

“A DEEP DEPRESSION IS HANGING OVER SHELL TOWER”

The above comment appeared in The Daily Telegraph on 2nd April. The story was about the latest coup by BP, which has relegated Shell to third place in the world ranking of oil companies.

Never before has a multinational suffered so many reversals in such a short space of time. Shell's financial reputation, status, and capital value, have all been severely diminished in less than a year.

BP was faced with precisely the same market conditions as Shell, but cleverly turned the situation to its advantage by capitalising on the depressed price of oil. In stark contrast, Shell's antiquated “politburo” - the “CMD”, dithered, dallied, and danced the Macarena.

All of the debacles – the losses of £1bn a month, the abortive merger with Texaco, the fire sale of assets including landmark properties, and the relegation to third place, all occurred after Mr Moody-Stuart took command. You may recall that I first criticised his leadership qualities soon after the 1998 AGM.

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I heard at first hand his up-beat speech, which gave not a hint of any impending financial meltdown at Shell. I compared his address to the “welcome aboard” speech given by the Captain of the Titanic. Many Shell employees probably thought I was mad.

I am sorry to say that the same leadership flaws that became apparent when I first crossed swords with Mr Moody-Stuart have contributed towards the current sad state of affairs.

Following our adverts in Time Magazine, the Shell Shareholders website has received record numbers of visits from international financial institutions, news media, PR consultants, ad agencies, Shell shareholders, and numerous oil companies, including BP. Our most frequent visitors are from Shell companies around the world. They too must be stunned at what we have to say.

Why has Mark Moody-Stuart got into such an incredible pickle? Potential merger partners such as Texaco and Chevron have almost certainly been put off by the fact that he has made a laughing stock of Shell by his failure to deal with us. He is unable to act because he does not want a McShell libel case, particularly when Shell lawyers know that we can substantiate our allegations of outright sleaze and corrupt business practices at Shell UK.

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