

1945

World War II: Battle of Iwo Jima: About 30,000 United States Marines land on the island of Iwo Jima.

1948

The Conference of Youth and Students of Southeast Asia Fighting for Freedom and Independence convenes in **Calcutta**.

1949

Ezra Pound is awarded the first Bollingen Prize in poetry by the Bollingen Foundation and Yale University.



1953

Censorship: Georgia approves the first literature censorship board in the United States.



Keeping Priti Patel as Home Secretary and Dominic Raab as Foreign Secretary was sound. Both shared the PM's euro-scepticism during his campaign to leave the EU, and keeping an existing Foreign Secretary in place to build the relationships needed in a difficult world is essential.

son had lost a key player within weeks of winning the election.

Despite the “no” word being heard early in the process, the rest of the reshuffle continued, and the media and political world picked over its predictions to make sense of it all.

Nonetheless, there are other extraordinary features of what has happened in Downing Street. A quiet revolution is taking place in the UK, and the ministerial changes that have been made are pivotal.

Firstly, there was little attempt to ensure balance in terms of the great former divide over EU membership. The cabinet and senior ministers, to a man or woman, are individuals who either campaigned to leave the EU on any terms or have totally accepted the possibility of such an outcome, and who can therefore

be relied upon to support the prime minister's decisions on the negotiations without question.

The EU should take note of this as its negotiations with Britain get seriously underway. Mr Johnson is playing off a full deck. In addition, the removal of a number of ministers – including some of unimpeachable quality but who were perceived to be either a potential source of difficulty in future or guilty of some political misdemeanour in the past – made clear that there is no longer any tolerance for dissent. Such ‘weaknesses’ in the past, the thinking goes, have are partly responsible for the Conservative Party's failures since 2015.

Secondly, behind the scenes but brought to the fore by Mr Javid's sacking, is a new mentality of micro-management and direct rule, architected by the prime minister's chief adviser, Dominic Cummings. The whole government's centre of gravity now lies firmly directed in the prime minister's office at 10 Downing Street. The takeover by Number 10 of the system of special advisers – political appointees who used to be personal to ministers, but are no longer so – suggests that neither individual ministries, nor ministers, can be fully trusted to deliver the government's existing or future agendas.

Watch this space. And get very used to the name of Dominic Cummings.

ground, Mr Javid had many admirers during his time in the role. But he would only have been allowed to keep it on the condition that he dismissed his own aides and merged his advisory team with one controlled by the prime minister's office. Mr Javid said “no”, and no amount of persuasion could change his mind. By accident or design, Boris John-

teach oil and gas chiefs



For governments and private companies elsewhere who invest in energy projects beyond their own borders, the lessons of Mozambique are worth noting. No amount of intervention by foreign or local powers and security forces can make up for the severe governance gaps that corrupt and incompetent host governments foster.

– has done little to stem the tide of bloodshed.

Mozambique's struggle with its northern insurgents will prove to be a cautionary tale for oil and gas majors and natural resource ministries alike.

There are several reasons for this. First, those energy companies that try to ensure sound corporate social responsibility practices – such as fair compensation and building new housing for people displaced by their projects – cannot be sure that the government will follow through on its own part in these efforts. Instead, evidence in Cabo Delgado suggests that surging local anger was the product of a belief that traditional land and fishing areas had been stolen and polluted for the benefit of corrupt elites and foreign interests, indicating

that ExxonMobil and its counterparts are on the losing end of a public relations battle despite their efforts to offset the social costs of their projects.

Second, the introduction of more security forces is unlikely to solve the crisis. At most, it will help to temporarily protect energy installations, but will do nothing more to improve the underlying situation. Again, this is because poorly-trained and abusive troops act rather as forces of insecurity, furthering alienation and anger among the victims of their cruelties.

For governments and private companies elsewhere who invest in energy projects beyond their own borders, the lessons of Mozambique are worth noting. No amount of intervention by foreign or local powers and security forces can make up for the severe governance gaps that corrupt and incompetent host governments foster. Instead, outside parties risk being party to heavy-handed tactics that only fuel more violence.

