



Travelogue No 23



Job For The Boys - Final Proof

Gordon Brown promised to increase regulation to deal with collapsing financial institutions, but his biggest move to date is a massive decrease in regulation.

The PM allowed the money men to ignore the normal rules when he let Lloyds TSB sidestep a Competition Commission inquiry to take over HBOS. This forced deregulation is one more piece of financial blackmail by the bankers: give us our bail-outs and exemptions or the economy gets it !! But there were other pressures on Brown too.

Firstly, Lloyds TSB's board is Gordon-friendly. Brown has good relations with Chairman Victor Blank, while the board includes Sandy Leitch, a Labour donor whose many good works for the party were finally rewarded with a knighthood. David Manning, Tony Blair's old foreign policy advisor, also sits on the board. The bank had wanted to take over HBOS for some time but knew it would not get past anti-monopoly laws. Brown's bypassing of an inquiry represents a huge and

valuable gift from one part of the establishment to another - the "establishment" Brown claimed in his speech to the Labour party conference that he wanted to change rather than join in.

Secondly, Brown had another pressing reason to want to stabilise HBOS. Thanks to Brown's private finance initiatives (PFI), the bank is central to NHS hospitals and other public services. During the Labour conference his wife Sarah took part in a well-publicised visit to Manchester Children's Hospital, part of a £420m PFI scheme. Via various PFI consortia, HBOS is helping to run 12,000 beds in hospitals from London to Halifax. It also finances more than 30 school projects, covering some 20,000 school places.

The ultimate financial effect of an HBOS collapse on these PFIs is hard to calculate, but the disruption would have been severe. Instead of "transferring risk" to the private sector, PFI has given the public sector another pressing reason to bail out the banks.

Number Crunching

£35,000 Amount in Customer's savings which is guaranteed, even if the banks go out of business.

£375,000 Half-year bonus which is guaranteed for Richard Pym, boss of Bradford & Bingley.

True Story

Jacques Cousteau Expedition



More Inside This Exciting Issue, p3



Larry's fabulous 267 score



Heard On The Circuit

“Adam, Daaahling!” trilled killer-bimbo Amanda Platell when she spotted Sky’s Political Editor Adam Boulton at the *Grauniad’s* Labour conference booze-up. Cue much gushing and air kissing. No such gush for the young chap Boulton was talking to, a nondescript nerdy type in thick-rimmed glasses, presumably a junior policy donk from a think-tank. Amanda waited for him to obey the rules of etiquette at media parties: when a celeb greets another celeb, all non-celebs in the vicinity must instantly sod off. Yet he continued to hover. “Who are you and what are you doing here?” she demanded crossly, grabbing the conference pass from round his neck for a closer look. Then she read the name on the pass: James Murdoch.

Later in the evening Amanda was seen berating Boulton, whom she somehow held partly responsible for the instant death of her career prospects at News International. “Why didn’t you warn me?” she wailed.



Advertisement



Casey R are holding a Property Auction in Mabprachan Lake

Following the huge success of our previous auction last month, when nothing was sold, and nobody turned up, Casey R will be offering Homes, Land and Water to the unsuspecting public.

We are a flash and trendy Agency who offer an honestly unreliable service to the unwary. Always on the move, be sure to check that our office is still there before wasting fruitless time looking for our auction venue. Local maps won’t help, nor will the locals.

Not sure how an Auction works?? Then just slip along and chat to Poor, Kunt, Soon or Layta at our office, or why not pitch up with a suitcase of lolly on the day and bid for something you really don’t want. You know it makes sense !!!

Contact: Khun Dutchy @ 0381563890 or Khun Dickie Fruitcake @ 0381768217

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Frogmen Hop To Lakeside To Repair Ruptured Water Supply



A near disaster was almost averted at Lakeside after renegade fishermen snagged the pump and cut off water supplies. By chance, the dynamic duo had called into the Gourmet Chef for a sumptuous repast of steak and kidney pies. Owner and chief chef Lee is an accomplished deep sea diver and his colleague, also Leigh, agreed to come over to help solve the problem. Or that's what we all thought !!!

