

A QUIET REVOLUTION.

I am about to set out an idea, an acorn. In the process of putting my thoughts into writing I am likely to put some ideas forward that wont work if others are implemented, but on their own they will make sense.

We are dictated to by politicians, and in general by their nature they are not going to do what is best for us, but what is best for their party and if their party allows it for themselves.

Your MP is more than likely voted in because they are a member of a political party not because they are the best man for the job, you will vote for your party in most cases because you think they stand for your views whether they be socialist or fascist. The truth is that whether your party is labour, liberal or conservative they will produce little change to your circumstances while they sit in power, and more amusingly we even get coalitions where two parties with differing views are willing to share POWER, with little interest to the compromise this represents for both parties.

We have seen tax rates change with various government, we have seen more money given to the poor or taken away from the poor but these percentage points have rarely made a great difference to people's lives.

The government need tax to survive, so again whatever the political leaning of a party they are happy to compromise their voters to raise an extra pound, whether that is through drink, tobacco or fuel, or raising more revenue through direct tax. We as voters suffer to feed our masters.

Tax is just a symptom of the political disease. Our tax is spent by successive government on what in simplistic terms can be called marketing campaigns. Family and child tax credit's could never be afforded, the Olympics is to pay for, parliament building in Scotland and Wales (and for that matter devolution) but if it gained a few extra voters it was money well spent, after all three terms of government is all any political party can hope for, they can leave any fallout for a future 'opposition' government. We are far from the only country that this happens to.

Parliament and politics were a great idea, and of their time produced a closer and better way of life, but as the system has evolved the parties have found themselves getting closer and closer in political views, no longer have we Lords and serfs, and it is proven time and again that there is no door barred for a hard working man with an idea.

All political parties want to retain the system that socialism has given us of free health care and social security, and an excellent education system, all parties want business to work because this generates huge tax incomes. Non of the parties want to see extreme left or right wing politics as they have seen these systems come tumbling down throughout the world where they have been practiced. So again we see a drawing together of our politicians.

So why do we still have political parties dictating to the population?

Jobs are the answer, political jobs in the UK and Europe. If Tony Blair had stood as a Labour candidate in Richmond he would have stood no chance, and indeed if Tony Blair had stood as an independent Labour candidate in Sedgefield it is unlikely that he would have beaten the party's nominated candidate past the post. We have returned to self interest, even if it means that your own views are compromised. When you have won your seat you continue to compromise your beliefs as long as you sit with your political party. You may not agree with your parties view, and really believe that your constituents would want you to use your vote against the party in certain situations, but you can't, the whip's and your job security see to it that you are in a loose loose situation. This whole situation is confounded by the fact that the majority of MP's are out of their earning league, very few would expect to earn anywhere near the salary they earn as an MP in the open market- greed is another factor when towing your parties line. Finally, an MP in a safe seat can expect to stay in the chocolate factory all their working life with a very healthy pension at the end of it.

There are other marketing issues that our successive governments fail to take notice of because of potential political suicide and hence the potential of being put in the hands of the social state.

In recent years four things spring to mind and all for different reasons have been ignored. Firstly the fuel protests, which in my eye's was fantastic, a government just about brought to it's knees, lip service was paid to the population, but a government that relies so heavily on fuel duty couldn't give it up, if you remember the military were brought in, and there is an outcry by our government if another government chooses force to quell the populace. Secondly, the hunting debate, there were a million people marched in London, calling themselves the Countryside Alliance. This was war! The Labour government wouldn't have tried to ban a 'sport' that appealed to their voters, but a mainly disinterested public were introduced to an us versus them scenario and again the people who were directly affected by the ban were ignored. Thirdly, we have seen the ugly rise of extreme politics in this country in recent years, with the BNP winning votes and seats, while this has been in working class areas with high Asian populations it has been mainly ignored that as a rule the voting population would like to see a kerb on immigration, and a stop to segregation, the BNP aren't offering anything else. Finally, a major talking point- Europe, why when we have returned UKIP members to the European Parliament does successive government ignore the fact that this is happening, perhaps as usual they think they know best, or is it just that the potential benefits to individuals (think Neal Kinnock, Peter Mandelson) far out weighs the interest of the people who put them in positions to make these decisions in the first place.

