

Dark Times

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March 2011

London Polling

Dark Times staff writers

The 15th of March. A momentous date. 2044 years ago, the known world changed forever, as the Emperor of Rome, Julius Caesar, was assassinated in the Senate Chamber. However, as with most such shifts in power, politics was the true weapon – isolated from his supporters, surrounded by conspirators, the Emperor could not stand alone.



This seems an apt matter to reflect upon, now, as the conflict between John Houblon, childe of Harderstdat, and Queen Anne of London, seems set to be determined. Ulysian Thraces, Ventrue Justicar, will decide the challenge issued by Houblon, by assessing the levels of support brought by each party to a public meeting, on the date of the anniversary of Caesar's demise.

At the meeting, the Justicar will decide who is best suited to rule the domain, and declare the Prince of London from that day forward. To permit those Kindred who wish to declare themselves for either party, all of good standing within the Camarilla are invited into the domain of London between the sunset of

March 14th and sunrise of March 17th.

While both Anne and Houblon will have their close supporters with them, with the London contingent finely split between them, it may be the support the two can gather from outside domains which will tip the balance. Anne has made enemies over her time as Prince, and one wonders how her recent expansionist turn will influence matters. However, she displayed sufficient political clout to turn the obstinately independent Prince Carter to her cause; will he also attend the meeting on her side?

Glasgow will have its part to play, and some observers take Prince Rothschild's declared opposition to London's expansion as a sign that he will declare for Houblon.

However, that may be jumping to conclusions, particularly as Rothschild has not been seen at court for a number of months.

In any event,

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this is perhaps the greatest event in British Kindred politics for decades, and all should await the outcome with baited breath. And with a very careful consideration of where they declare their loyalties – the eventual Prince of London will be unlikely to forget who opposed them on the Ides of March 2011.

Glasgow O Go

Dark Times staff writers

In a significant shift in the Glasgow political and practical landscape, Glasgow O has this month lost its contract for CCTV cameras around the city. There will be a short handover period while the necessary arrangements are made for the infrastructure to be transferred to Glasgow City Council, but by the end of Spring, Glasgow's surveillance will be back in public hands again.

Whether this will benefit or hinder Glasgow's Kindred remains to be seen, after all, the Glasgow O's time has been marked by a number of incidents which have not made the media impact they had the potential to. It must be hoped that Prince Rothsilde will be able to ensure as tight a grip is kept over such disclosures in future.

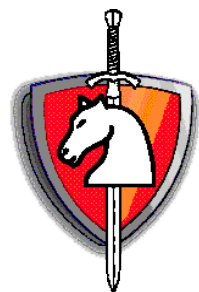
It is refreshing to see that even in Glasgow a task can be handed to a coterie of neonates and ancilla and it will be completed swiftly and efficiently without any of the brute force tactics Glasgow has become renowned for. Well done!

Travel News March 2011

Rosina Provanzano-Giovanni

This month, an independant inquiry is being launched into allegations that the senior executives in Network Rail (the company that runs the nations track infrastructure) have been using public funds to line their pockets. A previous internal investigation did not uncovered any evidence. Network Rail, as a whole, has a reputation for heavy-handed tactics and an obstructive bureaucracy.

On a more humerous note, a newly-formed Thai airline has recruited transsexuals as air



hostesses. The new airline's boss is enthusiastic about the move, "I think these people can have many careers – not just in the entertainment business – and many of them have a dream to be an air hostess," he said. "I just made their dream come true."

By Rosina Provanzano-Giovanni
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Clay's Day in Court

Dark Times staff writers

David Clayson, a Glasgow councillor for the Govan/Ibrox area, has been arrested this month on numerous charges relating to allegations including corruption, fraud, tax evasion, false expenses claims, statutory rape and conspiracy to commit murder.

A prominent member of the Council, with over 10 years good standing, Clayson has been in the public eye recently thanks to his public campaign against the renewal of the Glasgow O contract. Championing privacy and limiting the interference with those rights by private companies, Clayson was instrumental in ensuring Glasgow's CCTV network passed back into public hands.

However the recent attention appears to have come at a cost, as police unearthed evidence of crimes of dishonesty after an investigation spanning over 4 months came to a conclusion. The arrest was made shortly after a raid upon Clayson's council offices, during which numerous computers and files were seized.

While this high profile arrest comes just too late to save the Glasgow O's contract, it must be wondered if the timing of the two events is coincidental, or if there are more malevolent forces at work here.

War

when is it over, absolutely never

Dark Times staff writers

The gang war in Glasgow, which some had hoped had stagnated somewhat, burst into view again this month, as the murder of Reverend Whitely appeared to spark off a spate of sectarian attacks, focused on prominent Catholic criminal figures and even a number of priests.

Although police presence around vulnerable churches was stepped up, this was not enough to prevent the kidnap and murder of 4 priests during February, and the toll among Glasgow's criminals is believed to be in the dozens, although impossible to verify.

Retaliation followed swiftly, and gang violence peaked once again as the two major crime families in Glasgow, after a period of focusing on rebuilding their empires, have found themselves embroiled in the conflict anew, and forced to try to pre-empt the other's actions.

All in all, it seems Glasgow has once more descended into the worst criminal violence in decades, with police unable to keep a lid on matters, and no end in sight. It seems only a matter of time before the Scottish or UK government intervenes.

