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Politics

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Laugh at him; belittle him; even do your best to ignore him; but you do so at peril of your wellbeing. As Boris Johnson is the only true begetter of this decade's only proven template for assured political success.

And he knows it, even if you don't want to admit it.

To wit: His secret weapon, his de facto chief-of-staff, Dominic Cummings; known affectionately to one and all as "The Dom." He whose ever more coolly calculated data manipulations and digital machinations now occur in plain sight for all to see in real time; all the better to cause alarm in all the old familiar places; and all exactly to plan.

While, in the meantime, people are distracted, daily, nay, mesmerized by The Boris's artfully crafted bumbling bravado and bombast. But don't believe your eyes. For just as you find is the case with all the very best magicians, who do nothing to conceal their artfully conceived artifice, so it is with The Boris's Eton-honed boyish charm and his storied powers of witty linguistic legerdemain; sharpened, so legend has it, by his time as Oxford Union president and, later, much-lauded contributor to the 'The Spectator'.

All and everything deployed with the steely-eyed, calculated skill of a top-flight barrister, however ruffled he might well appear to be at first glance. Although, it's true, there are niggly naysayers who say The Boris is nothing but self-serving mercenary whose only goal is power. But more fool they.

Love him or loathe him. He's nobody's fool. And no one should have any doubt about the fact that he's the one in control: the one who's paying the piper and calling the tune.

Why else would he have called upon a political advisor so famously known for not suffering fools of any stripe or persuasion? Chutzpa? Chumminess? Charity? No. And ask yourself why, in turn, would The Dom 'Destroyer of Fools' agree to work hand in glove with so seemingly obvious a fool as ever-buffoonish BoJo the Clown? I'll tell you why: because neither man is a fool.

'The Dynamic Duo of Digital Data Prestidigitation' knows all too well they make a laugh-out-loud winning combination. And if nowhere near, say, the level of Morecambe and Wise, The Two Ronnies, Peter and Dud, or Fry and Laurie, certainly very reminiscent of The Chuckle Brothers, Cannon and Ball, and Little and Large. And, yes, I even thought of referencing the delightful comedic duo of Mike and Bernie Winters, but couldn't quite determine who reminded me of who. Funny that.

Case in point. Knowing he's now very securely berthed at the top table, The Dom has insisted that everyone at No. 10 belay their vacation plans for the

immediate future. And this very week has begun a cull of political advisers. Clearing the drecks (pun intended) for action. I mean, who needs dead wood left on deck for potentially policy-sinking, loose lips and tongues to trip over? Certainly not The Dom.

All of which is to signal that it's odd on a general election will be called on November 1, the day after "No-deal 'Brexit!'" hits screens large and small.

The very same election campaign that began the very same day BoJo was anointed leader of the Conservative party and thus, by fiat, the country's Prime Minister and leader of the nation. And if only by two votes to begin with and but one vote, soon after, still enough to pull all the important levers and strings of State and put his decisions into immediate action.

Which is how and why the barrage of proto election promises is already well under way: Hiring 20,000 more police officers (in London). Creating 10,000 new prison places countrywide. Extending police 'Stop and Search' procedures, nationwide. The latest wheeze: More funding for the Crown Prosecution Service and an extra £100 million for prison security to fight "the drugs, weapons, and mobile phones that increase the risk to our officers and hinder rehabilitation." But, then, voters do love a party that's tough on crime. They always have; always will. "Lock 'em up!" "Lock 'em up!" You've got to admit it's got a familiar ring to it. Catchy doesn't even begin to cover it.

And all the pronouncements; let's not call them "all promises made, all promises kept, and paid for," quite yet; will have all polled strongly, in both subject and easy-to-remember attendant number. All to ensure that the balance is just right and that what's being promised has a whiff of being achievable if only left in the "trust me" hands of a PM determined to put the "great" back in Britain. Details to follow ASAP. And it matters not one wit, which of the ideas actually hits home with the electorate, just so long as one or more of them do. It's the all-important emotional connection with The Boris that The Dom and his team are trying to establish here.

And if one thing's for sure, between now and election day, there'll be any number of more such newsworthy promissory notes winging their way to the in-boxes of any media correspondent worth his or her salt or media outlet worthy of the name. As well as bucketfuls of targeted online ads all appearing out of the blue on Facebook pages and Twitter feeds. Anywhere, the armies of The Dom's determinedly diligent digital 'bots' can affect legal entry. And all yet more evidence of the ruling political mantra of the day: "Digital Rules. OK."

All of which is how and why RoBoJo and The Dom will most assuredly win through to victory in the fast looming, surprise, surprise, "Snap!" general election. And even though The Duo haven't shown anywhere near their full hands, yet, you can bet your bottom dollar they've got every combination of possible upcoming issue and response all well covered. Their "War Room" ready to respond to any dissenters and/or disbelievers in a flash of wireless keyboards and a flourish of smart phones on speed-dial.

And no one and nothing can stop it all from happening.

Regardless of all the outraged mutterings from Whitehall Mandarins or the woeful cries for the want of a properly "done deal" 'Brexit' or the pained shouts from all those in the wilderness still hoping against hope for a Second Referendum, everyone knows it. And even though it's patently clear not everyone wants to admit it, yet. The Boris and The Dom have clearly got the Game of Political Thrones all sown up.

"Bernie Winters is coming."

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