Up until very recently many sections of Scottish society refused to accept the simple fact that Rangers are in grave danger of ceasing to exist. Now each passing day seems to bring more startling revelations regarding the club's grievous financial state. The shocking disclosures regarding the takeover and the subsequent questions about the 'missing' money dispels any lingering notion that all is well at Ibrox. If nothing else, the impending Rangers' nightmare has finally concentrated many complacent minds which chose to ignore the mounting evidence that financial meltdown was an economic certainty at Govan.

Many commentators who hitherto were conspicuous by their silence are now the most vocal in expressing their concern for one of "Scotland's great institutions'.

It seems only reasonable therefore that Celtic supporters should ask themselves the question, do we actually need Rangers?

I listened to Gordon Dalziel on Radio Clyde try to offer a justification for Rangers' continued existence. Anyone who has ever listened to Dalziel speak will excuse me for using him as an example of the current school of thought which seems to be emerging from the traditional Scottish football media. Ex-Ranger Dalziel bizarrely attempted to speak for Celtic supporters when he said; " I know Celtic supporters and they would never want to see Rangers go to the wall. There is so much history and tradition between the clubs that it just would not work. The Celtic supporters would not want Rangers to go away, they always look forward to the big

games against their old enemy…. implications for tv revenue……great atmosphere…blah blah…....”

Dalziel’s general tone was supplicatory, almost begging Celtic supporters to consider the dire consequences for their club if his beloved team should be liquidated. He also advanced the secondary argument that Rangers’ demise would result in catastrophic consequences for the ‘wee clubs’. Now the intellectually challenged Gordon Daziel might not be the brightest bulb on the Christmas tree, but it is fair to say that his points need answers.

Does Celtic need Rangers? No, absolutely not. One tends to forget that Rangers are in their current difficulties due to their own making. They cannot point the finger at external forces and blame them. Celtic supporters could argue that there are now real questions about the legitimacy of Rangers’ ‘successes’ throughout the Murray reign. Quite apart from borrowing money at suicidal levels, Rangers compounded their folly by being involved in highly dubious tax avoidance matters which undoubtedly handed an unfair advantage to them. One could argue that many of the problems which bedevil Scottish football clubs are a consequence of trying to compete with the Rangers policy of throwing loads of (borrowed) money as transfer costs and players’ wages went through the roof.

This was the era when Murray spoke of abandoning Scotland as it was not big enough for the mighty Rangers. Murray and his acolytes in the media had no qualms about shafting Celtic back then, when the coffers were filled with money and the trophy room full. As Murray tossed pieces of succulent lamb to his lackies in the Scottish press, there was not a whimper of criticism regarding Murray’s stated claim of going to the mythical “next level’ by fleeing Scotland. Celtic and the rest would be left to fend for themselves in the brave new world of a hunless Scotland.

Since those halcyon days of Murray bullshit, Scottish football has seriously downsized. Television money is paltry and attendances are suffering with most clubs struggling to survive. The one exception to the rule is Celtic which is a professionally run club with people from the Board down, who know what they are doing. Celtic cannot help or determine the fate of Scottish football, all it can do is to ensure that its own house is in order. That they have done and in the process have laid down a template for the future. The new strategy of identifying young talent and developing them is the correct strategy to follow. Being based in The Netherlands, I can state that it is exactly the strategy that Ajax and PSV follow. Like Scotland, the Dutch do not have access to the big tv money as they are designated a small country. The lack of big money has not stopped the Dutch continue to develop genuine world class players. Their league is also very competitive with provincial clubs like AZ Alkmaar and FC Twente winning the Eredvisie in recent years. One could argue that the disappearance of Rangers for a few years at least would do much to encourage the smaller Scottish clubs. For example, when Rangers were in the doldrums in the early eighties both Aberdeen and Dundee United made it to European finals.

There is of course a moral issue, Rangers should be punished if it has been proved they cheated. They should be judged by the same criteria as other clubs and the SFA should not use different rules. Any attempt to circumvent these rules should be strongly contested by Celtic publicly if the issue should arise.

On a personal note, I would not shed a tear to see Rangers go into liquidation and never resurface. What they and their supporters represent is a throwback to a mindset which belongs in 1950's monochrome, a world far removed from a multi-cultural, tolerant society. It is a club which rapidly expanded for the simple reason that it appealed to the basest instincts of a section of society which loathed Irish Catholic immigrants. Their sole raison d'etre was to put the uppity immigrants in their place, with the foot always firmly on his throat.

Gordon Dalziel might want to reflect that when he played for Rangers, it was a club that had an active policy of not signing Catholics. I would argue that the mere existence of Rangers football club is a blight on Scottish society. The events in Manchester a few years ago showed them for what they really are. Right wing, sectarian and violent. Celtic does not need them, Scotland doesn't need them. They are history.