

# ECONOMIC LEAGUE

Limited by Guarantee

7, WINE OFFICE COURT FLEE STREET LONDON EC4A 3BY

Telephone 01-353 7672

5 May 1987

PERSONAL

The Hon. G.C.D. Jeffreys  
Director and Secretary  
Secombe Marshall and Campion PLC  
7 Birchin Lane  
LONDON EC3V 9DE

Dear Mr Jeffreys,

Mr Udal has passed to me your letter of 16th April, withdrawing your support from the League.

While we are convinced that we operate to the public good, we do not see ourselves as a charity but as giving a service to industry, namely increasing support for industry and commerce and opposing those of both political extremes who seek to undermine that support. Because this is in part a service to industry as a whole, it is clearly possible for some companies to free-load on it, but equally clearly if too many do the service dies.

As I understand it you increased your contribution to the League from 25 guineas to £30. in 1971, and there has been no increase since then. As was pointed out to you the £30. now hardly covers the cost of the direct service that you received and leaves nothing over as a contribution to the real work of the League. This contribution is way below what we would normally expect from a company of your size and standing, and I really do not see it as unappreciative to draw this to your attention.

I would be grateful if you would copy this letter to the members of your Board.

Yours sincerely,

MICHAEL NOAR  
General.

NOTES OF A MEETING OF  
THE DIRECTOR GENERAL'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
 at  
7 Wine Office Court  
 on  
TUESDAY, 25TH AUGUST, 1987.

PRESENT:

J Lawrence-Mills	- League Chairman
M Noar	- Director General
T Robinson	- Company Secretary/Director of Information
R T Brett	- Director, North Western Region
J S Bromley	- Director, North Eastern Region
E Dover	- Director, Western Region
P Leach	- Director, Eastern Region
H Macgregor	- Director, Scotland
J Winder	- Director, Midland Region/Research
A L P Weeks	- Director, South Eastern Region
P Thackery	- National Co-ordinator, Services Group
J O Udæl	- Liaison Director

The meeting began at 10.30am. - Mr Noar in the Chair.

1) MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING.

The Director General apologised for the late circulation of the notes of the previous meeting.

(a) Representation of Regional Directors Views:

Mr Brett stated that he believed the unanimous feeling at the last meeting had been against the League's high profile, and that there had been a wish that this be represented to the Policy & Finance Committee. He did not feel this had been adequately reflected in the notes.

The Director General said it was not his recollection that the Regional Directors views had been unanimous and he pointed out that the Chairman of the Policy & Finance Committee had been present when this matter had been discussed. Mr Mills assured the meeting that the Policy & Finance Committee had been made fully aware of the views of some Regional Council Directors on the League's high profile, but the Committee was still resolved without dissent to continue with the policy.

So far as the general question of communicating the Regional Directors' views to the Policy & Finance Committee was concerned the Director General said he intended to put a paper to the Policy & Finance Committee which would include the relationship between the Regional Directors, the Director General and the Policy & Finance Committee. He reminded the meeting that Regional

Directors could also submit their views to the Policy & Finance Committee via the Director General through their Regional Councils and representatives on the Policy & Finance Committee. In addition the Policy & Finance Committee had decided to invite one or two Regional Directors from time to time to attend Policy & Finance Committee Meetings to answer questions about their Region, when they would doubtless have an opportunity to make their views known directly to that Committee.

(b) Pension

The Secretary reported that Scottish Widows had stated that if only one or two Regional Directors elected to pay voluntarily to increase their life cover, there would be no advantage as they would be individually assessed. They advised individual Directors to take separate term assurance with a life company. He reported that if the life cover for all group members was to be increased to provide one additional year's pensionable salary, it would cost approximately £95. per annum, per head, or £2,500. per year. The Director General pointed out that this was not a good time to be proposing cost increases, however modest, and that the emphasis should be on savings. Mr Mills said he would refer this to the Policy & Finance Committee for further consideration.

(c) Central Register

Mr Brett stated that he had visited CRD and understood that if they were to file his cards in with their existing records, they could only handle 250 per month. He enquired when he should start moving cards and when completion was expected. He estimated that he would have 2,500 photocopies of cards to move and thought that this would therefore take a year. He had already sent the first batch, and wanted to know when and how subscribers would be informed of the new arrangements.

The Director General referred to his memo of the 15th May, 1987, to those Regions maintaining records, asking them to separate the cards used for employment checking from the research cards. He would shortly be asking the Regions to report progress. Since it would certainly take CRD time to sort cards into their full system, he proposed initially that the cards would be moved en masse, but kept separately, at CRD. Since those cards had also been "slipped" to CRD, it would be possible for CRD to assume responsibility for all employment checks immediately as they would then be able to refer to the Regional cards in their possession instead of, as at present, having to telephone the Region. They could then be sorted into the CRD system over a period of time.

The Director General stated that the Regional cards, and not photocopies, must be sent to CRD because it would take

too long to cut up and stick photocopies onto the blank cards. He wanted a date from the Regional Directors when their cards would be separated. Mr Brett replied that he could only process 250 cards per month, but the Director General stated that all cards must be sent together and must be transferred to CRD quickly. If the Regions were unable to copy them in their offices, the cards would have to be sent to CRD anyway.

The Director General stated that it would be necessary for him to agree a letter to go out from the Regions to their Members explaining the advantages of the new services. Mr Winder stated that he thought a letter would be wrong for security reasons and believed that the new services should be explained by telephone. Mr Bromley expressed reservations that some subscribers would not telephone London and queried whether FAX machines could be installed in each region so that they could still take the enquiries direct from their subscribers and FAX them to CRD.

Mr Macgregor concurred. The Director General said the problems should not be exaggerated. It was essential to separate employment checking cards, which were fully sourced and authenticated, against the "grey" cards which were used for intelligence gathering. The League needed to be able to assure any enquirer, e.g. a Select Committee, that there was no question of the "grey" cards being used for employment checks. Employment related calls must not therefore go through offices with "grey" cards.

He agreed that it would still be necessary for Regions to send up-dates of information for the cards at CRD and they could, if necessary, still maintain their own copies of these cards solely for this purpose. A number of Directors expressed fear that the new system might lead to loss of personal contact with their members. The Director General responded that three Regions did not have their own cards and it did not seem to effect their personal contacts with their subscribers. It was up to the Directors concerned to ensure continued contact.

Mr Bromley queried how many FAX enquiries could be taken at CRD. The Director General replied that he did not know, but said he favoured the use of FAX and additional FAX facilities would be provided as necessary to ensure a rapid service for subscribers.

(2) GENERAL SITUATION

The Director General tabled a chart showing the diminishing income of the League in real terms since 1958. He pointed out that income had been maintained in high inflation years and that the real decline had come since the 1979 election, and perhaps, coincided with the new trade union laws and reduced militancy. He suggested that companies might believe that there was therefore less need for the League's services which, if true,

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would present a major problem. The League's product could not be changed and it might be necessary, if a demand for League services was reduced, also to reduce expenses to keep within a lower income; thus essential research and resources provided by the League could be kept in being for the future.

All Regional Directors said they were confident of meeting their budget targets for 1987. The Director General reported that a number of Central Council subscribers had resigned from the League resulting in losses in the current year, or had given their intention of resigning next year and these represented some £40,000 of subscription income.

There was a general discussion about the financial record of the League.

