



Brexit 2.0 - The Return Of 'The Dom'

Politics

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He's back.

To "Take 'Back' Control."

And, in all probability, if things work out as much his new boss Boris Johnson hopes they will, there'll be no more backing off and he'll be around for much of the foreseeable.

Yes. We're talking about that dynamic dynamo of the digital dark arts; that brilliant eccentric and/or mad evil genius political advisor; none other, than Mr Dominic Cummings. The campaign director of 'Vote Leave' in the referendum on whether the UK should remain part of the European Union or once again become: "This precious stone set in the silver sea, which serves it in the office of a wall, or as a moat defensive to a house, against the envy of less happier lands."

No. He's not played by the ever-dashing Benedict Cumberbatch, this time, as he was in Channel Four's 'Brexit: The Uncivil War.' The crux of the matter fully revealed in the film's subtitle: 'Meet The Man Who Altered The History Of Britain'. It's the lad, himself, in the scruffy, windblown flesh, so to speak. Fixed-wheel bicycle, bicycle helmet, bicycle clips, and all. A man that, once set in motion, will brook no deviance from whatever artfully conceived action plan he's devised. And, no, he doesn't suffer fools at all gladly.

Carol Midgley of 'The Times' said 'Brexit: The Uncivil War' was a complete blast: "'Brexit' without the boring bits." The key takeaway from that little tit-bit, if you haven't seen the film, that The Dom is "British politics without the boring bits."

Which, in a nutshell, explains why Britain's new Prime Minister Boris Johnson has just appointed the non-elected outsider, Dominic Cummings, to be his senior political advisor; his de facto chief executive: his hidden-in-plain-sight *éminence grise*.

Suzi Feay in the 'Financial Times' had, earlier, likened The Dom to Machiavelli and bemoaned the fact that "we're all now living in the chaotic reality dreamt up by this diamond-eyed ideologue."

And there you have it: 'real or reimagined', 'Brexit' or no; diamond-eyed Dominic Cummings is, now, very much a force to be reckoned with. As much by civil servants of all grades and politicians of every stripe, as by every man and woman, alive in Britain, that believes they have a duty to cast their vote, come election time.

Which will be more difficult for some more than others. As from all accounts The Dom is neither trusted, nor much liked in the corridors of Whitehall and Westminster. Even with his new government appointment, the lad from Durham will still be seen as being "not a good sort; not at all someone you'd want to have join your club"; an outlier to be suffered until such time as he can be shunned and cast aside; any and all failures then

fully attributed to him. Stalking horse or sacrificial goat, it's one and the same in British politics.

Even, so, it's one of the most important of all Boris Johnson's picks for his new Cabinet. One that might not only help keep The Boris from crashing and burning in his first 100 days, but also keep him firmly on the rails to delivering a successful 'Brexit' and whatever comes after. As despite all his detractors, and they are legion, there's arguably no more accomplished, nor more powerhouse political adviser, in Britain, today, than The People's Data Cyclist, Dominic Cummings.

Did I say data? You, surely, remember the events that happened back on that fateful Thursday, 23 June 2016, that first brought The Dom out of the shadows and into the pale light of day.

Britain voted to leave the EU. But did so by the very slimmest of margins. The final tally: 51.89% for 'Leave', 48.11% for 'Remain'; a margin of just 3.78%. 'Vote Leave's winning campaign strategy: urging people to "Take 'Back' Control." All and everything masterminded by the devilishly devious disruptor-in-chief Dominic Cummings.

The man who coolly and calculatedly; some, say, callously; mined a motherlode of previously unknown voter data. All of it accessed by newly designed data algorithm sets hidden in seemingly innocuous online ads on social media platforms such as Facebook and Google-Search. All and everything designed to draw out and identify deep hidden wells of voter angst. And so successful was he in his audacious black box scheming, he effectively changed British politics forever after.

Would 'Brexit' have happened without him? It's doubtful. The Dom knew what he and his 'under the radar' data analytics team were secretly doing and he and they together did it all very well. And in doing so The Dom and his team managed to unearth deep seams of disgruntled disenfranchised

voters that felt they'd been ignored for far too long, who otherwise might not have even bothered to vote.

Then with an unerring exactitude that both startled and amazed onlookers, even within the 'Vote Leave' camp, he pressed all the right hot buttons, in exactly the right order, to get exactly the results he wanted.

The fact he elected to raise dread spectres to achieve his ends is, now, neither here nor there, they worked. If the right one didn't get you, the left one did.

He discerned that there was deep, widespread concern at the prospect of Turkey being admitted into the EU, as it would then unleash a flood of Muslim immigrants into the UK. And people simply no stomach in the country for that to happen.

He also detected that people absolutely hated the idea of Britain having to pay massive annual membership dues to the EU. So then he devised his *pièce de résistance*: "We send the EU £350 million a week; let's fund our NHS instead. Let's take back control. Vote Leave." Which motivated enough people to stop complaining about the inadequacies of the National Health Service and get off the couch and go cast a vote for 'Vote Leave.' Thereby, radically tipping the balance of the referendum and revealing a stark political divide in Britain that may well take generations to heal.

So it was all too clear Boris Johnson had truly set the cat amongst the parliamentary pigeons when within days of appointing Dominic Cummings as his aide and chief political advisor, a flock of outraged MPs took the Prime Minister to task over his "terrible error of judgment."

Coming, as the appointment did, less than four months after Parliament passed a motion to censure Dominic Cummings for failing to testify at a specially convened inquiry into disinformation and "Fake News!"

The committee, unanimously, finding The Dom in contempt of Parliament, even as it released its interim-report stating; The Dom sighted squarely in the cross-hairs; that the new and invasive misuse of 'data analytics' threatens the very fabric of British democracy.

The disgruntled MPs only option, now, it seems, to try and cut Dominic Cumming's "publicly funded" salary, then deny him full-access into the hallowed halls of Westminster by severely restricting his security pass.

Golly, gosh, what's the model of a very modern major political powerhouse advisor to do?

What's any of us to do? As love him or loathe him, in one way or another, it's a cert that everyone's destiny is now entwined with The Dom and the dark digital arts he's introduced into mainstream politics. And full on US campaign mode 'a la Trump' now a fixture of UK politics.

As for The Dom, you can rest assured he's already preparing for a no-deal Brexit, after which there'll be an early general election to be run and won.

The lessons of The Dom, there, for the learning, it does make you wonder who else is waiting in the wings for their political moment in the sun.

All of which suggests that the all too recent days of deadly boring British politics are now well and truly over.

Bring on the slogan emblazoned buses. Let loose the satirically themed blimps.

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