All of the above in its own way is about the people rising against the government, but we all think the same, if you want a voice you should use your vote. Your vote gives parliament the opportunity to be smug about the decisions they make, the more votes the more right they are! We have seen small revolutions in all of the previous paragraph- and where has this got us?

THE IDEAS.

It should be made a condition of your entry into Parliament that you can not be a member of a political party. People would stand in their constituencies with a view, they should stand by beliefs, whether this be right or left wing or a whole melting pot of ideas. Being part of a political party will become irrelevant anyway as the following will show.

All MP's will be given a maximum of two terms in Parliament, which will do away with the lifers, and will give a much better chance for new ideas and new viewpoints. While there have been some very highly thought of long term politicians, their longevity can only lead to a stagnation, same view, same delivery, same standing. All seats should be fought for at different times, to give the candidates full coverage in all the local press without the overriding bigger picture that takes over in the present status.

By ridding ourselves of political parties we will no longer see decisions being made within Westminster by one government only to be overturned by the next for party reasons, and all the waste and spending that goes along with this. You won't see an idea reversed because it is to New Labour or to right wing. Politicians will speak their minds without fear of losing their seats.

The major working of this system will not come from Parliament but from the people, because the people will be given a referendum twice a year on all the major decisions put before Parliament. We would be asked if we want the Olympics, whether we want to be part of Europe, whether we would like to see fuel duty rise or spending cut. The job of parliament would be to take people's ideas through to referendum, and then when the voters have decided what they want how this is taken forward, so if the UK voted out of Europe, it would then be for Parliament to debate how we leave. If the voters choose to ban fox hunting then Parliament would need to sort out what form of hunting would be allowed and over what time scale the ban would take place. The population would need very simple decisions to make; MP's would have to use their skill to bend this overriding decision to the nuances of it.

It would probably smack of big brother, but I would suggest it becomes law that the population needs to return their ballot paper, even if this was spoiled, that way we have the whole population making the decision. The other obvious thing that all of this would create would be proportional representation without all the middle of the road decisions that it would bring if it was part of our current political situation.

There would need to be leaders of the house, this would need to be a stable situation and would be voted for by the house. There would in fact be an election where MP's could choose because of the skill of the individual, whether it is because they have the right intellect, or because they are great speakers, or book balancers, or indeed because they can ride a unicycle and make people laugh. The countries leaders again would have the countries interests at heart not the political parties they represent, and they wouldn't be there because somebody within the party wanted them.

There would have to be decisions that only parliament can make, and would never reach referendum under normal circumstances, they would be crisis decisions, again not driven by political leanings. These would be obvious things like war, and not so obvious like saving banks, or a major manufacturer like Rover cars. Even some of these decisions could be thrown at the people in the next referendum.

By taking political considerations out of the way our country is run will introduce considerable savings, Parliament will be looking at the good of the country, and not trying to satisfy political indoctrination. We won't see money spent on gaining votes; indeed any major ideas will have to be chosen by the electorate. Would the Welsh and English tax payer think that a devolved Scotland would be worth paying for, probably not, and defiantly not if they realised the real cost to their wallet, in point of fact if the Scottish Nationalist was told how much they would save in taxes by not having to pay for the Scottish Parliament, they would more than likely vote against. This brings me to my next point.

My MP is the Foreign Secretary, William Hague. At the beginning of 2010 I went to one of Mr.Hague's surgeries with four idea's, three of which he took to the relevant people of the then Labour government, and the fourth idea he discounted as it would produce far to many problems for any government. I was encouraged, as I will get to later the ideas were all sound, and would without exception create wealth and jobs. I got lip service from the various departments and little else. When I wrote outlining my idea's to Mr.Hague (at his request) I put a throw away line at the end of the letter as a bait, I told Mr.Hague that I could sort the massive budget deficit the country had, and suggested he contact me about the same. I heard nothing more from him on this subject, and for that matter the other idea(s). Even if Mr.Hague had walked from our meeting thinking I was a crackpot, a quick phone call or e mail may have got a crackpot answer and quickly forgotten, or as I am about to explain, could and probably would make sense. Mr.Hague is highly thought of, I wonder what this says about the other 658 MP's, goodness help us.

