"There are known knowns; there are things we know we know.....we also know there are known unknowns."

As Rangers slipped formally into administration with the clock approaching three pm on St Valentine's Day 2012 those brilliantly absurd words of Donald Rumsfeld perhaps took on some semblance of meaning – a measure of the staggeringly strange days we are living through.

What do we know? Rangers, by any measure, are in deep trouble. Those of us, and there are many, who have been following the tax case for well over a year should not be surprised at that. And yet, still, there's a sense of unreality about all of this. In those dark days – the late 1980s and much of the 1990s – could we have ever imagined that the circumstances would so conspire against our oldest rivals that would threaten their very existence? No, we could not.

Such a possibility has come about though gross financial miss-management by David Murray, and the banking crisis of 2008. It is also a result of Craig Whyte now being at the helm of the club. This is a man about whom we know staggeringly little. He has, it has been said, a "colourful past" in business. We have no idea how much money he has personally, nor whether

he actually owns the major assets of the club – Murray Park and Ibrox itself. We do not even know the detail of his ‘plan’ to steer Rangers through this crisis.

Let us put that to one side and look at both yesterday and yesteryear. Despite our enjoyment, our *Schadenfreude* over recent events, they will and must impact on Celtic too and indeed the rest of Scottish football.

That is why it was so heartening to hear Peter Lawwell so clearly say “we don’t need Rangers” in order to flourish and that the Parkhead board have “a stand-alone strategy, a stand-alone financial plan.” If that truly is the case – and there has been plenty of time to prepare for a Rangers-less landscape – then we have little to fear.

Celtic has a solid fan base that would remain in place come hell or high water; a point missed by outsiders is that supporters are not defied by being some imagined opposite of Rangers. The club are in reasonably good financial shape, and seem to be pursuing players through both the academy route and fairly priced markets in Europe.

The truth that is problems at Ibrox present an opportunity to Celtic – one we should not shy away from: get the strategy right on and off the pitch and we will dominate Scottish football for a generation to come.

Let history teach us this lesson. During the years of WWII Celtic took an overly relaxed view to the watered-down versions of the league and cup competitions – winning nothing outside Glasgow competitions, while Rangers swept the board, creating an aura of invincibility around the club. In short, they made the most of our lapse in judgement, as they would do again in the years preceding the arrival of the Golden Bunnet himself, one F. McCann.

It should also be noted that, strange as it seems, there is opportunity too here for Rangers. My expectation is they will survive, as some much diminished rump and therefore be left with no option but to rely solely on youth. Such a policy would be difficult in the short-term, but could

eventually reap a rich harvest.

Scotland badly needs a crop of young, technically gifted players in the mould of James Forrest, something to reignite football in this country and boost our prestige abroad. If another unintended consequence of Rangers' battle with HMRC is a reduction in TV money into the SPL in coming seasons, then we too must take note, and not rest on our laurels, but, to use another – saner –, expression from America stay 'ahead of the curve'.