

## [Credit to Cameron](#) [1]

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David Cameron's challenge upon taking office was monumental. After 13 years of Gordon Brown's fiscal incontinence and Tony Blair's failure to reform public services, national debt levels are incomprehensible and the government sector bloated and inefficient. All this against the wider issue facing all mature democracies of a burgeoning ageing population supported by a relatively dwindling workforce. This certainly wasn't what Cameron expected when he first thought of becoming leader of the Conservatives.

Now that he's grappling with the mess, there's no shortage of conflicting advice from left, right and centre, often vitriolic, merciless and downright abusive. You do wonder why anybody ever wants to become a politician. Us ASI types haven't hesitated to put the boot in on a range of issues from high tax rates to green subsidies, from immigration control to misguided infrastructure projects, from EU vacillation to ineffective foreign aid.

Yet, this past week, Cameron looks like he's about to take on yet more vested interests, having already riled up the benefits industry, doctors & nurses and teachers & academics. First out of the gate was Tom Winsor's report on police pay and conditions, suggesting fat coppers shape up or ship out, that useless coppers get sacked and that good coppers get paid more than bad ones. Then came suggestions that the government is planning to end national pay scales for civil servants in favour of pay being set against local conditions.

Remembering Blair's comment about 'the scars on my back' from attempts to reform the public sector, Cameron's persistence on widening this front is admirable, given the full knowledge of what to expect in terms of more outraged howling.

But, in for a penny, in for a pound, so Godspeed, Mr Cameron. Unleash Home Secretary Theresa May and Chancellor George Osborne because the fact is you won't succeed with your top priority of taming government finances unless you tame the public sector. Just ask Tony.

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