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Politics

Tony Broadbent Fri, 12 Jul 2019 10:33 GMT



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Dear Honourable Ambassador Sir Nigel Kim Darroch, KCMG:

And yes, my dear sir, despite your recent resignation from your post as UK Ambassador to the United States of America; and even if by your own volition and not by official request; that is how I shall, with the greatest of respect, continue to think of you and address you, now and forever.

I don't know you personally. We have never met. I was never invited to one of the many successful diplomatic parties you hosted at the British Embassy, in Washington, DC, these past three years or so.

Although, given what I now know of your diplomatic track record, I would have happily flown across the country to attend one of your highly sought

after social and political gatherings and done so at the drop of a proverbial top hat. Even at very short notice. And bought my own air ticket, too.

No cost would have been too great. Especially after now having read your 'Top Secret' communiqué concerning the banal realities of President Trump and his so-called Administration that you sent to the Foreign Office, in London, via sealed 'Diplomatic Pouch'. You know, the supposedly 'For Your Eyes Only' missive leaked by some nefarious Civil Service troll with his or her own highly questionable political agenda, that was published on 7 July in the 'Mail on Sunday'; that bastion of middle-brow populism.

You will, of course, remember that you described the Trump Administration as being "dysfunctional" and "diplomatically clumsy and inept". You added that official policy on sensitive issues such as Iran was "incoherent and chaotic." What was more disconcerting; startling, even; was that you also said that you didn't expect anything would ever change.

In yet another memo you even described reports of "vicious infighting and chaos" inside the White House as being "mostly true".

Mostly? Your use of understatement showed an astute diplomatic touch. The awful truth, hidden in plain sight and between the lines; Whitehall Mandarins must have been duly impressed with your work.

But then you were, until comparatively recently, Britain's permanent representative to the European Union, as well as the National Security Adviser under David Cameron, before you came over to Washington. All of which is to say, that in certain circles and wheels within wheels you've long been earmarked as an unabashed and quite unashamed "Europhile".

Is it possible, do you think, that 'The Leaker' hoped to ensure that a far more suitably "Brexit"-minded personage could instead fill your post? After all, Washington is a key diplomatic posting is it not? "The Special Relationship" and all that? Especially, when it's widely expected that Boris Johnson will be made Prime Minister by the end of the month. And it's a racing cert he'd want to get his own "Special Relationship" with his golden idol, Donald Trump, off to a "no flies in the ointment" flying start.

Yet, my dear sir, your propensity to shine light into dark places and the singular clarity of your observations can do nothing now, but promote the thought; nay, the earnest plea; that you don't even think of resigning entirely from public service, but that you very seriously consider taking up a career at the other end of Whitehall, as a Member of Parliament. For the plain truth is you are more sorely needed now than ever.

And given the current sorry state of affairs it wouldn't really matter which party or constituency seat you sought to represent. It would, I assure you, be of little or no consequence. You would tower over the mediocrities at present thus assembled. And I have a very strong inkling you'd find you had huge and overwhelming support from both sides of "the Woolsack", as well as from large swathes of British voters of all callings.

Because by your works are you already known.

You, showing preternatural grace under pressure, in the eye of the storm, as the subject of Donald Trump's even more than unusually mean "Tweet Tirade" for three consecutive days and no resurrection anywhere in sight.

Culminating with his ad hominem attack and boycott of you: "The ambassador has not served the UK well, I can tell you that. We're not big fans of that man. And we will no longer deal with him." He even described you as a "wacky" and a "pompous fool". Terribly hurtful, I'm sure, coming from such a one as he.

Trump even then roundly castigating the UK's still serving Prime Minister Theresa May, not only for being "so stupid" as to support you, but for also having created such "a mess" in her handling of "Brexit". Tweet what he will, at least Mrs May backed you to the hilt and whatever else anyone may have to say about her accomplishments or lack of them, that spoke hugely for her.

"Dysfunctional, clumsy, inept, vicious, incoherent, and chaotic," still sums up Trump perfectly, wouldn't you say? Your "signal" still abundantly clear, even amidst all the massively interfering "noise" of Trump's bottomless echo chamber.

I know from personal experience just how devilishly difficult it is to write short, sharp ad headlines and punchy copy; incisive reports; clearly worded instructions, as opposed, say, to long-winded, purposefully opaque and/or excessively oblique “C-Y-A” missives and memoranda.

As the sainted American humourist and political commentator Samuel Clemens, the immortal “Mark Twain” once wrote: “I didn't have time to write a short letter, so I wrote a long one instead.”

And that from the man who also said:

“The nation is divided, half patriots and half traitors, and no man can tell which from which.”

“It’s easier to fool people than to convince them they have been fooled.”

And: “If voting made any difference they wouldn’t let us do it.”

Sober political truths, indeed, but your perspicacity and clarity of mind do you great credit sir. And I’d willingly canvas for you; help support your cause; and vote for you. And, I suspect, so would countless others.

And all that even before ‘The Boris’ showed his true colours during the nationally televised debate on the Tory leadership contest. The wretched man revealing, to one and all, the oily mendacity behind his political showmanship; all and everything artfully contrived since his salad days at Oxford; as he all but threw you under the bright red “Brexit Means Brexit” bus. A betrayal of a stellar career diplomat, the stain of which no spittle-laden dissembling or wisecracking on Boris Johnson’s part will ever quite be able to wash away.

One can only hope that anyone sorely tired of “Brexit” can now clearly see that ‘The Boris’ has only ever had eyes on his own prize and the devil and the country take the hindmost.

I’m not sure that even Jacob Rees-Mogg and his hard-line ‘Brexit’ European Research Group (as a prime example of ambiguous ‘Newspeak’ as has ever

been cooked up) quite know what they've wrought. They should read Mary Shelley, the very first chance they get, with or without a glass of vintage claret or ridiculously rare classic motorcar close to hand.

But please, Mr Ambassador, don't let the venalities; as evidenced by 'The Leaker', 'The Donald', and 'The Boris'; in any way deter you from future endeavour. You are made of far better stuff; sterner stuff; the stuff of the mighty fabled lions of old that have ever graced the heraldic shields of Britain's more honourable families. And the fact that you have chosen to fall upon your sword, rather than prolong the agony of lack of support by the very powers that you would speak truth to, does you signal honour.

And, in the end, may all the many vicissitudes that have now befallen you, for carrying out each and every one of your official duties so superbly well, become as nothing. For in the annals of British diplomacy yours will be a name that will endure on the lips of all good men and women of unimpeachable conduct and principal.

And I for one, salute you, sir. And thank you for your service.

With the utmost admiration and respect. I remain yours truly.

Signature on file.

PS: "Once more unto the ballot box! Once more!"

PPS: I'm told it's traditional that a retiring ambassador of your rank gets offered a seat in the House of Lords. Hopefully, no future Prime Minister would dare deny that to you now. In which case I very much look forward to hearing you speak.

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