

Britain's Uncertain Future: The Downing Street Plan of Chaos

Dominic Cummings' Vote Leave

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Global Research, August 19, 2019

[TruePublica](#) 17 August 2019

Region: [Europe](#)

Theme: [Intelligence](#)

The man behind shaping Boris Johnson's premiership, the architect of Vote Leave, Brexit and the U.K.'s future in the world also wants radical change in the way Britain is run and to rebuild world politics. This vision includes seeing the destruction of the European Union, the biggest trading bloc in the world and the United Nations - designed to uphold world peace as a political opportunity. Dominic Cummings is lauded as the genius who is upsetting the establishment, but the truth is, he's a dangerous techno-theorist whose deluded mistakes will take much more than a generation to fix.

You are sure to have read about Dominic Cummings by now, the man behind Vote Leave and now the prime minister's new senior adviser. But there is an awful lot you don't know about him. What follows here will quite honestly sound like the musings of someone from the tinfoil hat brigade - I assure you, these are the true reflections of a man who gambled on Brexit being the Trojan Horse of what is to come next and who's vision of the world is more akin to a Star Trek novel than the reality of the world we live in.

DC, as we'll call him from now, is captivated with decision-making, technology, high-performance teams and government. Obsessed would be a better word. He talks a lot privately of "dynamic tools to help understand complex systems." Cummings understands what he has done as the [architect of the Leave campaign](#) - itself embroiled in legal battles with the electoral commission and the police. He says that he is helping to manage the new chaos, that he himself caused - with a new architecture to completely redesign how Britain is governed. "It is relevant to Brexit and anybody thinking 'how on earth do we escape this nightmare'" he says. And a nightmare it truly is for Britain.

A hint of what he has in mind in this architecture comes from one of his blog posts.

"One of the most fundamental and striking aspects of government is that practically nobody involved in it has the faintest interest in or knowledge of how to create high-performance teams to make decisions amid uncertainty and complexity. This blindness is connected to another fundamental fact: critical institutions (including the senior civil service and the parties) are programmed to fight to stay dysfunctional, they fight to stay closed and avoid learning about high performance, they fight to exclude the most able people."

DC then goes on to make an admission, that Vote Leave and their fellow travellers - went about the process of undermining the government, take advantage of its weaknesses from within and steal the EU referendum result from under their feet.

“The Westminster and Whitehall response was along the lines of ‘natural party of government’, ‘Rolls Royce civil service’ blah blah. But the fact that Cameron, Heywood (the most powerful civil servant) et al did not understand many basic features of how the world works is why I and a few others gambled on the referendum — we knew that the systemic dysfunction of our institutions and the influence of grotesque incompetents provided an opportunity for extreme leverage.”

A demonstration of DC’s arrogance and disdain for the rules-based system of domestic and global governance is no better explained than in his belief that he can “improve government around the world.”

Creating chaos

DC also explains that the plan all along was to create chaos, to collapse the government, dismantle the civil service and reshape the establishment with his new architecture of control. He asks -

“What comes after the coming collapse and reshaping of the British parties, and how to improve drastically the performance of critical institutions?”

So confident is he that no-one will read his online musings (and says even if they did, they wouldn’t understand any of it anyway), he writes-

“Not one in a thousand will read a 10,000 word blog on the intersection of management and technology and the few who do will dismiss it as the babbling of a deluded fool, they won’t learn any more than they learned from the referendum or from Vote Leave.”

There is a false belief by DC and his team that the EU referendum result was fair. It wasn’t plain and simple and he tries in vain to defend the indefensible. Vote Leave broke the law but this is not important to the overall project.

He openly talks of the vast scope for applying ideas and tools from the physical sciences and data science/AI - that was largely ignored by mainstream social science, political parties, government bureaucracies and media - to social/political/government problems as he puts it. So they fixed it - “*as Vote Leave showed in the referendum.*”

DC was able to take an institution like government, knowing No10 was a long way behind new technologies available - and then blindsided the entire establishment. With these new tools DC also understood that these technologies are already beyond the ability of traditional government and centralised bureaucracies to cope with.

In terms of manipulating the public DC actually takes a completely different view to all political commentators in the mainstream media.

