

Prince Harry in Blunderland

Third in line to the throne, dispatched to Iraq

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Surreal. Prince Harry, the Queen's twenty two year old grandson, the late Princess Diana's youngest son and third in line to the throne, is being dispatched to Iraq, with his regiment, the Blues and Royals. To be deployed in Basra, the party loving Prince is reportedly 'over the moon' and 'thrilled'. He has apparently undergone a course in cultural awareness and customs (presumably including kicking down doors at 3 a.m., hurling families from their beds and dragging kids into barracks and beating them up, with the odd bit of torture thrown in.)



'Cornet Wales', is his official army title, equal to a Second Lieutenant (a cornet is a conical wafer filled with ice cream, which drips copiously unless eaten with speed) said, of his determination to deploy, rather than be grounded at home for safety reasons: 'There's no way I'm going to sit on my arse while my boys are fighting.' His 'boys?' Hope they know their place under their fledgling Sovereign Lord. Professor Michael Clark of London's King's College told the Evening Standard that the 'spare heir', as some cynics shamefully refer to him is '...absolutely officer material ...and not over complicated'.

The Prince left Britain's elite Eton College with a 'B' grade in art, which led to his art teacher, Sarah Forsyth, receiving £forty five thousand pounds in damages, for unfair dismissal from the College, for alleging she had helped with the project. A spokesman for the Prince rejected her claims, detailed The Scotsman (14th February 2006.) The man who is to lead his 'boys' through Mesopotamia's complex and often (to western eyes) featureless Basra Province and the myriad alleys and sprawling complexities of ancient Basra City, also gained

a 'D' in geography.

Dropped from his final exams, was history, which might have been helpful. Iraqis have a long historical memory of British invasions for which they suffered. Basra was first occupied by the British in November 1914. Uprisings followed, culminating in 1920, when Iraq was put under British mandate. (In 1917, British General Stanley Maude stood in Falluja and said that we come as 'liberators' not as 'invaders.')

On 13th August 1921 Britain installed their puppet King, Faisal 1st. ('At last we have crowned our little King', wrote Gertrude Bell from Baghdad.)

Subsequently the British went on their re-mapping of the region ('lines in the sand') and in 1933 Faisal died and was succeeded by his son Ghazi who was assassinated in 1939 - Iraq version. Killed in a car crash, British version. The British were anyway held responsible by the Iraqis. When World War II broke out, the Iraqi government of Nuri Said sided with Britain (he ended up being dragged through the streets until little remained.) On the 14th July, 1958 the last vestige of British influence died with the execution of Faisal II, when two hundred 'Free Officers' overthrew the monarchy. 'Independence' from Britain had been declared in 1932, infact it mirrored Iraq's fake 'independence' of America and Britain now and only died with Faisal II.

'The full period of the British imposed monarchy saw great turbulence in Iraq .. violence and terror' escalated ... 'coups, assassinations, public executions, persecution of dissident groups ... uprising, followed uprising..' writes Geoff Simons (Iraq: from Sumer to Saddam, Macmillan 1994.) Further, then as now, fundamentalist elements in Iran sought to wield influence, especially in Basra and the southern provinces. All history repeats uncannily in Iraq. And the same disregard for life and patronisation had been shown for its people. 'I do not understand this squeamishness about the use of gas. I am strongly in favour of using poison gas against uncivilised tribes', wrote Winston Churchill.

'If the Kurds hadn't learned by our example to behave themselves in a civilised way, then we had to spank their bottoms. This was done by bombs and guns', wrote Wing Commander Gale, 30th Squadron, Royal Air Force (courtesy Simons.) The British employed or educated virtually no Iraqis, and when they left writes Simons, the average life expectancy was twenty six and illiteracy over ninety percent.

Add recent history's wickednesses and the more recent thirteen year embargo, responsible for at least one and a half million excess deaths (1990-2003) an illegal invasion and subsequent carnage, the lynching of Iraq's legitimate President and his half brother and this is where the 'not over complicated' Prince is to lead his 'boys'.

