

Johnson and Cummings - The Long Game.

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Boris - The Long Game

The trouble with Etonians is that the only people who really know how they work are other Etonians but the next closest are their ancient enemies - Carthusians. Those of us who went to Charterhouse, like Jeremy Hunt and myself, know how to play those who went to Eton (pretend to fight but know when to give up and wait for them to fail; then you can take over).

The trouble with Oxford graduates is only other Oxford literature experts know how they really work but next closest are their rivals from back in the day; Cambridge University graduates. Especially those who realise Dickens and Shakespeare were far greater writers than Dostoevsky or Tolstoy.

So Etonian Boris and Oxford Cummings have a long game.

Neither cares either way about Brexit, a trivial problem which really doesn't matter anymore than the size of VAT or which side of the road we drive on. The ultimate question is - will changing over be more trouble than it's worth? My answer is Yes it will, but that really doesn't matter either.

What matters is how to survive as Prime Minister and win the next election.

Both Boris and Dom are fully aware that the real danger is not Labour but Nigel Farage.

Until Brexit is out of the way, one way or the other, the Johnson premiership will end with the destruction of the Tory party.

So Boris will pretend he wants Brexit. He will say he's prepared to accept No Deal, which he's not. He will say he will not seek an extension, which he won't. He'd rather be dead in a ditch.

The opposition, egged on by the media (who love a good story) will keep going on about No Deal and breaking the law. Boris will go to the EU, get an easily agreed deal dropping the hated 'backstop' (in fact replacing it with a statement saying there will never be a hard border on the island of Ireland), tweaking other words in the May Withdrawal Bill so he can claim 'radical improvement', cutting the monies delivered by billions (which has happened anyway as the deal did not go through in March) and return in triumph to Parliament.

There; I've obtained a totally new deal despite the EU screaming like children. Now let's pass this and leave by Oct 31st.

The DUP - not entirely stupid, will hate this 'new deal', realising it does not rule out a hard border between the island and the UK but Labour, LibDems, SNP and Tory rebels will pass it - probably only if there is a confirmatory referendum immediately.

Boris and Cummings will swear, shout, argue and spit red wine at passing Socialists but will be forced to agree.

The referendum, during which the public will become well aware that this is Brexit In Name Only, will reject the deal 80-20 and choose to Remain in the EU. Brexit dead. Exit Brexit.

That's when Boris, who never cared about Brexit, will shed crocodile tears and say "well, the public has decided", will go for a General Election, reckoning that real danger Farage has been beaten and that Corbyn can never win against a rejuvenated Tory Party (the rebels having been welcomed back into the fold with open arms).

Personally, as someone who has found Corbyn refreshingly sensible, low key and impressive, I hope and think Boris and Cummings will be proven wrong in that, but I think their Brexit strategy is correct and will succeed. I'm only surprised that the media hasn't seen through it and can only assume they have but that, like in all things, the only thing that matters to the media is a good story.