Arriving with Hull Rugby League fanatic, Martin who was to act as H & S in a microscopic plastic boat, the boys duly turned up to explore Lake Chaknork. With visibility akin to diving into one of Lee's steak and kidney pies, this was to be no easy task. After two hours and air running out, the pump was located. Unfortunately the effort to tie a marker buoy to the equipment failed as they only managed to attach the line to some floating debris. By now the weather had closed in and a thunderstorm beckoned. Steve Redgrave would have been impressed at the turn of speed exhibited by Martin in returning to *terra firma* !! With no marker in sight, another attempt will be made in a few days.



Quips Of Excellence

They couldn't find the artist, so they hung the picture.

Frank Zappa

I am convinced the name Ursula Andress is a spoonerism.

John Simon

I have a poor memory for names, but I never remember a face.

W.C.Fields

All a child can hope for is that its father be present at the conception.

Joe Orton

How Privacy Works

May 2007: Legal firm Schillings write to media editors warning them that to reveal the location of a house recently purchased by footballer Steven Gerrard and his partner Alex would breach their right to privacy under the human rights act.

September 2008: *OK!* magazine features "WORLD EXCLUSIVE: Alex and Steven Gerrard exclusively invite *OK!* to their secret Portuguese mansion."

Game Fair To Be Banned??

Meanwhile in Woodstock, Oxfordshire, (Pop. 2,924), the new mayor is upset about traffic jams on the A44 caused by the annual Game Fair at Blenheim Palace. The two days of 'chaos' were a 'catastrophe', Cllr Peter Jay said last week. Indeed, it was a 'grave violation of the Public's rights and welfare'. The Game Fair might have to be banned unless the traffic was sorted out. Blimey!!!

But you probably would feel that way if the A44 went past the end of your road. And one must expect strong opinions from a former British Ambassador to Washington, economics editor of the BBC and Chief of Staff to the late Cap'n Bob Maxwell !!! Yes, this particular Peter Jay, it is indeed he.

An exciting career move, then, for the man once tipped as a future world leader by *Time* magazine. What next ?? Might Radio Oxford hire him to do the traffic news ??



DF preparing for battle



Sartorial elegance at the first



And they're off !! (the fairway)



Oh God, where did that one go ??



Heading for crocodile territory



Please don't roll backwards again



Now which club should I use - the shovel ??



Gracious in defeat, DF waits for a G & T



Ed: You are considered a legend in both Europe and Asia. To what do you attribute the most important aspect of this claim is ??

JB: Well, in reality, it is only one's natural *persona* that people see. I always believe that the first meeting is the most important. Thereafter people judge for themselves. Some people you like, others you avoid like the plague. I have been fortunate in my ability to communicate with an extremely diverse audience.

Ed: Your love of Thailand is renowned. Tell us more about the beginnings.

JB: I first came here in 1975. I was effectively on business to discover the benefits of utilising Thai labour in the Emirates against the popular use of Sikh artisans. It came down to economics and the employment of Sikh labour won the day.

Ed: What were your early impressions of Thailand?

JB: I was overwhelmed with the politeness, the generosity and sheer desire to assist visitors. Being a new visitor, I was concerned that the language would be a problem. Thais go a long way to help by speaking English in schools and they get a real kick out of being able to communicate in a foreign language. The Thai culture is one of the most interesting and stimulating in the world. I really enjoyed the variety and positiveness that came from those early days.

Ed: Your formative years in Thailand led you to many future visits to the Kingdom. Tell us about the middle period when you became a regular visitor.

JB: Yes, I was a cricketer and was playing for my country, Wales. We had played in the 1979 World Cup and I had the great privilege to meet HM the Queen. It was through the great game of cricket that I met many of my long term friends. I was invited to join a group of players in 1985 who were playing an inaugural six aside competition in Bangkok. Unfortunately, I was in throes of a vitriolic and acrimonious divorce which made an overseas trip impossible. It was only when the divorce became final that I was able, in 1986, to return to Kingdom. From then on I have been able to participate in cricketing events in both Bangkok and Chiang Mai.

Ed: Your latter years have enabled you to eventually retire in the Kingdom. Talk about the circumstances that led you to that decision.

JB: Actually, it is a rather difficult subject for me. My life in the UK become intolerable. Firstly, the death of my second wife in 2002 from a dreadful illness, then my eldest sister passed away unexpectedly in 2006. Simultaneously, I was issued with eviction papers by the family Trust, SG Hambros, fully endorsed by my own children. The reasons for this disgraceful behaviour is, to this day, a complete mystery to me. It was clear that abandonment by one's own family, apart from my sister Jane, was the final straw. Thailand, with such close family ties and wonderful culture, was only a few hours from this hellish scenario, so on the plane I got.

