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# Britain - Prince Philip - Isn't the Duke of Edinburgh Scheme Fantastic?

Monday 12 April 2021, by [KELLAWAY Dave](#) (Date first published: 9 April 2021).

**From Dave Kellaway, the Anti\*Capitalist Resistance Royal correspondent somewhere near Buckingham Palace.**

For weeks the ranks of the mainstream mass media have been beavering away honing their comment pieces, assessing thousands of archive photos and looking at their contact list of royal pundits to line up their *rent a quote*. The tabloids and even the 'serious' papers have had endless meetups to discuss how their special edition will eclipse everyone else's. It is a reasonably easy journalistic job since they all have had plenty of warning.

Already it has begun. The Guardian has abandoned its Covid lead for a half-page of various articles on the great man. There is even a live feed so the great and good can give their heartfelt condolences. So for Sadiq Khan, he is an extraordinary man. Really? How is being a Naval Officer for a while and then the Queen's escort something extraordinary? Being an astronaut or hitting a hundred centuries for the English test team is what you might call extraordinary. Sadiq somehow finds some great contribution that the Duke made to London. Search me. And Sadiq you can't keep using the Duke of Edinburgh scheme because that is a national 'extraordinary legacy'.

Sir Keir has not loitered around. We have the 'extraordinary' epithet again but this time not just an extraordinary man but an 'extraordinary public servant'. So did he work for the NHS or was he a teacher part-time? No Keir buys into all this stuff about the Royal ceremonials being really hard work that is doing extraordinary public good. Our Keir riffs on the symbolic role of the Duke :

*"Their marriage has been a symbol of strength, stability and hope, even as the world around them changed - most recently during the pandemic. It was a partnership that inspired millions in Britain and beyond"*

Not surprising that the leader of the Labour party believes in an unproblematic, contradiction-free, colour blind nation that inspires us all. He even lauds the idea of conservatism in the face of a changing world. Strength, stability and hope are surrendered to the symbolic role of the royal family. He even ascribes it a great international impact beyond our shores! The struggles of working people with a socialist vision that could express strength, stability and hope for all humanity is rented out to an unelected monarchy.

Nobody is saying Keir or Sadiq had to put out a statement calling for mass dancing on his grave or with slogans about abolishing the monarchy. Something a little more restrained and some basic condolences for a lost family member would have been okay.

Who was Prince Philip? He was a minor Danish/Greek royal who through all the royal intermarriage in Europe was actually officially English. So Phil the Greek was actually an inaccurate nickname. Thanks to today's in-depth Guardian article clarifying that one today. Solid enough military record,

no skeletons, heterosexual, so he was lined up to marry his distant cousin Elizabeth.

However, if you look at his public declarations over the years you can see he was every inch a colonialist, racist and sexist. God knows what his views were in private. Here is a list that Hamid Dabashi drew up in an article in Al Jazeera in August 2017 [\[1\]](#):

*“British women can’t cook”*

“Everybody was saying we must have more leisure. Now they are complaining they are unemployed” (during the 1981 recession).

“You are a woman, aren’t you?” (in Kenya after accepting a small gift from a local woman).

“If you stay here much longer you’ll all be slitty-eyed” (to a group of British students during a royal visit to China).

“You can’t have been here that long, you haven’t got pot belly” (to a Briton he met in Hungary).

“Aren’t most of you descended from pirates?” (to a wealthy islander in the Cayman Islands).

“How do you keep the natives off the booze long enough to pass the test” (to a Scottish driving instructor).

“It looks as if it was put in by an Indian” (referring to an old-fashioned fuse box in a factory near Edinburgh).

“Still throwing spears?” (question put to an Aboriginal Australian during a visit).

“There’s a lot of your family in tonight” (after looking at the name badge of businessman Atul Patel at a Palace reception for British Indians).

“The Philippines must be half-empty as you’re all here running the NHS” (on meeting a Filipino nurse at Luton and Dunstable Hospital).

Hamid has indeed done us a public service here. The BBC and the rest of the mainstream media treat all these remarks as ‘gaffes’ or Philip ‘speaking his mind’. As though his age and background excuses such outrageous comments! In 2021 the argument that something can’t really be racist if it is just a joke has long gone past its sell-by date.

If somebody as extraordinary as Philip can get away with this stuff it makes it even harder for black people or women to challenge such racism and sexism. No wonder Meghan Markle got the hump and legged it out to California.

The problem for Keir and Sadiq is that try as they might Boris Johnson and the Tories always clean up when it comes to milking Royal Family events. Expect Boris to be centre stage even under Covid restrictions.

Oh and the Duke of Edinburgh scheme. My kids sort of did it and it is harmless enough but let’s be honest the big drive they make for it in schools is as much about getting it done for your application to a university as anything else.

**Dave Kellaway**

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**P.S.**

• Anti\*capitalistresistance. 9 April 2021:

<https://www.anticapitalistresistance.org/post/prince-philip-isn-t-the-duke-of-edinburgh-scheme-fantastic>

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**Footnotes**

[1] <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2017/8/13/the-priceless-racism-of-the-duke-of-edinburgh>