(3)

#### BUDGET

The Director General recalled that for 1987 there had been a departure from the traditional system of drawing up the League's Budget.

Under the traditional system the Regional Budgets had included a significant level of inter-regional transfers. Many of these were of somewhat dubious validity and were the source of frequent disputes.

The 1987 Budget had swept all these away. It had looked at each Region's subscriptions from its own subscribers and then at its expenditure and had simply provided for a balancing payment one way or the other from the Regional Development Fund. What mattered was the total League income rather than which letter boxes it came through. Subject to any comments the Director General said he proposed the same system for 1988.

Mr Bromley expressed concern that this would, to some extent, remove the incentive for Regional Directors to maximise that income. The Director General replied that he recognised this. It would, of course, still be the case that the Regional Directors would be assessed to a considerable extent on their ability to generate subscriptions and in particular new subscriptions. However, the view that this was their sole *raison d'etre* had led to a kind of competition and lack of co-operation that was not always desirable. There was no doubt, for example, that less trouble was taken over liaison with companies paying their subscriptions to other Regions. It was important that Directors gave due weight to their other responsibilities including research, courses, seminars and the general promotion of the League.

Mr Leach queried whether the recommended subscription scale was correct and instanced the case of IBM where it had become known that they were paying proportionally less than some other subscribers. The Director General advised that in such a situation one should neither confirm or deny reports of other firms subscriptions, but explain that different subscribers pay

in respect of different sections of their organisation and it is therefore possible to read too much into such disclosures. As regards the scale, it was generally agreed that while this was a goal, companies only prepared to subscribe less should be accepted on the understanding that there would be an attempt to bring them up to the full level subsequently.

(4) WORLD IN ACTION

The Director General reported that the Independent Broadcasting Authority had conceded that the League had neither been made aware of the allegations, nor "invited to appear" on the programme to answer them. Three options would be put to the Policy & Finance Committee:

- (1) make the best of the current IBA judgement and abandon the fight;
- (2) to sue Granada; and
- (3) take the complaint to the Broadcasting Complaints Commission.

Mr Udál observed that since the League had undertaken to circulate subscribers with the IBA's adjudication the League should press for a response to the remaining aspects of its complaint.

The Director General responded that the IBA might refuse to do so having offered participation in a new programme. However, an option might be for the League itself to publish details of its complaint and attack the IBA's failure to deal with them. This might win sympathy. There was a general feeling that it would be better to let the matter die, although Mr Udál reiterated that Central Council Members were continuing to raise the issue and expected an answer. The Chairman observed that there was a sensible balance between not losing subscribers who were sensitive to publicity, and allowing the allegations to go unchallenged, when they might be repeated in the future. He did not believe that this attack would go away and might well be resurrected by the Select Committee on Employment in the autumn. The Director General reminded Regional Directors that as this matter was to go to the Policy & Finance Committee they would have an opportunity to express their views through their Regional Councils and Regional Chairmen.

(5) LIBEL

The Director General reported that writs had been issued against the "EVENING NEWS" and "DATA LINK" and the author. He believed that given the blatant inaccuracies of the "EVENING NEWS" article the League should be able to gain an apology if not damages. The author appeared to be a Communist of long standing and also appeared to be participating in a systematic attack on the League, probably in conjunction with the Labour Research Department. The League should be aware of the organised nature of the attack which was being made. Continued vigilance was required.

(6)

PROFILE

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MAS!!

Mr Winder queried the purpose of publicity. The Director General said that this had been gone over many times but in brief it was to dispell accusations that the League is a secretative "Right Wing" organisation with something to hide, to make companies aware of the League's existence, and it was also necessary to use the media and a high public profile to carry out the League objective of promoting democracy and fulfilling the League's educational role. It was not a break from tradition. In the past the League had adopted an extremely high profile, involving public meetings, leaflets, advertising etc., and a lot of media coverage, although the League at that time had retained a low profile in respect of its checking service. That service had, however, been penetrated on several occasions over the years and was now full public knowledge and continued attempts to deny it only made matters worse. Mr Brett tabled a memo from Mr Winder dated 24.1.83. which set out League policy at that time. Mr Winder stated that the League should have consulted major subscribers about the high profile policy. ✓

The Director General said it was important to separate the publicity which the League had positively sought such as the coverage of Revolutionaries Today and the more recent comments on "WRITTEN IN FLAMES" from the unprovoked attacks. Such attacks had always been made regardless of the level of profile. The more the League was seen to be getting its message across, the more its enemies would seek to discredit it. There was no way round this. It was essential that we gave our enemies no grounds for justified attacks.

Refusing to respond to attacks was no answer. If, as some people had suggested at the time the League had in fact refused to appear on the "World in Action" programme it would have made the result worse not better.

There had been extensive debate within the League on this issue. Having adopted the higher profile any change now would be seen as retreat.

Mr Weeks asked if we had attracted more or less subscribers following our adoption of the high profile and, if less, then this policy should be reassessed. Mr Dover believed the League had invited an attack by producing the "Revolutionaries Today" series and the effects of that series should have been thought through prior to its publication. He regretted that the meeting was going over old ground, and The League should now plan for the future. The Director General reminded the meeting that the League had not put out information about the checking service, nor sought publicity on it. However where accusations were made they had to be answered. It was not possible to adopt a high profile on some aspects of the League's work and not attract media attention on other aspects. The only viable alternative was to restrict the League's activity solely to the checking service and to maintain as much secrecy as possible.

Any wider role for the League would require a higher profile and the consequences that flowed from that. If the League had confidence in what it was doing it should not be afraid.

Mr Mills stated that the Policy & Finance Committee had felt the League needed more product. It had been living too long on the momentum of past activities. It had been the intention of the Policy & Finance Committee that the new high profile should be looking to the development of other activities, such as education, training etc. The Director General had joined the League on that basis. Mr Mills believed that journalists were frustrated by lack of information provided by government and the media was therefore more confrontational than before and campaigning for more access to information, including access to the type of records kept by the League. This had nothing to do with the change in League policy. He also warned that changing attitudes of company directors meant that the League could no longer guarantee that subscriptions would be paid automatically year after year.

Mr Winder believed that subscribers were the League's first priority. Mr Weeks believed that, for his subscribers, it was necessary to concentrate on the philosophical reasons for supporting the league. However, Mr Brett stated that his subscribers were only concerned with the checking service and were worried about the profile. Of 4 recently lost subscribers, one was due to the high profile, and two to the Granada programme. Mr Mills reminded the meeting that the Central Council subscribers were more concerned with the philosophical aspects than the employment checking service.

(7) BROCHURE

Mr Robinson tabled a draft brochure and reported that this had been prepared based on the original ideas of the Director General and the views expressed by Regional Directors at the recent meeting in the Midlands. There was a general discussion on the content of the brochure and it was observed that it should contain only the addresses of regional offices, that press cuttings would have the banner but not the date and that the text still required special sub-editing. Regional Directors were invited to make any further comments directly to Mr Robinson and also through their Regional Councils to the Policy & Finance Committee on 22nd September, when the brochure would be discussed.

(8) ANNUAL REVIEW

There was a general discussion about the 'Annual Review'. It would be made available for the late autumn, but would be dated 1987. The Director of Information would check with Regions how many copies they required.

(9) REVOLUTIONARIES TODAY.