Maputo is out of its depth and simply reacting, with no clear strategy to the crisis on its hands. For their part, interested parties like oil majors and foreign governments must push Maputo to take a hard look at addressing the drivers fundamental to the conflict. Until then, the situation will only worsen, until all of the country's promising energy potential fades for good.



TOP
4
TWEETS

01



This morning I spoke to Chinese President Xi to express my sympathy and support for those affected by the coronavirus outbreak. The UK government has donated vital medical equipment to the region and we will continue to offer our assistance. (1/2)

@BorisJohnson

02



London is and always will be a part of Europe - Brexit hasn't changed that. I had a good meeting with @MichelBarnier to discuss how vital it is that a Brexit deal protects our economy, the rights of Londoners and Europeans, and the relationship our city has built with Europe.

@MayorofLondon

03



Faith is what has gotten me through difficult times in my life. It provides hope, purpose, and strength. And it is what gives me the reason to believe that our nation's best days still lie ahead.

@JoeBiden

04



After decades of being ignored by Washington, the forgotten men and women in America found a champion in @realDonaldTrump. They are the same people Bloomberg has spent years insulting. He has no business leading our country!

@GOPChairwoman

Disclaimer: (Views expressed by columnists are personal and need not necessarily reflect our editorial stances)

Lebanon running out of credibility

DR DAINA KHATIB

Despite the continuing public anger and widespread protests in Lebanon, deputies went to Parliament last week to give the government a confidence vote. Some had to rely on armored vehicles to avoid facing angry protesters. It is obvious that those in power are no longer representative of the people; however, that does not change the fact that they are ruling the country. This government has the lowest confidence rating ever. It was confirmed with 49 percent of the vote. In any case, the new government is only a reincarnation of the previous ones. The same political parties are controlling the same key ministries. The change has been cosmetic by pushing to the front unknown figures who are controlled by the old guards.

The speech of Prime Minister Hassan Diab, with which he gained the confidence of the Parliament, was surreal. He spoke of promises upon promises with no real mechanism or means on how to achieve them. In Jan. 27 parliamentary session, in which the new government ratified the previous budget proposed by the Saad Hariri government, a deputy said: “No money no honey.” The Lebanese political configuration, thriving on corruption, had always found someone to bail them out, but not anymore.

The Lebanese central bank can no longer create money. No one wants to lend to a country that is about to default. Since 2018, the central bank has been spending from

reserves that are the economy's live flesh. A \$1.2 billion payment in Eurobonds is due on March 9. The government can choose to pay from its reserves or default. Both cases are catastrophic. The debt is no longer internal. Banks have sold a big chunk of their bonds to foreign investors at a discount to access liquidity. If the government defaults, then debtors can sue the government. If it pays off the debt, it will no longer have reserves to pay for the necessary imports.

Another alarming signal is the measure the central bank has undertaken to escape the liquidity problem. The central bank has started to print money. Printing money is the beginning of the end for any system. Though the central bank says it is doing so to replace

old bank notes, observers believe the new notes were used to inject liquidity into the market.

The country's situation is grim. The government has no national or no international credibility. If any help is expected from the international community, there should be transparency as well as serious structural reforms. However, the current government has no political power and no political will as its patrons are looking for ways to save the day for themselves.

Diab's long ministerial statement had no substance. It promised the Lebanese people great projects like the metro and a modern military hospital, as well as the eradication of poverty. However, when it came to the obvious economic catastrophe facing the country, the prime minister was elusive. He said that his team is preparing a plan that will be revealed in the coming month – while, logically, the rescue plan should have been the basis on which the newly appointed government was to obtain the confidence of the Parliament.

Lebanon's political leaders are trying to deflect the situation. The ousted foreign minister Gibran Bassil blamed the situation on refugees, after offering a disclaimer at the beginning of his speech, saying that there is also corruption and faulty policies being implemented. He claimed that refugees have cost the country \$43 billion, which is absurd.

