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Power Play and Politics

It could be said that we are all politicians to some degree, as we negotiate our ways through life, but it is those who take it on board as their profession that can sometimes be the most intriguing. For better or for worse they have set themselves up as ducks in the fairground, dodging rubber bullets.

Power Play

*It was intriguing to view
How people fawned on this man
Of obvious power:
This politician.
(I did the same I guess)
A disparate bunch,
Trying to extrude a common thread.*

*From our view
He was there to impress.
Eyes, voice and motions
All aimed in one direction:*

*From his view
(of which to surmise)
“My position has no bounds.
I am like a king amongst disciples,
(though this is a pretty rag-tag bunch!)
They are from whence I came.
I should hold true to that,
If my politics will allow
Such indulgence”*

Cheltenham, 2005

Towards the power in that room.

Power Play (above) recounts a small meeting between a local group (of whom I was a member) and our new representative to the UK parliament. The group was definitely *left-of-centre* and our guest had risen from similar ranks. It was a fascinating exchange. He came with formal jacket and tie, plus very fashionable, shiny brown shoes, while my bedraggled lot could only aspire to such grandeur (and in truth, despised it). Yet for him, it was now part of his armoury, which enabled and protected him. The question in my mind asked: “How real is the commitment, now he has ascended to the dizzy heights of Westminster?”

Ode to Tone (below). At the time of writing I was sick and tired of Tony Blair, or *Teflon Tone*, as he came to be known (“No shit sticks to this man!"). For me, his false smile was hollow cover for bloodbath which he was responsible for. I felt his unbridled support for George W. Bush and total support for the invasion of Iraq, and the subsequent war, negated much of the good works he and his government accomplished, during their time in office.

Spoken in two voices – a rather languid serious verse alternating with a more rollicking, vicious chorus – the poem tells the story of Blair and David Cameron (his eventual successor) as if it were a stage play ... albeit a Shakespearian tragedy!

Prime Minister Blair turned out to be a wolf in sheep’s clothing. To my mind, he, more than anyone else, was responsible for launching an illegal war, based on flimsy evidence of Saddam’s weaponry and an engineered vote in the House of Commons. Without Blair’s backing I believed Bush would not have had the strength and determination to go to war. Other alternatives could have been sought to control Saddam Hussein and his despotic regime, within the United Nations charter. In the end, tens of thousands died and many more were injured because of Blair’s singlemindedness. One could speculate that if Gordon Brown had been the leader, the Iraq war might not have happened (and what a difference that would have made to history).

In contrast, David Cameron - at the time of writing, the Tory leader and new pretender to the throne - came across as fresh and innocent (and presumably not responsible for killing anyone). It was to be hoped that he would take a more responsible attitude and respect the British heritage of involvement in conflicts (or abstinence) based on merit.

My fury directed at Blair, mirrored the thinking of millions of others at the time. Yet the Teflon man stuck to his guns, backing George Bush, the son, to follow his father’s footsteps into the Middle East, against the wishes of the United Nations, this second time round with much more disastrous consequences.

FOOTNOTE: With hindsight I can see that my usual antagonism towards policies emanating from elite factions on the right was clouded by this one issue of Iraq. David Cameron turned out to be a weak leader, also a wolf in sheep’s clothing, who ended up plunging a hapless Britain into Brexit. Nevertheless, whenever that toothy grin of *Mr Non-Stick* appears on TV, I know that my thinking was right, to reject his evil deeds, committed on behalf of myself and the other 60 million Britons.

Ode to Tone

*This plastic man called Blair,
Looking old in his gold rimmed specs,
Now faces a younger foe
Across the Commons floor.*

***It's been 'Tony this' and 'Tony that'
For what seems like eternity.
Shored up by his New Proletariat:
The essence of slick modernity.***

*This non-stick man called Blair,
Slithering over each bump in his path
With a slick and bloated ego:
Enough to take us to war!*

***But now David's here and David's young.
Can he turn the tables on the Teflon man?
And make mud stick to the side of his pan,
So he buries his nose in Gordon's can.***

*This obnoxious man called Blair
Is fuelled by the stink of power:
Cross-lantic currents, to and fro,
And prayers behind George's door.*

***So Punch and Judy and kick him down,
Rip off his tight trousers and knock off his crown,
He deserves to be kicked to the edge of town.
Push him over the cliff and watch the man drown.***

*This war-mongering man called Blair
Has death on his own bloody hands:
Innocent lives that just had to go
To please their English Tzar.*

***So bring on David and crown him king;
There's no way that he could be worse than him.
For as far as I know, there's no blood on his skin
While our Tone has ten thousand on his!***