Provost lost

Dark Times staff writers

Glasgow's Lord Provost has resigned, in an unexpected move, after calling a press conference to discuss the issues posed by Glasgow's rising drugs problem. The media were invited to his office on February 23rd to discuss the matter, and the Provost's plans to tackle widespread use and associated crime.

However, on the day, he said nothing of drugs, but instead spoke of a darkness which has fallen over Glasgow, referring to the gang violence which has terrorised the city leaving ordinary citizens reluctant to leave their homes.

He also touched on a perceived pervasive corruption among public servants, a sore point after Councillor David Clayson's arrest this month, and claimed that power brokers were taking advantage of political instabilities, trading political agendas for profit with no thought as to the effect this might have.

Finally, in a more personal note, he claimed to have made decisions in his capacity as Provost that he was not proud of, which no-one in his position ought to have countenanced. No more details were forthcoming, but it was at this stage that he announced his resignation, effective immediately, with his deputy assuming his position until a replacement is found.

Fielding the inevitable barrage of questions deftly, giving very little away, he appeared at much greater ease leaving the room as entering it, as though a great weight had been lifted from his shoulders. However, ultimately another high ranking Glasgow official has been forced from office, and it must be wondered as to the character of those who would take up that mantle now.

Great Britain By Night

Margery Houndsworth-Stone, Clan Toreador, Ancilla, Harpy of London

Dear Faithful Readers,

I found myself entirely wrapped up in the exchanges in London these last eight weeks and hence I was unable to provide the Dark Times with my regular article. While that could have left my article twice as long as usual, the current unstable situation invalidates assumptions and statements so fast that most of what I would have written four weeks ago would be contradicted by what I am writing now.

For those who have not followed the situation I will try at to first frame the issue. Britain, since roman times has been ruled by the Ventrue line of Mithras; and until World War II by Mithras directly (apart from a few short decades every other century or so where he placed a chosen overseer on the throne, but those times can be ignored for this argument). After his disappearance his favored and prior seneschal Lady Anne Bowesley took the throne. While she was reputedly only sired during the glorious revolution led by William of Orange she had amassed a stockpile of favours and political alliances and was able to keep older Ventrue off the throne. Her sway, though, was not sufficient to keep all the princes of Britain under the same control Mithras once had over them and so the domains became independent of London. Something that Queen Anne has tried to correct in her recent expansionist moves.

On the other side of the fence we have the line of Hardestadt, who many hail as the founder of the Camarilla. It was certainly he who ended the anarch revolt with the treaty of Thorns and it was also he who arranged the meeting of the Clans where the Camarilla was formed. He holds major influence of western continental Europe and has done ever since the dark ages where he, his childe Jurgen and William of York organised the kindred aspect of the first crusade.

Hardestadt survived the Nights of Fire, the anarch revolt, and all the days since. His dynasty, most prominently represented by his childer Jurgen, Sir John Houblon and Jan Pieterzoon. Sir John Houblon is known for his strong grip in British finance, for having been granted domain over the Isle of Man about a century ago and recently for opposing the "apparent weaknesses" of Lady Anne.

You might well ask, where does that leave you, the faithful reader. After all, do we care which traditionalist elder Ventrue rules the capital and maybe the country? Even if you believe that there will be no noticeable differences to you, the larger implications of global politics are impressive, as are the opportunities to gain favour of one of the most powerful kindred in the country, or to earn their ire. On the slighter smaller scale of UK politics the differences will also be huge. Whilst I am not sure what Houblon will have promised the princes of the outlying domains their relationship to the capital will likely change should he succeed.

It will be interesting to see who will declare with which candidate as there are no certainties here. Questions like will the prince of Severn, who is reputedly a childe of Mithras, declare against his enemy Queen Anne and risk the crown falling away from the line of Mithras? Will the Scottish fives declare with Houblon or will they simply stay neutral? Will clan Tremere use this occasion to oust leaders who have been feuding with them ever since they arrived in Britain? Will Edinburgh follow Paris' example of having an alliance with Hardestadt? Many questions and very few answers.

If I had to guess about the other 3 English princes I

would think that Birmingham would stay with Anne, York would stay neutral and Manchester & Liverpool will jump ship and join Houblon's side, but all those questions and more will be answered in 2 weeks in front of Justicar Ulysian Thrace.

While the boon trading is too frantic at the moment to accurately be reflected here I have nonetheless picked out some items of note or items potentially removed from the conflict.

Let it be known that Edward Bulwer-Lytton, former Scourge of Norfolk, ancilla of the Camarilla is indebted to Sir Colman Rashleigh, of London, elder of the Camarilla.

Let it be known that Lady Anne Bowesley, Prince of London, Queen of England, elder of the Camarilla has granted domain over his ancestral estate to Charles Augustus Aldworth, Baron of the north of Glasgow, elder of the Camarilla.

Let it be known that Lynn Ferguson, of Edinburgh, ancilla of the Camarilla has repaid her debt to Reginald Albertson, Seneshal of Aberdeen, highly esteemed elder of the Camarilla.

Let it be known that Poppy, of Glasgow, ancilla of the Camarilla, childe of William of York is substantially indebted to Charles Augustus Aldworth, Baron of the north of Glasgow, elder of the Camarilla.

Let it be known that Alexander Haddow, formerly of the Anarch Movement, has been recognised as a neonate of the Camarilla by Richard Farr, harpy of Edinburgh, elder of the Camarilla. This cancels all debts held between the two parties.

**Dark Times is accepting submissions.
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