The Budget Deficit.

We have all watched with interest (greater or lesser) the effect that the swinging cuts are to have on our jobs and security, especially those employed by government. The current coalition is taking a hatchet to various departments, and probably not before time, but where does the idea come from that certain departments are able to operate with certain percentages of their budget? Certainly not the departments themselves, who can always spend more!

The politicians and civil servants who have come up with the cuts are pretty far removed from the realities of life in the council yard, in the operating theatres, or in the school classrooms. They are advised by people who themselves are far removed, and whom probably have a self interest in the advise that they give. I have yet to meet a council store man, or a nurse who has been asked by a manager, or civil servant their thoughts, and even if they were asked would be probably protecting their corner. Throw the question into a conversation when you have one or more civil servants in a group, as to how they could save money, I am pretty sure they will start by telling you that they need all their budget, only to proceed into telling you how they need to shift money at the financial year end, or how they have a person working in their

department who isn't needed, or how a budget for one field isn't enough while there is always plenty left in another. How many times have you seen new tarmac go down in March, or lamp posts painted?

So to the idea.

Give every civil servant their national insurance contributions back if their department, school, ward, station, quango saves a percentage of its budget. Suddenly the budget becomes their money and the responsibilities that go with it, for most civil servants this will mean a considerable income boost. The requirement to save would be given to each organisation, and can easily be calculated so the savings far exceed the tax income lost to the government (in point of fact civil servants are not truly taxed, again a point I will come to later).

Suddenly you will find that people will work to save, and that those that don't will be pushed by the rest of the organisation into saving not spending. This would trim a very fat civil service.

I have watched time and again money being spent by bodies that would not have been spent if the people making the decisions were spending their own money. I don't even mean cutting service or quality of care, I am talking about the covering of a school quadrangle when the school is due to move to a new site in two years, I am talking about a University changing its name from The University of Teesside to Teesside University, I am talking about Blackpool Council changing its logo because the previous administration had introduced the previous one, I am talking about a council yard keeping all of its bags of cement under one roof and not in batch's that separate people have bought throughout the yard, I am talking about not needing these Highway Vans with LED screens that pop up out of the top, I am talking about the Police using Skoda Octavia's and not 5 Series BMW's. I could fill page after page of these purchases which wouldn't happen if it was the buyers own money. At the moment every one of the people responsible for spending money will justify an act, but these same people would change their thinking if it were their own money. I am sure that if you are reading this as a teacher you are thinking that how are you going to save budget without harming the school, and why should you, after all you are there to teach. You may not be in control of the school budget, but you may be in control of small purchases where you have always bought from the same stationary company, or a light switch. You will benefit from the school saving money overall as it won't just be the head that sees their National Insurance back, but every member of the school, from Head to Dinner ladies. The head will stand to benefit most because proportionally they will earn more.

What can and can't be saved I couldn't begin to work out, but I am sure this will open a whole minefield of ideas, and as it is the operational managers who benefit most, instead of it falling on deaf ears, they will listen.

If each of our school saved £10,000 of their annual budget we would see a saving of £270million, and this is small fry when you look at our public service budgets. Just to point to one example and I will leave names out for fairness. One of my suppliers is also on a town council, he wanted sign's for the council, he came to me and we did the job, nobody else quoted and the Town Council paid promptly. The

same supplier wanted new signs for his premises, he got more than one competitive quote and we didn't get the work, when I asked him why, he said 'you were too expensive'.

There is a very real reason why in the long term this would be unsustainable. The biggest problem with this idea is our political system. It is simple, the administration that creates this saving will have to face up to an opposition that will promise to reinstate the budget's at the same time as giving civil servants the benefits that they received for reducing them. An opposition would use a marketing tool to regain power that they couldn't afford. The majority of the electorate do not truly understand how money is raised and from where, so will believe that this is possible. I return to the fact that we really have no need for political parties.