Basra has also been war's front line in recent decades. In the Iran-Iraq war (1980-1988) the 1991 Gulf war, and now in the Iranian incursions and British and American onslaughts and disregard for the ancient city's peoples. 'If there was a war between France and Germany, Basra would be bombed', is a wry saying in the town. First World War poet Siegfried Sassoon's family came from Basra : "You smug-faced crowds with kindling eye Who cheer when soldier lads march by, Sneak home and pray you'll never know The hell where youth and laughter go". Suicide in the Trenches)

Sinbad left for his magical journeys from this haunting city, which, with the region, produces nearly six hundred different kinds of dates, revered as near sacred, as Palestine's olives. The

British arrived in Basra in 2003 flying the St George flag – the Crusaders’ flag – on their vehicles. When lack of water, due to bombing, became a death threatening crisis for the population, donated water aid was brought in on the British Naval vessel ‘Sir Lancelot’. It seemingly turned in to a nice little earner. Her Majesty’s Navy was reportedly so nervous of the traumatised, hungry, dehydrated population, rather than give it out themselves, they gave it to locals with tankers to sell to the penniless. Any old tanker, no matter what had been in it. Legend has it that Sir Lancelot was stolen as a baby and brought up by a water fairy. Those crusaders sure have a sense of humour.

If Prince Harry wishes to gauge the level of appreciation for the the illegal British presence in Basra and Basra Province, he would do well to take his ‘boys’ on a detour to Basra’s cemetery, containing the British War Graves. Cemeteries of former British invaders, throughout Iraq, have been tended by generations of Iraqis, as if their own lay there, the oldest, for a hundred years. At death, God takes over responsibility for injustice and He judges. A final resting place must be respected by the living. On the invasion, British war graves were immediately vandalised and wrecked – including that of General Maude, in Baghdad.

That, though is the fate of the dead. Britain has joined America in crusading, invading, slaughtering, lynching the legitimate President of Iraq. Prince Harry and his ‘boys’ are now to illegally squat in Palaces or other State buildings. A war crime. He will also be part of the Nuremberg Tribunal’s ruling of the ‘supreme crime’ : a war of aggression. It has to be wondered what Her Majesty must think. Only the naive would think that the capture, or worse, of the Prince would not be the ultimate payback time for numerous British historical injustices in Iraq, ancient a recent. Further, the Prince cannot even go to a night club in London’s exclusive Mayfair (and fall out of the door at 3 a. m.) without a personal protection squad. As he becomes, inevitably, the ultimate magnet for the resistance, it is reported an SAS unit has been training to follow/protect/rescue him. What of the prize his ‘boys’ too, will become, by his presence? The logic of his deployment equals the recent revelation that the Ministry of Defence had spent £eighteen thousand in experiments to find whether random U.K., citizens could find Osama bin Laden by clairvoyance. Prince Harry and his men, whether ‘patrolling’ or palace squatting, will be a prize beyond gold.

Britain’s precious Prince, will also be allowed home for a memorial service for his mother and a concert in her honour. Britain’s soldiers of a lesser God being able to pop home for poignant family commemorations? Dream on. As the privileged pray and party, the ‘boys’ will doubtless patrol alone, even, Heaven forbid, maybe pay the Cornet’s price. ‘When the war is done and youth stone dead (and old men) toddle home and die in bed’, wrote Basra’s son, Sassoon, of war planners.

Prime Minister Blair said recently he was ‘proud’ of his war. The Independent’s Political Sketch writer, Simon Carr, wrote in concern of the Dear Leader: ‘... crossing the fine line between insanity and lunacy’.

When Prince Harry’s mother, Princess Diana died, Blair at his schoolboy Shakespearean best, stood with wobbly lip and talked of ; ‘ ...the people’s Princess.’ It has to be hoped, that despite all best efforts, the final chapter in this historic folly which defies shame, is not him stumbling into the sunset, for a seat on the giant Carlile Group (founded by the Bush and Bin Laden families) remembered for all time, paying tribute to : ‘The people’s Prince.’

Diana herself is remembered in a carefully staged walk through a minefield. Her son is

headed for both a political and actual one. Ironically the Prince's deployment was announced on 22nd February, a year to the day of the destruction of the Golden Mosque at Samarra. In the Middle East, dates are all. The second day of the second month, was deemed unlucky by Pythagoras and consigned to Pluto. Samarra was 222.

'Cry God, for Harry, England and St. George'. Shakespeare, Henry V; Act Three. Will humanity never learn?

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