“The better educated think that psychological manipulation is something that happens to ‘the uneducated masses’ but they are deluded — in many ways people like Financial Times pundits are much easier to manipulate, their education actually makes them more susceptible to manipulation, and historically they are the ones who fall for things like Russian fake news.”

DC confirms that although it is obviously bad that the media disinforms the public, the only rational planning assumption is that this problem will continue and even get worse. He gets to the conclusion that the media will do even worse with new technologies and data science and will provide large opportunities for both good and evil.

Part of the government deconstruction project would be to turn No10 into some sort of NASA control centre – where relevant data and information models preserve a common picture of what is important in the news cycle or live-wire management of particular projects.

“Here is the Cabinet room. I have been in this room. There are effectively no tools. In the 19th Century at least Lord Salisbury used the fireplace as a tool. He would walk around the table, gather sensitive papers, and burn them at the end of meetings. The fire is now blocked. The only other tool, the clock, did not work when I was last there. Over a century, the physical space in which politicians make decisions affecting potentially billions of lives has deteriorated. The British Cabinet room practically as it was July 1914.”

DC is also toying with the idea of bringing in Cabinet ministers from outside parliament although how this would work is not clear. He’s also suggested setting up government agencies in a similar shape to that of DARPA, the U.S. Department of Defense’s tech development arm and revolutionising the Cabinet room and emergency COBRA committee room to look and deliver more information in real-time – like NASA’s control centre. It’s all very ... American – a country that is itself hardly a model of perfection.

However, there is an interesting insight into the heart of government, which is quite useful. In talking about COBRA, you know that all-important meeting used by politicians to save Britain from all sorts of evils and points of crisis – DC also has a few words. He says that the aims of the meetings are unclear, assumptions are not made explicit, there is no use of advanced tools, there is no use of quantitative models, discussions are often dominated by lawyers so many actions are deemed ‘unlawful’ without proper scrutiny, and that there is constant confusion between policy, politics and PR. “Then the political cast disperses without clarity about what was discussed and agreed.” This is how the government is and it all needs changing. In this DC may well be right.

And whilst this might sound like a plan to revolutionise how government works, DC is looking at the bigger picture. He says the government could create systems for those making decisions about billions of lives around the world and trillions of dollars. He only refers to two seats of power though – that of Downing Street and The White House.

A final few thoughts on the one blog post that this article is based upon really is quite revealing though. Whilst firmly denying any wrong-doing at all in the 2016 referendum and blaming it all on fake news and conspiracy theorists – by harnessing some of these new technologies – DC does in fact confirm what really happened.

“Vote Leave hacked the referendum but such opportunities are much rarer than VC-funded ‘unicorns’ (\$billion tech start-ups). On the other hand, arguably what is happening now is a once in 50 or 100-year crisis and such crises also are the waves that can be ridden to change things normally unchangeable. A second referendum in 2020 is quite possible (or two referendums under PM Corbyn, propped up by the SNP?) and might be the ideal launchpad for a completely new sort of entity, not least because if it happens the Conservative Party may well not exist in any meaningful sense (whether there is or isn’t

another referendum).“

The context with which DC's blog is understood is important but so are the hints of his vision for Britain. It is a vision of government stripped back and rebuilt using state of the art technologies and systems. He forecasts that th

“EU will not be central to a second referendum — and if you (the politicians) think 2016 was bad, you will find the next one somewhere between intolerable and career-ending.”

Interestingly, DC does not see himself as a Brexit ideologue given he was the designer and planner of the campaign that led the UK into the Brexit quagmire. In a [May 2018 post](#), he said it is “*unknowable to anybody*” whether the U.K. could “*make the most*” of Brexit over a “*10/20/30 year timescale*.” In other words – the Brexit result in economic terms was actually known to him. He understood the damage that was possible – but it was a gamble worth taking. The economic harm in the short and medium-term to ordinary citizens is of no concern to him.

DC describes himself as “*not a Tory, libertarian, ‘populist’ or anything else*” and in a January 2017 essay outlined his reasoning for joining the Brexit campaign.

“I thought very strongly that 1) a return to 1930s protectionism would be disastrous, 2) the fastest route to this is continuing with no democratic control over immigration or human rights policies for terrorists and other serious criminals, therefore 3) the best practical policy is to reduce (for a while) unskilled immigration and increase high skills immigration ... 4) this requires getting out of the EU, 5) hopefully it will prod the rest of Europe to limit immigration and therefore limit the extremist forces that otherwise will try to rip down free trade.”