The Director General reported that the first draft of the



revised version had been produced, but this needed amending in the light of further developments as with, e.g. the National Front. As soon as the draft was complete the composite book would be published.

(10) EUROPEAN REPORTS

The first report on France had been produced and looked good. It was being checked for accuracy. Because it was difficult to have these reports written, they would be published as an occasional series rather than monthly.

(11) ECONOMIC REPORTS

The British Manufacturing report was now in production and awaiting printing. It was proposed to hold a launch meeting attended by senior industrialists and journalists etc. The report on Pay Bargaining would be produced as soon as possible.

(12) 2 MINUTE NEWS REVIEW

Mr Winder queried whether the last item, "WRITTEN IN FLAMES", of the July edition should not have been the first item, in view of its importance. He also believed that the review should not concentrate on political issues at the expense of industrial issues. The Director of Information announced that henceforward the '2 Minutes News Review' would be published in the first week of each month, and explained that there had been a change of printers to improve the speed with which the review could be produced and hoped that the teething problems experienced with this change had now been overcome.

There was a discussion about the "WRITTEN IN FLAMES" booklet and the opportunity that this had given to make direct contact with company directors. Most responses were now in, and the Director General would be circulating these to the Regions to follow-up.

The Director General said that this had been extremely useful from the League's point of view and demonstrated a useful point. Initially it had been brought only to the attention of our contacts within the subscribing firms mentioned in the book. Subsequently letters had been sent to all of those referred to, whether or not they were subscribers. This had enabled the League to make direct contact with many senior people both inside and outside the membership. It was important to do this whenever suitable opportunities arose. Restricting ourselves solely to our contacts within companies was a mistake since it often meant that when a contact left there was great difficulty in retaining the support of his firm. Reasonable efforts should also be made to help non-members as a means of convincing them of the value of the League.

(13) SERVICES GROUP SECURITY

Mr Thackery gave an account of Services Group security. The Director General stated that while he preferred regions not to use P.O. Boxes for their addresses, the choice was left to the individual Regions. He also said that he wished that on answering the telephones Regions would say "Economic League" rather than just the number. We need to demonstrate pride in our existence not appear ashamed of it.

AS IT IS  
OCCASIONAL  
ENVELOPES ARE  
TAMPONED WITH  
THIS WOULD HAPPEN  
MORE SO IF  
EL WAS ADVISED  
ON THE FRONT.

(14) CONSTITUTION

The Director General reminded the meeting that the League had started to revise its Constitution and this had been left temporarily in abeyance to allow time for the Granada affair to die down. It was now proposed to go ahead again.

The proposed Constitution would create a uniform status for all Members of the League and abolish Associate Membership status. Subscribers would be able to chose whether to become full Members of the League with voting rights and the opportunity to participate in League management etc., or to chose to become simply subscribers (i.e. customers) with no voting rights nor to participate in management. From the subscribers point of view the key difference would be that Full Members, unlike present Associate Members, would have their names recorded at Companies House and therefore be identifiable with the League. The other key change in the Constitution would be to set up a National Council in place of Central Council, which would be made up principally of representatives from the Regions. The question was whether under this Constitution there would be sufficient present subscribers prepared to become Full Members of the League to make the Constitution workable.

The proposed Constitution would be placed before the next Policy & Finance Committee and it was hoped to carry out the changes at the next AGM of the League in May 1988. Regional Directors were asked to comment on the likely viability of this Constitution. Mr Mills queried whether Regional Councils were in fact useful for attracting new subscribers, and with the exception of the North Western Region, it was generally agreed they were not.

A NAIL IN  
THE COFFIN OF  
RGC COUNCILS ??

(15) CBI

The Director General reported that although the CBI had initially accepted the League as members they had subsequently said that the League did not qualify for membership under their rules. Mr Macgregor thought the League did qualify as a commercial member.

Mr Mills believed the League should continue to press for membership but at an appropriate time. It was reported that the League had booked space at the CBI Conference in Glasgow. However, on further reflection, since the original decision, the Scottish Council did not now believe that the League's presence

at the conference would be constructive. The Director General said that while he still favoured go ahead he could not recommend doing so without the enthusiastic support of the Scottish Region. It was generally agreed that the League should withdraw from the Conference even though it might be necessary to pay the contracted price of £2,500. Mr Mills agreed that the cancellation should go ahead and not wait for the next Policy & Finance Committee meeting.

(16) MEMBERSHIP LISTS

All Regions, except the North Western Region, had produced an up-to-date list of their current subscribers with the rate of subscription and an indication of their use of the League's services. North Western Region undertook to produce this list as soon as possible. The Secretary explained that the list would be used to prepare a full list League of subscribers. The Regional Directors said that in the interests of security they would prefer not to have copies of the list.

(17) COMPUTERISATION

The Secretary informed the meeting that he had now examined a number of computers which were suitable for Central Council accounts. Mr Bromley queried why monthly subscription tables had not been sent recently, although they were produced at the meeting for the period up to 30th June. The Secretary explained that he had not sent these forms in order to discover whether they were actually looked at and used by Regions, and since it had been several months before anyone complained at the absence of the form he did not believe that they were put to great use. He stated that with the new Central Council computer different management information and reports would be available and he asked Regional Directors to let him know which management information would be useful to them so that he could ensure that it was possible to produce this on the new accounting system.

Mr Leach said he was anxious to make full use of the new computer.

(18) TRAINING

Mr Bromley said he believed someone should be appointed to expand and co-ordinate the League's training programme because at the moment there was no co-ordination between ad hoc regional activities. There was a general discussion on training and it was suggested that the League should seek areas in which other organisations were not providing facilities. However, it should not be afraid to compete where it was convinced that it could do better. Mr Mills stated that it was up to Regional Directors to initiate training in their own Regions. The Director General believed that initially it was useful for regions to test the market with training courses on a risk free basis rather than to employ a full time training officer with attendant staff etc. which would be very expensive. The League should capitalise on the existing skills of its employees.

(19)

SECURITY CLASSIFICATIONS

Mr Brett suggested that there should be a co-ordinated protocol for addressing correspondence within the League so that non-sensitive material was not sent under 'PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL' cover, thus risking delay in the absence of the addressee. He also suggested that subscribers should be allocated a number so that in correspondence between regions there would be no need to mention subscribers names. The Director General agreed that there was a tendency to over classify work. In any event in case anyone was not aware of it he reported that all mail to Central Council was opened by his Secretary and was seen by him. Genuinely "personal", that is non-business, letters should be sent to home addresses.

Mr Mills asked the meeting whether there was anything concerning the league which was going on in their individual regions which they believed the League should be alerted to; no issues were raised.

The meeting ended at 4.30pm.

M E M O R A N D U M

To: Regional Director, North Western Region  
From: Regional Co-ordinator, North Western Region  
Date: 22 June 1987

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VISIT OF DIRECTOR GENERAL, ECONOMIC LEAGUE, TO 18 MUSEUM STREET

1. 15.06.87

A telephone call was received from the Director General on Monday, 15th June, 1987, regarding his intention to visit the North Western offices on the 17th June. He spoke, initially to Miss Riley and requested that I should be available when he came. I therefore telephoned the Director General, that afternoon, the 15th June, to point out that the Regional Director was away on holiday and to express the view that such a visit would be best made when Mr. Brett had returned. I was told that the Director General was aware of your being away and that the circumstances of his having to prepare a written report regarding Regional Registers (for the P & F Committee) dictated his visit to Regions being made quickly. The report, I gathered, had to be ready for early in July. Mr. Noah made it clear that he wished only to see the Register.

