

RIGHT SAID (SIR) FRED; IT'S A HOLE NEW CRISIS

Those readers old enough to remember Bernard Cribbens and his song about men trying to dig a hole and then giving up. might pause to reflect on how it all ended. After many attempts to dig said hole, the lads abandoned it. In the lyrics the line was: Right said Fred, let's have another cuppa tea and then go home. Or in Gordon's case, lets go to the White House.

The hole gets deeper; Lord Myners says he knew something but not everything about the pension deal. Yet Harriet Harman says the government will seek legal action to stop Sir Fred getting the full whack. Something m' learned friends think might be hard to deliver. But that doesn't matter because apparently the case is not scheduled for Court Number One at the Old Bailey but at the court of public opinion. Presumably it's the one across the road in the pub.

So does all this matter? Two Western elder statesmen, asked many years ago about why things in politics went wrong, said it was first down to events, dear boy, events (obviously English). The American opined that when you are in a swamp being bitten by an alligator, you wonder why you are there in the first place.

With no one able to figure out how to drain this particular swamp and stop the financial sector from dragging us all into the alligator pit, it is good to know the priorities are clear. Lets avoid finding a solution and just blame Fred.

What we have here is a classic dissonance. The quantum involved for Sir Fred's pension fades into insignificance when compared with the bail-out money paid by the taxpayer to the bank. Yet that is what is grabbing the headlines.

Whatever the rights and wrongs of Sir Fred's pension, if the Government want justice should they start by apologizing not just for getting us into this mess but for not finding the safe route out of the swamp.

Surely the time has come to confront the realities of the economic crises rather than teeter round the edges. And the G20 summit is still to come. Perhaps they will know what to do with Fred's pension.

But for Gordon as he flies back to the UK a warning. Please remember that many a good ship has foundered on the (Sir Fred) Goodwin Sands. Now is the moment to increase the level of Reputation Radar.

Postscript:

For those of you brave enough to follow the Future Imperfect trail, contact us if you would like to receive a Reputation Radar briefing on the threat of social disruption which is due for issue later this month.

And finally - we are running a G20 breakfast briefing on the 20 March To reserve a place call Emma on 01332 222299 or email link.training@linkassociates.com

For more information, visit the MediaLINK website or call Mike Hogan on 07771 962911/ 01332 222299.