The plan after leaving the EU at the end of October – as if somehow that was going to be easy, suggests that his next target will be the Whitehall machine, nice and ripe for the dismantling. His suggestion is having parts of Whitehall “amputated” as one necessary measure, including “firing thousands of unnecessary people.” DC has not thought of the possible constitutional crisis Brexit poses to Gt Britain and no mention is made that the union will likely fall.

But DC's work is not finished just with the radical changes he envisions for the civil service and Britain's political establishment. No – his vision is to take full advantage of – “*displacing the EU and the United Nations, that will emerge from the chaos as the world makes painful transitions in coming decades.*” Not satisfied with igniting the destruction of the EU project without much care for ordinary people caught up in the inevitable hostile environment it creates – as populists tear down the institutions that upheld civil society – he wants the UN wrecked and ruined – without a thought for the millions of vulnerable lives in its dutiful care.

The type of chaos Cummings talks of is about game theory not about people living in villages, towns and communities. It's not how the state can deliver the best services with given resources. It's about tearing everything down and rebuilding it all in some sort of political star-trek future world – with him at the helm, as if somehow previous human failings will simply vaporise, no-one will make mistakes or try to game it in expenses, corruption or other scandals that bedevils the taxpayer.

Cummings fails to answer for so many of the problems he has personally contributed to. Britain has been severely weakened both economically and politically as a direct result of his Brexit and along with it, democracy has been trashed to the level of worthlessness (Johnson even uses democracy as his 31st October deadline mantra). Britain's negotiating position has been drained away to the point of being an international begging bowl where trade deals only work out best for the big players in the EU, America, China and the economic pacts of South America, Africa and Asia. Brexit has divided society in so many awful ways to. For instance, it has led to the rise of a far-right ideology so violent they are now deemed as terrorists and considered a tangible threat to national security. In the space of three years, his vision of Britain has substantially reduced the nation to a laughing stock with no real clout on the world stage. The police and army stand ready to help the country cope - no mention of this either.

What does Cummings propose to do about all that damage? A few algorithms, a few high tech TV screens and a bit of artificial intelligence - don't make me laugh.

Cummings is a deluded techno-theorist who thinks he's Captain Kirk in charge of the Starship Britannia. Currently, the warp drive motors have just broken down, he's forgotten Scotty and any spare parts. Britannia is now floating in space with no operational navigation system and light-years from safety with Klingon Trump and Borg Bolton [waiting to pick us off](#).

Cummings has not concerned himself with unpredictable events such as rapidly changing geopolitical alliances, the implications of trade wars or the inevitable political pressures they bring. A good example is that under a Johnson post-Brexit government, Britain will be forced to accept trade deal terms it would not normally accept, nor would its electorate. This will further degrade both standards of living and social cohesion. By signing a trade deal with the USA standards will fall sufficiently that other trade deals with other countries with equally low standards will follow - the trajectory for everything then becomes regressive.

In the meantime, America's constant threatening the UK over preferred diplomats, over China, Iran and Huawei for their version of a trade deal is only more evidence of Britain's continued fall of power.

And all of DC's musing would be fine if Brexit was what the nation really wanted and had happened as promised, trade deals in Britain's best interest were easy like they said and that America was a true friend like it pretends. But none of that is true.

Dominic Cummings actually wrote this publicly on his blog and this should be a warning to everyone to his state of mind.

"Then there are ideas to help solve more general coordination problems such as the risk of accidental nuclear war. The most obvious example of a project like this I can think of is a manned international lunar base which would be useful for a) basic science, b) the practical purposes of building urgently needed near-Earth infrastructure for space industrialisation, and c) to force the creation of new practical international institutions for cooperation between Great Powers."

Britain can barely afford to fill potholes after each winter let alone build a space station on the moon to govern a fictional new world order. Downing Street is 100% deluded if they

think Brexit will be over on 31st October – it won't be. It will haunt whatever government comes to power and will distract the well-intentioned from making the country a better place than it currently is precisely because of it. The sunny uplands they keep promising is further away than ever.

Yes, the man advising Britain's Prime Minister is both clever and as delusional as they come. He's extremely dangerous and in No10 Downing Street.

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