2. 17.06.87

The Director General explained that he is to make a case for a Central Register to which all Economic League subscribers, nationally, would have telephone/postal access. This system he stated works well now for South Wales. I said that as far as the North West Region is concerned I supported the retention of the operation in the form currently operated in the North West and that the reason for so supporting was motivated by reasons of practicality arising from eighteen months of experience in the field. I put the following description of our operation (REGISTER) to the Director General with the supporting parameters also listed.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION FOR REGISTER

- a. PRESS.
- b. SUBSCRIBERS.
- c. INVESTIGATIONS (SPECIALS).
- d. LIAISON WITH LOCAL "FRIENDS".

USE OF REGISTER

- i. Immediate response to subscribers (MAS).
  - ii. Build up of Town/City profiles.
  - iii. Profile cards of Trade Union and BLOC organisations.
3. I stated that I thought it not a bad idea to have all information the League possesses, held centrally, for security reasons, but I could not agree that the best interests of the North West Region would be served by running the register centrally. Offering the argument of increased expense (salaries) by having the Register in London, the Director General said that centralization did not necessarily mean London, the Register could be held in the Midlands, especially since the Information Director already works from there.
  4. On the subject of reducing the Region's operation, as I saw his intention, the Director General said that far from reducing the number of people, this could be increased by the introduction of "Researchers" who might have some responsibility to the Information Director, as well as to the Regional Director.
  5. Since I understood that a "Researcher" would also be a "Verifier" and operate in the field, I pointed out that we already have such a person in the North West in the form of JJ. I made the point that I believed only a person of that background would be of any use because of the need to establish contacts. The Director General did not agree with me.
  6. The Director General was shown our Register and talked with Mrs. Jean Latham about its content and operation. She asked him if the intention to move the Register, could mean redundancies. The Director General said that for the moment he was simply gathering up the facts in order to bring the operation into perspective and no decision had yet been made. However, he appeared to favour not a smaller staff, but a staff of a different composition ie. an Admin/Clerical Officer capacity and some Researchers. These would therefore be redundancies for some existing staff.
  7. The Director General asked for copies of cards held in the names of BARKER and ROBERTS. As I understand it, he will compare information we hold in this regard with information held elsewhere, since he feels there is a lack of co-ordination and some doubt as well, as to whether certain individuals should be held on record at all.
  8. The Director General volunteered that both North Eastern and Scotland favour a central Register.

SUMMARY

It seems to me that the Director General has the following salient points in mind for his paper to the P & F Committee.

- A. A central Register.
- B. An increased Regional staff, perhaps comprising "Researchers" who would, in part, be responsible to the Information Director.
- C. A reduced records staff in Regions.

G.S. BAKER  
Regional Co-ordinator.



# THE ECONOMIC LEAGUE

Limited by Guarantee

7, WINE OFFICE COURT FLEET STREET LONDON EC4A 3BY

Telephone 01-353 7672

19th December 1988.

TO ALL LEAGUE SUBSCRIBERS

Dear Member,

Last month Radio Moscow broadcast an item about the Economic League. In spite of Glasnost, it was a fairly obvious propaganda attack upon us, but arguably no more biased or unfair than one or two other recent programmes about us by our own domestic media.

The League will, of course, always be attacked by those on the extreme Left and their sympathisers just as it is by those on the extreme Right. We have never considered it worthwhile to reply individually to such attacks since we are sure that most people and, certainly, most companies, can see these attacks for what they are. It is, however, perhaps useful from time to time to put on public record what the League does do for British industry and how it goes about it. Accordingly, the following is a brief account of our work, which you may wish to use in responding to any enquiries which you may receive.

## "Understanding Not Strife"

The League has existed for 70 years precisely to counter the highly damaging view that is sadly still being actively advanced that industry must always consist of two opposing "sides". The League was one of the first organisations to promote the idea that every company should in fact be a united team with a single common purpose where class antagonisms and "them and us" attitudes have no place.

At least as damaging as the deliberate promotion of politically motivated divisions within industry are those divisions which arise from simple ignorance or genuine misunderstanding.

The League was founded on the principle that the best antidote to both these sources of division is wider and better understanding of basic economics and the facts of industrial and commercial life. The League seeks to achieve this understanding through its own publications and courses and through its contacts with member companies, other industrial organisations and the media.

The League also sets out directly to counter the activities of extreme revolutionary groups of both the far Left and the far Right, particularly as they affect industry.

Continued

Founded in 1919



These groups know that they do not enjoy any real measure of support among any significant section of the population. Accordingly, they attempt to achieve their objectives by non-democratic, often covert means.

a) Entryism

One of their better known techniques is that of "entryism" - that is secretly putting their supporters into legitimate democratic organisations either to undermine them from within or to influence their policies. The League has consistently frustrated efforts to infiltrate, for example, the trade unions and genuine campaign groups by publishing the facts and drawing public attention to them.

b) Front Organisations

Another of their techniques is the creation of innocent sounding front organisations who pursue political campaigns without revealing their true background. The League regularly answers queries from firms who have been approached by organisations or individuals often for help with "research". Many of these are entirely bona fide but some are not.

c) Support Groups

Anarchist and far Left groups are often active in the "support groups" that spring up during major disputes. The League is often able to identify the true background of such groups. When the genuine employees are made aware of the real character of these "supporters" they are usually quick to distance themselves from them.

d) Company Infiltration

Finally, the extremist groups seek to put their members into key positions in companies either to steal information from them for a variety of purposes, or to create discord or physical damage within them. There is no shortage of evidence in the form of training manuals for the activists and well documented case histories to substantiate this.

The League believes that companies in common with political parties, campaign groups and charities have a right to identify these people and to protect themselves against their activities. Indeed, the League would suggest that companies have a duty at least as much to fellow staff as to shareholders to do so.

Accordingly, League members can, as just one part of the comprehensive evaluation which all companies should make of potential recruits, check to see if they are known to the League as active members or supporters of one of the revolutionary groups of the far Right or far Left.

The League gives straight factual answers to such questions. The League does not itself advise for or against employing anyone. It is always for the company to decide whether or not any information supplied to them is relevant to the job they have on offer or not. The League is happy for companies to put any information supplied to prospective employees to give them a chance to deny or explain it.

Continued

Equally, any individual who believes that he or she may appear in the League's records is free to check with us and will be told precisely what information, if any, is held. Accordingly, although the Data Protection Act does not apply to us because our records are currently not on computer, we are already on an ex-gratia basis freely giving individuals the rights they would enjoy if it did. The people in charge of this work have training and experience in the collection and evaluation of such data and the League is satisfied that the service operates on a fair and professional basis.

### Advisory Services

#### a) Lobbying

A further League service derives from the fact that as Governments have become more and more involved in industrial affairs companies, either on their own or on an industry basis, find an increasing need to lobby for or against some policy or specific item of legislation.

While the League would not itself take part in any such individual campaign it can often give very valuable advice to members on which parties, groups or individuals are likely to be helpful or hostile.

