

“Peace Envoy” / Former War Criminal Tony Blair : Glossing Over Remembrance Day

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*“You fasten all the triggers for the others to fire,
Then you sit back and watch when the death count gets higher,
You hide in your mansion’s as young people’s blood flows,
Out of their bodies and in to the mud.” Bob Dylan.*

Today, is Remembrance Day, on both sides of the Atlantic. At the eleventh minute, of the eleventh hour on the eleventh day of the eleventh month, the guns of the First World War fell silent, leaving the estimated nine million who had died in battle, to the graves’ muteness across continents, and to France’s poppy fields. It remains the day when the deaths of subsequent tragedies and imperial follies are remembered. A day when even the cynical pause to read heartfelt notes on poppy wreaths, laid at the base of memorials, flowers refreshed on graves, stories of the lost, passed down and revisited, as more recent shared laughter, now also silenced.

Given the still mounting death toll of the people of Iraq and Afghanistan and America, British and “coalition” youth, lives condemned by former President Bush and former Prime Minister Blair, on spurious claims at best and outright untruths at worst, it might be expected they would be spending some time on their knees in a place of sanctity and offering condolences to the bereaved.

Mr Bush’s plans are unknown, but Mr Blair’s are tastelessly bizarre. The man with streets and children named after him in Kosova, recipient of the Congressional Medal, Liberty Medal and other glittering honors, is to address a conference of manufacturers of toilets, toilet paper and cleaners, tampons, and vacuums, at the International Sanitary Suppliers Association (ISSA) in Orlando, Florida. He will rake in an estimated £50,000 for a forty five minute address.

Blair, of course, famously, reportedly, cleaned out No 10 Downing Street, when he left, of the gifts given him as Prime Minister. Anything over £140, is supposed to be property of the nation, but seemingly fine carpets, jewellery and all manner of collectables, moved with the Blairs.

The speaker has been flown in, courtesy Diversey Inc.who, in 2010 began: “ .. a new chapter in a long legacy of environmental sustainability ... committed to a cleaner, healthier future... for everyone.” Perhaps their guest’s involvement in reducing a number of countries to largely futureless rubble, peopled with the sick, limbless and with rising cancers and

deformities, in an environment poisoned by western weaponry, so far from these admirable aims, had inexplicably escaped them. Ironically, the organizers credit him with his tenure resulting in: "More people receiving faster access to health care, with improved survival rates for cancer and coronary heart disease." Tell that to the people of the Balkans, Afghanistan and Iraq.

Being a bit of a busted flush, so to speak, in the U.K., few media outlets seem to have noticed this latest engagement. One India News referred to his: "Toilet Roll Talk", in their heading on a piece displaying advertisements including one for "Feminine Hygiene Disposal Sanitary Bins", and another for their rental. Exhibition News revealed: "Blair takes Soapbox at U.S., Cleaning Show."

The Daily Mail, never reticent in giving Blair a kicking, referred to his: "... career plumbing new depths (in addressing) a conference of toilet roll and disinfectant manufacturers." The ISSA: "... website's glowing profile ... has cleaned up his record as thoroughly as any of the stain removers on show", chortles the paper, pointing out that: "Nowhere is there a mention of the non-existent weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, the dirty tricks (the) sleaze ..", or the strange death of: "Ministry of Defence weapons expert, Dr David Kelly", a death of which, it has been ordered, all documentation relating to, will remain sealed for seventy years.

Mail readers have also been less than kind. An apt venue: "... for a man who took his country to the cleaners in more ways than one can imagine", wrote one; another ventured pettily that his speeches were worth less than toilet paper, anyway; another that: "Mud sticks, what better place for him to clean himself up."

He could also: "Take the opportunity to win one of five Flex hand driers", to be given away during the gathering.

Later in the day, he could join the Show Floor Happy Hour and: "... star in a band during Karaoke Live. Step into the spotlight - center stage" (no better man) "to jam with a live band complete with backup singers who make even a novice look like a rock star." Should be in his element, it has been a good while since he fronted a group called "Ugly Rumours", inspite of having created a good few in recent years.

If he is at a loose end waiting for his freebie flight out, he could pop over to Orlando's Disneyland and take in the "Small World", originally designed by a Mary Blair, where an animation of children of the world, frolick: "In a spirit of international unity, in a theme of global peace."

He could then take in: "Great Moments with Mr Lincoln", a celebration of the great man's sayings which includes:

"Let reverence for the [law] be breathed by every ... mother to the lisping babe that prattles on her lap; let it be taught in schools, in seminaries, and in colleges; let it be written in primers, [in] spelling-books, and almanacs; let it be preached from the pulpit, proclaimed in legislative halls, and enforced in courts of justice. And, in short, let it become the political religion of the nation; and let the old and the young, the rich and the poor, the grave and the gay of all sexes and tongues and colors and conditions, sacrifice unceasingly [at] its altars."

On his way out, he could suggest a new Magic Mystery Tour: “The quest for Weapons of Mass Destruction.”

Then back on the plane, with his ISSA goodie bag. With seven mansions to keep up, those cleaning products should come in useful.

And did he, the “Peace Envoy”, and new broom Catholic, at the eleventh minute, of the eleventh hour, take just those sixty seconds, in a quiet place, and reflect?

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