Ed: Now that you have made this momentous decision, what are your feelings for your new home?

JB: In many ways, I wish I had done this years ago. I am blessed with a wonderful girlfriend, a wonderful family set up with my brother in law, and the most supportive people who genuinely believe in family first. There are many idiosyncrasies in Thailand which the foreigner has to come to terms with, but in the main, the benefits far outweigh the negatives. Stress levels and angst are now manageable with minimal contact with the parasites who caused such hurt and dismay. History will call them and their time will come. At least my time is now, where the benefits far exceed the deficits.

Ed: What do you miss most about leaving your previous home and friends?

JB: Again a difficult question to answer. Where I lived was a huge place with much land and a house with many rooms. I have to say that I miss my fellow workmates, my friends and the Cricket Club. These were people I grew up with and to have all of this torn ruthlessly from under you was a very bitter pill to swallow. The efforts to provide a property with a lucrative business for eventual investment for the children obviously meant nothing to them. They, and their parasitic advisors, decided to pull the rug, regardless of workers and associated sub-contractors. Yes, I miss my UK mates very much and all the cricket fun that was so important to the region.

Ed: Thank you very much, JB, for an eloquent and honest appraisal of your reasons for coming to the Kingdom of Thailand. Chok Dee and may your dreams be fulfilled.

A full transcript of the interview above can be obtained in the Supplement to Travelogue 24. Ed



Gloucester Gipsies in Thailand



Shock, Horror - Lock up your nubile's !!!!

The 40s, 50s, 60s Tour of Thailand consisted of Mike Ter-
rington, Mark Briers, Bill Johnson and new boy Richard
Akenhead. A few days at Lakeside followed by four days in
Pattaya enabled the boys to take a well earned break from
the drudgeries of Blighty. Arrival at Lakeside to specialist
bag unloaders Khun Tuk and her friend enabled the
youngsters (!) to experience Thai hospitality as never be-
fore. Ham on the bone, Briers with bone on the ham, and a
typical Lakeside welcome was extended.

Golf at Emerald with a stunning lunch at the Camel's Toe
saw the boys enjoying a fine dessert and local hospitality.
Night time activities included Walking Street and Soi 6, the
very essence of life in the tropics. The Cats experience left
Akers unsure where to look, but no worries for the old
stagers who immediately took down the particulars. Ter-
rors and the Laird of Nongprue meanwhile entertained the
Lakeside girls at Bowling in Pattaya, The Avenue. An ex-
cellent chance for Mike to enjoy a full on Muay Thai mas-
sage. A great trip, to be repeated soon. Jonno waxed lyrical
about Lakeside and will be back for more pleasure very
soon. For Sir William and JB, the fun with this excellent
team of pleasure seekers cannot be repeated soon enough.



Advertisement



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Come and be a part of the last vestiges of a
bygone era. British colonialism at its finest
in a remote corner of Asia. Gin and tonic on
the balcony, wicker chairs and pith helmets -
all for your indulgence at the superb Lake-
side Lodge, outside Pattaya in the Chonburi
Province of Thailand. Old roués preferred.
Lashings of Assam tea, with a slice of lemon,
John West's finest tinned kippers, hot Bovril/
Marmite and Coleman's English mustard -
all available as a daily delight. Stories of der-
ring-do, escape from the Fuzzy Wuzzies, pur-
sued by Bengal Tigers and ravaged by den-
gue fever - there can be no
more perfect way to relax in
the evening. Sir William will
regale you with fabulous en-
counters from every corner
of the globe. **Enquire now,
positions very limited.**



Just Horsing About



An unusual pose by Gracie, a young filly
trapped by her head in an old tree. Unable
to free herself, her whinnying alerted a local
passer-by. Jason Harshbanger from Pull-
man, West Virginia, retrieved his tools and
set about releasing her. With careful use of a
chainsaw, he managed to cut away the tim-
ber from around the animal's head. Gracie
escaped from her ordeal with only a few cuts
and bruises, and a very dented pride. A full
recovery is expected and the tree has been
felled. It is not known why Gracie put her
head into the tree which resembled Winnie
the Pooh and the honey tree.