#### b) Cuttings Service

Most companies also subscribe to commercial cuttings services for mentions of the company name or particular issues affecting them. These services operate efficiently so far as the mainstream media are concerned, but usually ignore the fringe political papers and one-off leaflets and magazines.

Any mention of any member company in any of the papers read by the League is immediately referred to them. It can sometimes happen that articles containing allegations about a company or its senior managers are widely circulating within the company before management even gets to hear of it. Often the original source is not quoted. Swift and accurate notification to management by the League can allow such allegations to be scotched before damage is done.

#### c) Industrial Relations

Most major companies do, of course, have substantial professionally staffed personnel departments to handle industrial relations issues. Many firms are also members of the appropriate trade associations who are often able to give additional industrial relations advice. There are firms, however, who do not have such resources available to them and, in these cases, the League is able to help with advice on legislative and general industrial relations issues.

#### d) Training Courses

From time to time the League organises training courses and seminars. These cover a range of topics within the general objective of promoting the success of British Industry.

Continued

What The League Is Not

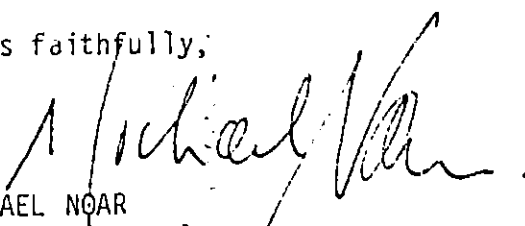
The extremist groups and parties who make regular efforts to discredit the League, often describe us as "Right-Wing" or "Anti-Union". We are neither of these things.

The League supports the whole of the democratic centre of British politics. In fact the Articles of Association prevent us from taking sides in party politics. The League believes that unions can have a key role to play in securing good industrial relations and over many years has worked to achieve that. Senior Trades Union leaders have participated in League functions at both Regional and National level.

The fact that some sections of the media have seen fit to launch attacks on the League indicates the concern experienced in militant circles at the effectiveness of the League in combating their activity aimed at undermining industry and the economy.

Recent industrial legislation has provided a more equitable balance between management and Unions to the benefit of both. However extremist organisations will be awaiting a more favourable climate for industrial action and any opportunity to foment trouble. The League is prepared for this threat, and with the continued support of its members and by the efforts of its staff will ensure that any future threat to the economy is frustrated.

Yours faithfully,

  
MICHAEL NOAR  
Director General.

THE ECONOMIC LEAGUE  
CENTRAL COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of a Meeting held at the  
Engineering Employers Federation  
Tothill Street, London, S.W.1. on  
17th November, 1987, at 5pm.

The Meeting began at 5.10pm.

PRESENT: Mr J Lawrence-Mills (in the Chair)  
Mr D Andrews-Jones'  
Major General T Brodie  
Mr J S Dettmer  
Lord Dowding  
Mr P G Edwards  
Mr D Fahey  
Mr A B Hampton  
Sir Maxwell Harper Gow  
Mr H Jakeman  
Mr L W Orchard  
Mr J Parsons  
Dr A Robertson  
Mr R Rowles  
Mr P Savill  
Mr D A Tate  
Sir Gerald Thorley  
Mr R M Willan

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Michael Noar, Director General  
Mr Thom Robinson, Company Secretary  
Mr J O Udal, Liaison Director

Minute 453 APOLOGIES

The Chairman tabled a list of apologies for absence.

The Chairman welcomed Mr David Tate to the meeting. He also reported that Mr Jack Winder was unable to be present due to illness and the Council expressed their good wishes for his speedy recovery.

Minute 454 MINUTES

It was agreed that the minutes which had been previously circulated be approved as a correct record and they were signed by the Chairman.

Minute 455

MEMBERSHIP OF CENTRAL COUNCIL

The Secretary reported that Mr G Hale had been appointed Representative Member for the North West Region and Mr J Coull for the North East Region. Mr C D Runge, Mr D P Marshall-Andrew and Mr W P Evans had resigned as members. The Council asked the Secretary to send their thanks to those members for their past service.

Mr David Tate and Mr A S J Fraser were formally co-opted as Members of the Council.

Minute 456

POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

The Director General reported that the complaint about the World in Action Programme had continued for some eight months. The IBA, although conceding a major aspect of the League's complaint, had refused to adjudicate on other aspects suggesting instead that these be dealt with in a further programme in which the League would have an opportunity to participate. The Committee had therefore decided to take the complaint to the Broadcasting Complaints Commission, which had agreed to consider it. The Commission had a statutory obligation to make an adjudication.

There had been media attacks in DATALINK and the Evening News upon which writs had been served. The attacks had been stopped and it had therefore been decided not to pursue the writs in court.

Publications: It had been decided to replace 'Notes and Comments' with a series of occasional economic reports. The first of these, 'British Manufacturing Industry - Its Record and Prospects' had been launched at a conference attended by Lord Ezra and representatives from the CBI, The Institute of Directors', the Downing Street Policy Unit, The Treasury as well as the media. Press coverage had been very satisfactory, and demonstrated the League's non-subversive role. The next report would be on wage bargaining. The first European Report on France was in preparation. The series 'Revolutionaries Today' was being revised and would be published as a book with a chart tracing the development of subversive organisations since the 1880's to the present day. A brochure was in preparation which would try to show the League's wider role particularly highlighting its history.

Policy Formation and Management The Director General reported that this document had been circulated. It was an attempt to codify current practices and was based on existing resolutions of Central Council under the current Constitution, and was not intended to break new ground. It was suggested that it could be discouraging to regions to state that any funds they built up might be transferred

to less successful areas. It was pointed out however that Regional Directors had been told and had accepted that their performance would not be judged solely on financial considerations but on the overall service provided by their regions.

*Nonsense  
A complete  
lie.*

Mr Willan stated that the North West Region was unhappy with the paper, believed it wrong on many issues, and did not accept it was the latest interpretation of the Constitutional position. He requested his objection to be noted in the Minutes. He stated however that he was pleased that the paper had been accepted by Regional Directors.

Mr Rowles commented that some regions were financially insecure and needed assistance from wealthier regions. He did not believe regions themselves could be the sole arbiter of the use of their financial surpluses. Mr Willan questioned why the paper had been sent to regions without Central Council approval since it involved a change in the Constitution. The Director General replied that it did not involve any change but was based on previously-agreed Central Council policy including 'The Way Ahead' but said that it was not immutable.

Mr Dettmer queried the reference in the document to staff having a right of appeal to the Central Council from disciplinary decisions of the Director General. He said that he had always understood that the Director General was the final arbiter of such matters. He would be opposed to staff problems being referred to the Council. The Director General replied that it was not the intention to change the existing situation. The sentence in question was intended to reflect a clause in the current staff rules. He undertook to look into the matter.

Mr Willan quoted from Theodore Goddard's letter about the proposed change of Articles relating to the need for regional approval. The Director General pointed out that that letter related to fundamental changes to the Constitution whereas the Policy Formation and Management document simply codified present practice. The applicability of Theodore Goddard's letter had been explained by one of their partners, Mr Hatchard, at the Policy & Finance Committee earlier that afternoon.

The Chairman stated that the date of the meeting at which the paper was considered had been known well in advance but the North West had failed to send a representative. He quoted from the Minutes of that meeting which recorded that the North West Region's letter on the subject had been read to the meeting. The policy had been decided unanimously by all those attending the meeting and he further quoted from the Minutes which recorded the instructions given unanimously by the Committee to the Director General.