AND OTHER IDEAS

HM Revenue and Customs.

All the countries income is processed by this department, a modern country cannot operate without the income derived from tax. The largest proportion of money generated and processed comes via business. Businesses in the UK provide the government with most of its revenue streams, whether this is from VAT, employees PAYE, corporation tax, or a multitude of other systems put in place to generate the funds and government needs to fulfil its promises. These companies while raising the money are unpaid by the government and in some cases actually charged (employers national insurance, a charge made to companies for employing people). HM Revenue holds no prisoners and is often the reason behind company failures.

This body while expecting their unpaid tax collectors to do their work for them are bloated and hugely overstaffed. How do I know this? There are over 6 million people employed in the Public Sector, all pay tax and national insurance, yet very few of them generate income for the country and hence really do not pay tax. An employee of the state is actually being paid for by the companies and individuals who create and sell goods and services and hence pay tax on the money they earn.

If all public sector employees were paid 'net' it would make no difference to the government tax income, so a £30,000 wage for a teacher after tax and national insurance will equate to around £20,000. So pay the teacher £20,000 and don't take anything from them. It would make public sector employees actual earnings far more transparent for the employee and save a huge amount of pointless work with the Inland Revenue service.

I have been unable to find how many people work within Revenue and Customs, but assuming an average salary of £20,000 there would be a £2million wage saving for every 100 staff not needed, that's £200 million in savings if you could reduce the head count in Revenue and Customs by 10,000, and with 6 million public employees I would suggest there could be a far greater staff saving than this. Add to this all the other costs associated with staffing and the saving will be far greater.

I am at a loss as to why this is not as obvious to others as me. I can only assume that this has been talked about within the Revenue service, and gone no further, the pain of implementing would be far too great!

STOP FOREIGN AID

We are in no position at this present time to give money to foreign countries and while this is very philanthropic it costs the tax payer over £5billion, money we are borrowing.

APPRENTICESHIPS

We have a huge problem with over £8billion being spent on Income Support, and 42% of those under the age of twenty four, costing the country over £3billion. I run a company with twenty employees and no apprentices. I understand there is funding available for apprentices, but as usual with this kind of government initiative the businesses have to go and look for the funding.

I would propose that apprentices are funded in an entirely different way. All business pays tax, either as sole traders, partnerships, or under various forms of limited companies. Give the businesses the opportunity to take their own employees on and fund them via a tax return, for every apprentice the company employs it gets a rebate on its tax bill. The company will have to place the student with a college on day release, but rather than the college finding the student a place, the employer places his or her apprentice in the college and on the course they think is most suitable for the employer. We would get a two fold benefit over night. Colleges would have to cater for the employer because that will account for a large part of their funding, and the courses will become completely relevant to work. The colleges will not need to pander to the Learning and Skill's Council and hence another tier of government bureaucracy can be reduced or removed.

The whole system could be policed by Chartered Accountants, and there would be an awful lot of companies who don't pay sufficient tax to cover the cost of the apprentice and would hence be subsidising them from their own revenue. I think that the government could fund through the tax system up to the full wage of the apprentice and still be in pocket on the money that is currently being spent either in Social Security or Quango's.

I have yet to meet an employer who wouldn't take on at least one apprentice. I have also found that there are no relevant college courses for my industry, as the vocational courses on offer at the moment fit with the larger common employment sectors, building, admin, mechanics etc.

When a tax return is filled in there would be a bottom line with tax due to the countries purse, just above this the question could easily be 'have you an apprentice' and for every apprentice your company employs you can remove say £8000 from your tax bill, simple and to the point.

Suddenly the skills shortages are being filled and the apprentice's that disappeared at the end of the eighties will re emerge, and with it the need for so many school leavers to go on to higher education. If you look at the age group of forty plus year olds there were far fewer graduates but a huge amount more job trained staff.

