

TO: THE EDITOR
LABOUR RESEARCH

BRITISH LEYLAND BLACKLIST

Your recent article on "Economic Leak" was very interesting. The following facts may help to fill it out.

The statement by Sir Gerald Thorley that he had "probably" seen the Economic League document is a little extraordinary. The document was sent to him, as President, and to all members of the League's Central Council, who were asked to get in touch with Thorley and give him their views about the very unsatisfactory state of affairs within the League, which this staff report revealed. He is therefore either evasive, or "ga-ga"!

The Economic League staff were, and still are, concerned at the dramatic fall-off in services to member companies, and the pathetic leadership of the present Director-General. They had hoped that the Report would galvanise the League's Council of industrialists into taking some firm action to remedy the situation. But nothing has been done. So resignations have followed - the most notable being that of the Director of what was the League's biggest and wealthiest Region, until Peter Savill (the Director General) destroyed it because he was jealous of its strength - David Laver of London & S.E. Region.

The League is now trying to recruit companies, and retain old ones, by giving them the impression that it can do work for them, or is doing work for industry generally, whereas it has very few staff in the field to do any work. The figures you published speak for themselves.

As for labour screening, this service is based upon records originally supplied to the League when it recruited a senior Special Branch officer not long after the war. Since then, it has been added to by including the names of "troublemakers" in the original list of known Communist Party members.

The screening is carried out by phoning, or sending lists in to the League's "Research Department", which is at 90 London Road, Thornton Heath, Surrey. Letters are sent to P.O. Box 251, Thornton Heath. The ex-directory phone number is 01.684 7550. Checks are done against a code number given to companies. The present series is in the 2000 range. So an enquiry over the phone against number 2345 might provide an answer.

As for British Leyland, they set up their own company screening system some years ago. It was located in Ware, Herts. under the name of B.G. Research. It initially included all those people whom B.L. would not employ for any reason - stealing company property, troublemakers, dismissed for any reason, etc. And it also included a Telex check to the Economic League against its political record and its record of troublemakers. This system was originally set up by two senior Thames Valley police officers, who have since left, and it is now run by B.L. staff.

The man in charge of the four girls in the League's Thornton Heath office is David Knight-Dewell, who lives at 18 Rickfield, Gossops Green, Crawley, Sussex. Tel: 0293 20468