Mr Willan said he was unaware that the Policy & Finance Committee had power to adopt such a paper. Mr Fahey said he thought the paper was the best way to avoid confusion. Mr Edwards concurred.

Consolidation of Records The Director General reported that consolidation of records was proceeding. Midlands had already been incorporated in the national system, North East was in the process of incorporation and other regions would follow soon.

Mr Savill agreed that for administrative and security reasons consolidation was more efficient but hoped that this would not lead to a loss of personal contact between the Regions and their subscribers. The Director General assured him that Regional briefings on local issues would continue.

Review of Constitution The Director General reminded the meeting that the proposed changes had already been circulated. The League solicitor had been present at the Policy & Finance Committee and suggested alternative proposals which would give equality to all members, maintain anonymity for those who wished it, and not affect the tax status or the privileged position with regard to libel which the mutuality of the League is understood to afford. The committee had decided to carry out the constitutional change in parallel with a re-examination of the League's objectives. The changes could strengthen the influence of the Regions on the National Council.

Mr Willan stated the North West disagreed with that interpretation and was concerned that objectives be identified first. Mr Savill stated that control must be at the Centre, which provided a large proportion of the funds. The Director General replied that Central Area would be replaced by a new London Region which would enable Central subscribers to express their views.

Minute 457

BUDGET

The Secretary reported that earlier in the afternoon the Policy & Finance Committee had approved the Budget, which had been previously circulated, subject to small alterations. They had also approved an overall salary increase of 5% to be allocated by the Director General provided the costs of the increase were met by reduced expenditure.

The Director General reported that the Committee had also decided to examine the costs of updating the League's pension scheme.

Minute 458

COMPUTERISATION

The Secretary reported that the Policy & Finance Committee had approved the computerisation of Central Council accounts and he envisaged that the new system would commence in the new financial year.

Minute 459

INVESTMENTS

The Secretary tabled a list of the League's investments and reported their value to be £215,000. Mr Orchard gave a brief report explaining that the League had not suffered so badly in the recent collapse of prices because of the proportion of gilts held. A vote of thanks to Mr Orchard for his advice and assistance was passed.

*It should  
be noted  
that the  
N.W. Swinton  
in properly  
increased in  
value during  
this period*

Minute 460

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The Secretary read the proposed dates for future meetings, which were approved as follows:

- 2nd February, 1988 - Policy & Finance Committee
- 12th April, 1988 - Policy & Finance Committee
- " " " - Central Council Meeting
- 10th May, 1988 - Annual General Meeting
- 5th July, 1988 - Policy & Finance Committee
- 20th September, 1988 - Policy & Finance Committee
- 15th November, 1988 - Policy & Finance Committee
- " " " - Central Council Meeting

The meeting ended at 6.20pm.



THE ECONOMIC LEAGUE  
POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE  
Minutes of a Meeting held at the  
Engineering Employers' Federation  
Tothill Street, London, S.W.1.  
on Tuesday, 17th November, 1987

PRESENT:

Mr J Lawrence Mills (in the Chair)

Mr P G Edwards  
Mr D Fahey  
Sir Maxwell Harper Gow  
Mr A B Hampton  
Mr H Jakeman  
Mr R Rowles  
Mr D A Tate  
Sir Gerald Thorley  
Mr B J Whitehouse  
Mr R M Willan

IN ATTENDANCE

	Mr Michael Noar	- Director General
	Mr Thom Robinson	- Company Secretary
From Minute 498	Mr Michael Hatchard	- Theodore Goddard
From Minute 503	Mr John Udal	- Liaison Director Central Council.

Minute 495 APOLOGIES

The Chairman tabled a list of apologies for absence and welcomed Mr David Tate to his first meeting of the Committee.

The Chairman read a letter from Dr Robertson expressing the hope that the League had no computer records which would prove embarrassing, and also expressing his reservations about direct involvement in education.

Minute 496 PRESIDENT

The Chairman reported that the President, Sir Gerald Thorley, had expressed the wish to retire although he was prepared to remain until the next Annual General Meeting.

The Chairman said he had approached Lord Pennock but had made no formal invitation. It was agreed that the Chairman formally seek Lord Pennock's agreement to become President. While it was noted that they were subject to annual election it was felt that the term of office for the President should normally be three or four years, and that the office of Chairman three years. It was noted that the proposed new Constitution would provide for a Vice-Chairman and so would ease the problem of succession.

The Chairman stated that a partner from Theodore Goddard would attend the meeting at 2.30 to advise on the proposed constitutional changes and he proposed to take the item on investments next, so that the meeting could proceed to consider the constitution at 2.30 sharp.

Minute 497 INVESTMENTS

The Secretary tabled a list of League investments which were valued on the 16th November at £215,000. The Chairman reported that the Secretary had approached him at the beginning of the stock market collapse and had advised him not to sell any of the League's investments. The Secretary reminded the Committee that it had been decided to review investments every six months and to investigate the possibility of professional management.

Warburg's had been approached but had declined to handle the League's investments because the fund was too small. There was, however, the possibility of asking a senior director of one of the League's subscribing bankers for assistance.

It was agreed that Mr Orchard should be invited to continue to advise on League investments; that the Committee should review investments twice yearly to coincide with Central Council meetings when Mr Orchard would be available to answer questions, and that any significant changes should be reported to the Committee as they occurred.

Minute 498 CONSTITUTION

Mr Michael Hatchard of Theodore Goddard joined the meeting. The Director General explained the background to the current revision stressing in particular the need for equality of rights for all subscribers and for greater involvement by the Regions in policy formation. The present Constitution had the advantages that being a mutual body the Inland Revenue treated the League as exempt from paying Corporation Tax, although subscriptions were not chargeable against subscribers' tax; mutuality was believed to provide qualified privilege as regards defamation; and Associate Members had complete confidentiality. The aim was to preserve these advantages in any change.

The proposed changes to the Constitution, whereby subscribers would have to choose between either full membership for Companies Act purposes or subscriber-only status with no rights to participate in management, could prejudice these advantages and the lawyers had proposed an alternative structure.

Mr Hatchard reported that the status of Associate Member could remain, but the Members of the League for Companies Act purposes would consist purely of nominees appointed by the Regions. These could be as few as the statutory minimum of seven and only they would be identifiable in the publicly-available Register of Members. These nominees would

act only for statutory purposes and would appoint the Members of the new National Council in accordance with instructions from the Regional Councils elected by the relevant Associate Members. Central Area Associate Members would be allocated to a geographical region and would have the same rights as other Associate Members. These proposals should not alter the advantages of the existing constitution but would remove the anomalous privilege enjoyed by present Central Area subscribers. There could be any number of nominees and Regions could have the same number of nominees each or proportionally to their financial or numerical size. The only radical change would be to provide for Regions to meet collectively to despatch business at General Meetings. There could be a National Annual Meeting of all Associate Members as well as Regional Annual Meetings. The names of both the nominees and the members of the National Council would appear on public records.

It was reported that the North West Region was opposed to change for its own sake and did not see the advantage of changing the Constitution before the League's objectives had been completely clarified. The North West Region placed on record that it would oppose constitutional change at this time, and reference was made to the letter from Theodore Goddard which stated that all Regions would need to approve the change. Mr Hatchard explained that that letter had related to the previously proposed changes and that the changes recommended by himself were less far-reaching and probably would not need approval by the Regions since the changes would not detract from the rights of Associate Members but enhance them.