So by adopting this apprenticeship scheme the government will remove people from Social Security and they will be trained for skills that this country needs through this century, job's equals wealth, finally we will get a higher education sector geared to the countries needs, and a greatly reduced higher education bill as more school leavers choose to get an apprenticeship.

SOCIAL SECURITY

There is a whole class of people who stay on social security as an easy option. They don't need to work because the State looks after them, the State being you and I with our tax contributions. While all of us appreciate the fall back that the State offers we begrudge the people who are on Social Security because they don't want to work, and to see these same people with 42" televisions and holidays tends to hurt the tax payer even more.

Why does the State give people cash in the form of Giro's or any other 'cash' payment. It would be very easy for the people on Social Security to be given payments in the form of non redeemable food, gas, electricity, rent vouchers. Make it an offence for pawn brokers/cash converters to take the vouchers in exchange for money, and make certain by whatever means that the retailers can't accept them for non essential items such as cigarettes and alcohol. There will be a mass movement into the employment market when people realise that they don't have money to smoke or go out on a Friday night. I have no understanding why tax payers should fund other people's pleasure. There is of course circumstances where people are unable to work, health being the obvious one, again food vouchers should be used, but then this wouldn't give these people available access to any other stimulation, so I propose that they get a small portion of their social paid in money so at least the cinema or the pub become an option.

I would limit the rent available for social security. There are huge quantities of Landlords exploiting the State, they know that rent will be paid and can hence demand. If the rent available is reduced these Landlords will have little to do but accept what is given, what else can they do with their properties. £17.8 billion, there must be a major saving here.

The state could negotiate deals with the major retailers; they would be in rather a large bargaining chair, so there are further reductions in public expenditure to be made. Imagine if Asda, Tesco et al allowed a five percent discount on foods bought with state vouchers, five percent of £28billion, you do the maths.

All of the figures I have quoted above assume that people would remain on social security which I doubt, who wants to live on bread and milk without the chance of a beer or a cigarette. Even if the private sector can't supply jobs for all of this section of society I am sure the State could offer part time work, food vouchers reduced, cash in pocket streets cleaned.

PENSIONS

Why should the tax payer have to fund the pensions of State employees, when in a huge amount of cases they are either not or struggling to contribute to their own pensions. There should be a system in place where private pensions are offered to State employees, the Union's would struggle to complain if their members were given the option to contribute or take their pension allocation and spend it on what they want, the burden would then be removed from the tax payer and there wouldn't be the huge disparity between private and state pensions so the private sector would be happier, and most importantly of all the pension burden on the country would be reduced to purely State pension, it may even mean that the State Pension could increase. This would save the country trillions of pounds.

EUROPE

This is of huge interest to me. There was a referendum in the 70's to ask whether Britain should be part of what was then called the Common Market, and we as a country chose to be a member and that was the end of it!

The Common Market, as the name suggest was a place of trade it has now become a huge rambling federation, and the voter in most European countries haven't had a say as to whether they want this or not, and the countries that have had votes such as Ireland were eventually bullied into agreement- Federal Europe saying we don't like that answer so we will ask the question again until we get the right answer. The last Labour Government promised a referendum on Europe as a marketing cry when they were chasing power, but when the people gave them the power they back tracked and refused to give the voter the choice.

Britain gives Europe £4billion net a year, and indeed the anti Europe lobbyists would argue that we actually contribute a lot more because we don't get to choose how the money that comes back to us is spent. While a full withdrawal from Europe is probably not a good idea (as Europe as a whole is Britain's biggest trading partner), there is an argument that Europe will still trade with the UK in the same way in or out. We as a country have given up part of our sovereignty and I think there is a under current of dissent in Britain.

I also ask the question as to whether again this isn't just another Government self interest society. A number of high ranking British Politicians have gone on when their careers have ended here to greater heights within the European Union, just look at Kinnock and Mandelson, have these people got the countries best interest at heart or their own? Truly what has European Union given us looking back over the last thirty odd years, and if you can think of anything was it something that we as a country needed? Do you know who your Euro MP is, do you care, and have you a clue what they do apart from earning more money than you?

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