you can't just walk away. Boris will have to go down with all words blazing, babbling even more pathetic lies than ever, but he knows it will be his own supporters, betrayed by their Messiah, who will demand his unconditional surrender for being exactly what they voted against.

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