It was suggested that the present constitution was silent with regard to disputes between the centre and regions. The North West Region did not believe the centre should dictate to a region and that the League was excessively anxious to be democratic. The role of Central Council was to advise not to dictate.

There was a full discussion on the merits of Mr Hatchard's proposals. It was pointed out that the League's Constitution was anachronistic; there was need for a uniform Constitution; regions which disagreed with national policy should withdraw; it was thought desirable for the League to change its image so that more subscribers would be willing publicly to acknowledge their membership, but always recognising that some subscribers had special needs which required confidentiality. There had been a change in attitudes towards greater openness. It was necessary to change the Constitution to attract younger Members to the committee. It was not a question of the Centre dictating to the Regions. The Regions would be better represented on the Committee and able to put their case.

It was argued that the League should first decide its objectives and then change its Constitution to best attain those objectives. The committee was reminded that it had

been discussing constitutional changes for some eighteen months and some members had complained that nothing had been achieved.

It was agreed that Mr Hatchard should prepare a paper explaining in detail what his proposals would involve; a special meeting of the committee would be held before February to consider objectives; and the constitutional changes would proceed on the basis that they would be implemented at the next Annual General Meeting.

Minute 499 MINUTES

It was agreed that the Minutes of the meeting of 22nd September be taken as read, that they were a correct record and be signed by the Chairman.

Minute 500 MATTERS ARISING

It was stated that the North West Region regretted that matters were discussed and decided at the previous meeting in the absence of a representative from that Region at that meeting. The Chairman replied that long notice had been given and the Region had specifically been invited to send a Representative.

It was pointed out that the meeting scheduled for the 5th April, 1988, would be on the day after bank holiday and it was agreed to re-schedule this meeting for the 12th April, 1988.

Minute 501 BUDGET 1988

The Secretary reported that the Budget which had been circulated had been prepared on a different basis from the previous year in that expenditure had not been split into the somewhat arbitrary divisions of administration, liaison, research etc. but had been shown under cost headings such as salaries, entertainment, rent etc. He reported a reduction in Scottish income for the current year as shown on table (2) by £12,000 and a reduction of some £4,000 in the budgeted expenditure for the North Eastern Region for 1988, shown on table (3). These adjustments meant that on present figures the League anticipated a budget deficit of some £9,000 for 1988. No salary increases had been included in the budgeted figures. It was reported that North Western Region depreciation might be less than the £4,500 indicated by that Region and the Secretary agreed to check this figure with the Regional Director.

Scottish Region indicated its hope that it would not be asked to reduce expenditure for the coming year. Wales and the Western Region drew attention to the special needs of their areas. It was pointed out that an increase in salaries of 4.5% would amount to some £26,000 and after discussion it was agreed to allocate 5% overall for salary increases to be

awarded as the Director General thought fit, subject to the additional cost being clawed back by expenditure cuts so as to achieve a balanced budget for 1988. The Director General would discuss this with Regional Directors.

The Chairman drew attention to the final paragraph of the Director General's paper.

Minute 502 PUBLICATIONS The Secretary reported the successful launch of the British Manufacturing Report. There had been a well-attended press meeting in London with representatives from the Prime Minister's Policy Unit, the Treasury, the CBI and Institute of Directors' as well as trade associations and the media. The publication had been reported in the Financial Times and the Telegraph and was an excellent example of the non-subversive educational work of the League. Copies of the book were to be distributive to members of the Economic Research Council.

League Brochure - After brief discussion it was agreed that the brochure proceed on the basis of the proposals indicated by Cleaverlandor which had been circulated.

European Reports - The updated version of the report on France was being checked for accuracy and would be produced in the near future.

Revolutionaries Today - This series had been updated to cover the post-election situation and was to be published early next year. In addition publication would be accompanied by a chart detailing the history of subversive groups from the 1880's to the present day.

Economic Report - It was envisaged that a report on pay bargaining would be the next publication in this series.

Annual Review - It was reported that the Annual Review had now been printed and distributed.

Minute 503 STAFF PENSIONS - Mr Brian Whitehouse and Mr Robin Fremantle had examined the League's current pension scheme and reported that in their opinion the scheme did not meet present standards. They believed the scheme therefore could be demotivating. They recommended:

- a) that life cover for death in service be increased to three times salary for those employees with less than 10 years' service in order to standardise cover for all employees;
- b) a 50% death-in-service pension for both widows and widowers be instituted; and
- c) that a 50% widowers' pension be instituted in respect of female staff who died in retirement.

They further recommended that the cost to the League of providing these benefits was too high consideration should be given to winding up the present pension scheme and assisting employees to make individual pension arrangements.

It was agreed that recommendation a) be implemented and that the Secretary ask the actuary to calculate the costs of providing benefits b) and c).

It was resolved to replace Mr Clive Hunting with Mr Brian Whitehouse as a Trustee of the scheme.

Minute 504 REGIONAL REPORT.

Mr John Udal, Liaison Director for Central Council, reported about the area. Subscribers were principally of two kinds, City financial institutions (20% of Central Area revenue); and group head offices, not necessarily in London, of large industrial conglomerates (80% of Central Area revenue). He was responsible for maintaining personal contact with some 150 Subscribers, including some London-based subsidiaries, and for co-ordinating visits to 150 subsidiaries in the Regions.

Central Area provided some £400,000 of the League's revenue. His responsibilities were not simply fund raising but to ensure that the League's services were being properly performed to Subscribers, as well as new recruitment. In 1980 there had been three people and two secretaries responsible for this work which had now been reduced to himself and a secretary. He regretted not having a Central Area Council to consult, although presently four members of Policy & Finance Committee came from Member companies of Central Area.

He believed that Central Council revenue had been eroded because of failure to match inflation, especially in the 1970s; the growth in mergers and takeovers; the contraction in manufacturing industry; and over-confidence by employers as a result of the new industrial relations legislation. 'Big Bang' had brought about major changes in City company groupings, and overseas parent businesses showed little interest in involving themselves in the internal British political situation.

In the past year there had been a further reduction in League educational publications but this was now being reversed. Adverse publicity had been very damaging in terms of lost members of Central Area.

The remaining items on the agenda were not reached. The meeting ended at 5 pm.

SPEECH OF THE NEW DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE ECONOMIC LEAGUE,  
MR MICHAEL NOAR, AT A LUNCH FOR INDUSTRIALISTS HELD AT THE  
MERCHANT TAYLORS' HALL, THREADNEEDLE STREET, LONDON EC2  
ON THURSDAY, JUNE 5, 1986

When I told my friends I would be joining the Economic League, I received a somewhat mixed reaction. At least eight out of every ten of them had never heard of the League and from those who had I received comments like 'isn't that the reds under the beds outfit' or alternatively 'isn't that a bit right wing'.

I do very much hope that, if nothing else, by the time that my successor comes to be appointed, he will find that many more people have heard of the League and in particular that they have a much more accurate perception of what it is about.

In that task I suggest that we are getting a little help at the moment, from a perhaps somewhat unlikely source, namely the current goings on in the Labour Party.

Clearly Neil Kinnock feels that there are some reds under his bed and equally clearly he feels that it is perfectly right and proper to find them and boot them out. I am sure we all welcome that move and support him in it. Indeed if he wants any help he may like to get in touch.

