

**Making £2.53 billion for the Government, in two months.  
From the Memoirs of Jason Briggs.**

**Part II**

So I start again to power-point the Big Idea to the PM. This time I race through it so as to avoid his being diverted again and knowing that his attention span has been measured at four seconds. I have his attention for longer than that, though because I repeat I can make £2.53 billion for the government in two months.

Of course, such dosh doesn't come from selling any old asset. Oh no. So I tell them. Well, the PM doesn't seem to like it. His eyes bulge (very rare) and his face goes beetroot coloured. I give a quick glance at the rinky-dink chancellor - he's gone white. The Dark Lord is impassive. Then the PM erupts.

'Are you out of your mind, Briggs?' he screams. 'Have you gone raving bloody mad? Sell the House of Commons! Get out! Get out!' Oh, well. It was worth a try, I say to myself, as I close the lap-top. But then the Dark Lord intervenes.

'Prime Minister. Perhaps we should ask Briggs to expand on this proposal.'

'What for? He's completely mad!'

'It's a lot of money.'

'Good God! Have you taken leave of your senses as well?'

'There would be no need to let it become public news, Prime Minister. And there is that payment to the IMF coming up next week. Briggs. Would you tell us your proposal again, in the simplest of terms?'

'With pleasure,' I say. 'You sell the House of Commons to a buyer I have identified and then lease it back. The buyer would pay £2.2 billion. Immediately. He would lease it back to you for a peppercorn rent.'

'Who is this buyer?' snarls the PM.

'Nanking Global Leisure Developments.'

'What?' He screams. 'Sell the House to a damned circus promoter? Get out!'

Again the Dark Lord intervenes. 'Prime Minister. £2.2 billion. And immediately. Tell us, Briggs, where is the rest of the revenue going to come from. The other point 33 billion.'

'Nanking want to have the right to allow conferences in the House---'

'Outsiders in the House?' screams the PM. 'Out, damn you!'

'-----for which we would get half the revenue.'

'Ah,' says the Dark Lord. 'Would such a thing work? What type of people would want it for conferences?'

'We already have expressions of serious interest from the Clintons, Tony Blair, Sarkozy, Berlusconi, Mugabe----

'What??'

'----and Obama.'

There is a silence. The Dark Lord smiles in that Cassius way of his, leans forward conspiratorially and says to the PM,

'Prime Minister, there is some merit in this. It helps enormously with the need to pay the IMF next week, which might be difficult, as you know. We need not let it be known that the House has been sold. Absolutely not. And, of course, there are good photo opportunities with the interested conferenciers.'

'H'm,' he responds.

'Briggs,' says the Dark Lord. 'Thank you for your presentation. You may go now.'

So I leave. Not a bad outcome, really. Huge bonus on this. I knew it would be a bit hairy with the PM. But the Dark Lord was the one who put me in touch with Nanking in the first place, so I reckoned on his coming out on my side.