

David Cameron – Sap Or Something Else?

They hang the man and flog the woman,
Who steals the goose from off the common,
Yet let the greater villain loose,
That steals the common from the goose.

Seventeenth Century English protest rhyme

In the run up to the last election, David Cameron said there were three things the government could do to tackle the deficit: cut, default or print money. He ruled out defaulting as immoral, and came out with the time honoured – and fallacious - mantra that printing money would simply cause inflation. What he neglected to mention – probably because he didn't know – was that the Treaty of Maastricht has made this illegal.

Awhile later he alluded to Britain as the junior partner in the struggle against Nazi German in 1940. And the senior partner was? Surely he must have known the attack on Pearl Harbour was December 1941?

And to cap it off, he nearly caused a major rift with Pakistan when he suggested that elements in that country's government were supporting Al-Qaeda.

Naught out of three ain't bad.

Luckily for Call Me Dave if not for Pakistan, the floods soon gave all Pakistanis something more important to agonise over than a minor player on the world stage who was attempting to punch above his weight.

The Prince of Darkness, Peter Mandelson, summed up Cameron in a nutshell a while ago when he said that at last his veneer had been peel off to reveal – more veneer.

It should come as no surprise then that Cameron's "big society" non-idea should contain a large element of populism. In opposition, like all politicians with the notable exception of the plain-speaking John Prescott, he agonised over the non-scandal of MPs' expenses. Last month – or was it last week? – it was a crackdown on "benefit cheats", and this week he has vowed to go after tax dodgers.

A politician who promises a crackdown on the rich is a bit like a police chief who promises to crack down on paedophiles; the rich may not be as unpopular as paedophiles, but does chasing them for unpaid tax bills really achieve anything?

Wealthy individuals can simply move abroad, and companies? Do we want them to invest in Britain or not?

Earlier this year, Sir Thomas Legg recommended that 389 MPs should repay £1.3 million. The inquiry probably cost more than that, and it remains to be seen how much money it made for both the tabloid and the “quality” presses who had a field day with righteous indignation, pious commentary, satirical cartoons, you name it.

So how much will this latest Tory brainwave bring in? Probably considerably more than the million pounds plus that MPs allegedly stole from us, and considerably, considerably, considerably less than the two hundred billion pounds the Bank of England is said to have pumped into the economy by the supposedly newly discovered process of quantitative easing. So where did all this money go?

No prizes for answering to the people who caused this mess in the first place.

It is now late September, and a winter of discontent is looming; the trades unions are both angry and bullish over the forthcoming cuts, and who can blame them?

Not everything the new coalition government has done so far has been to the country’s detriment. Nick Clegg in particular seems to have a genuine commitment to freedom; ID cards have gone for the moment – if for the wrong reason; he has promised fewer CCTV cameras, and even set up a special website through which ordinary members of the public could submit ideas for all manner of reforms. But unless and until our government or any government has the nous much less the courage to grasp the nettle of financial reform, in particular to take the power to create credit out of the hands of privately owned banks and return it to the Crown where it rightly belongs, Cameron, Clegg, Obama, the whole shebang, are simply rearranging the deckchairs on the “Titanic”. And even with global warming, there will be plenty of icebergs for us to hit in the months and years ahead.