Published on *Adam Smith Institute* (http://www.adamsmith.org)

Power Lunch with Digby Jones [1]

Written by **Tom Clougherty** [2] | Wednesday 30 January 2008

Digby, Lord Jones ? formerly director-general of the CBI and now Minister of State for Trade and Investment ? was our Power Lunch guest this week. He spoke very candidly and engagingly about his role as a GOAT (government of all the talents) and sparked some fascinating discussion around the table. What really shone through was the clarity of his ministerial remit (to promote the British brand overseas), and his enthusiasm for and expertise in getting the job done. That always seems to be a rare quality in politicians, but then, I suppose, Digby Jones is not really a politician anyway. He may have taken the government whip, but he has not joined the Labour Party.

It made me wonder whether there might be some mileage in appointing more government ministers ? or even secretaries of state ? who are not MPs. US cabinet members are typically far more qualified for their positions than their British counterparts. The US Treasury Secretary, for instance, usually comes from a financial rather than political background ? and this is surely a good thing. Thinking really radically, couldn't we directly elect Prime Ministers, have them appoint top quality cabinets, and turn Parliament into a US-style legislature, with its own agenda and powerful committees to grill government ministers? Well, perhaps not, but there may be something in the idea. I'm probably just getting carried away with US election fever...

blog comments powered by Disqus [4]

Source URL: http://www.adamsmith.org/blog/miscellaneous/power-lunch-with-digby-jones

Links:
[1] http://www.adamsmith.org/blog/miscellaneous/power-lunch-with-digby-jones
[2] http://www.adamsmith.org/authors/tom-clougherty
[3] http://disqus.com/?ref_noscript
[4] http://disqus.com