Equally clearly, if it is right for the Labour Party to adopt such a policy, it must be right and perfectly acceptable for other organisations to take a similar view without being branded as particularly extreme or indeed right wing.

The fact is of course that the League are strong supporters of the democratic centre, as much opposed to the extreme and

undemocratic right as to the extreme and undemocratic left.

The extremist parties, of both right and left, know perfectly well that in this country they are never likely to succeed through the ordinary processes of the democratic ballot. Their strategy is therefore to undermine and discredit our free democratic institutions to the point where they themselves might appear an attractive alternative.

That strategy embraces what is now the very well understood process of entryism - the process of feeding your supporters into key positions in other organisations in order either to undermine those organisations or at least to use those positions for your own political purposes and objectives. The organisations who find themselves under attack in this way include not just the political parties and major commercial and industrial concerns, but also many charities, voluntary associations and campaign groups.

It must be common sense that any organisation subjected to entryism has not only a right but a positive duty to try to defend itself, just as the Labour Party is doing at the moment. I am sure that is something the vast majority of people would support.

Of course I accept that it is all too easy, particularly, perhaps, for organisations like the League, to over-estimate or exaggerate the real power and real effectiveness of these extremist organisations and perhaps even by doing so to give further encouragement to them. But surely the dangers of complacency and of just hoping that the problem will go away by itself are far and away greater.

I believe that the right answer must therefore be to maintain and if possible to enhance the League's traditional approach in this area, to monitor carefully and accurately the activities of the extremist and subversive groups and to expose these activities wherever we can, not so much to the harsh glare of publicity as to as much honest day light as we



can let in, so that they are seen in their true colours.

Furthermore, if particular individuals or particular companies or organisations are under specific threat, then it seems to me to be perfectly proper for us to give them appropriate warning, not in any exaggerated or over hysterical way but carefully and accurately as the League has always done. It is our proud boast that we have never been successfully challenged on any statement we have made.

If it is right for Mr. Kinnock to say that he doesn't want subversives or extremists in the Labour Party then surely it is just as right and just as legitimate for other organisations and companies to say that they don't want them either. Nor is this just a "bosses' view". One thing I suggest that workers have made abundantly clear in recent years is that while they want and support honest and indeed militant trade unions in support of their rights and interests, what they do not want is to be used as pawns in anyone else's political games. Anyone who can keep the political warmongers out of their firms will have their support.

Certainly, as far as I am concerned, I do not feel under any obligation to be either hesitant, apologetic or defensive about saying that that is a part and an important part of what the League is about.

Important though it is however, it is only one side of the League. If there is one tendency that worries me at the moment it is the ITWA Tendency. Now, those of you who are my age or more know that ITWA stands for It's That Woman Again.

The ITWA Tendency is therefore the urge to blame Mrs Thatcher for absolutely any and every problem that occurs anywhere in the country, whether remotely to do with the government or not.

If there is a problem in our schools at the moment apparently no blame at all attaches to the teachers, to the head teachers, to the school governors or to the local education

authorities. The buck seems not even to hesitate as it flies past all of these people unerringly to Downing Street.

If there is a problem in the health service, and at least Victor Paige would agree that there is, again that is apparently nothing at all to do with the nurses, doctors, the hospital managers, or the health authorities. It's that woman again!

If companies fail it is not the fault of the workers, the unions, the managers, the directors or the shareholders, it is nothing to do with economic recession or technological change; once again 'Thatcherism' is to blame.

The latest manifestation in this trend is that apparently the prime minister is also to blame for the litter in our streets. Now if I had to bet on one person who has never thrown so much as a toffee paper on the pavement in their life, I would pick Mrs. Thatcher and think it easy money.

Never in the field of political conflict has so much been blamed by so many on one woman.

I must stress straight away that I am not here seeking to defend the current government or the current prime minister. This process has applied increasingly to successive governments. The opposition of the day seeks to blame the government of the day for every problem that they can identify, and of course they then go on to say 'vote for us, we have all the answers'. Time of course proves that they have not, and the process repeats itself.

This does seem to me to contain major dangers for democracy itself, because if people consistently expect too much of politicians they will be just as consistently disappointed. If party succeeds party in failure it breeds disillusion.

The extreme political parties obviously have an interest in encouraging this trend; first of all it is their declared strategy to politicise every possible aspect of our lives and

secondly, by blaming every failure on the main democratic parties, they can encourage a degree of cynicism in democratic politics which they hope will make their own all-embracing philosophies more attractive.

One thing that universal franchise democracy needs in the long term is a well informed and in particular economically literate electorate. It does matter that politicians are subjected to reasoned challenge and that their overblown claims are taken with a pinch of salt. There must be a clear understanding of the limits of political action and of those things which we must do for ourselves.

If the simplistic solutions of one political party are challenged only by the equally simplistic solutions of their opponents, it will not produce either a proper public debate or in the long term good government.

The Economic League was called the Economic League precisely because it was intended to have a major role in the field of public economic education. That positive role seems to me to be at least as important as the more defensive role to which I referred earlier. The best way to attack a bad philosophy is to promote a better one.

I do not, of course, wish to either underestimate the size of the problem or to overstate the contribution which the League can make to solving it.

The main thing to remember however is that a good idea has legs of its own and it is remarkable just how far it will run once you have set it free. With a little help from our members and friends we may surprise even ourselves with the number of ideas that, working through industry, we can set loose on our unsuspecting politicians and indeed perhaps on the captains of industry as well.

I particularly hope that the League will come to be known not just for the things that we are against but very much more for

the things that we are for. Very simply put, I take those things to be a free and democratic society within which industry and commerce can flourish for the benefit of everyone.

Obviously the more people we have supporting us, the better the job that we will be able to do.

One or two of the companies to whom I have spoken have begun by saying that they have no problems and therefore do not need the League's services. There are two answers to that.

First, the fact that you have not had a fire is generally reckoned a poor reason for not having insurance.

Secondly, and more importantly, companies which think like that have missed the point. Those undemocratic groups to whom we are opposed are not targetting particular organisations or sections because they have a specific vendetta against them. Their long term aims involve us all. If the bell is tolling for the company down the street, it is tolling for yours too.

Without getting over excited about it a modest investment in defending the sort of society and the sort of economy in which we all believe must be worthwhile.

It is clearly an exciting new start for me. I hope I shall have your advice and guidance and support to make it a great success.



*M. K. Colley*

# THE ECONOMIC LEAGUE

Limited by Guarantee

7, WINE OFFICE COURT FLEET STREET LONDON EC4A 3BY

Telephone 01-353 7672

23 December, 1987.

PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

TO: Members of the Policy & Finance Committee

cc: Regional Directors  
Liaison Director  
National Co-ordinator, Services Group

Dear Sir,

ADDITIONAL MEETING OF POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE  
Tuesday, 26th JANUARY, 1988.  
Engineering Employers' Federation, Tothill Street, SW1  
2pm.

I give notice that an additional meeting of the Policy & Finance Committee will be held at the Engineering Employers' Federation, Tothill Street, SW1 at 2pm. on Tuesday, 26th January 1988. The Agenda will be as set out below.

Yours faithfully,

THOM ROBINSON  
Company Secretary

## A G E N D A

1) NORTH WESTERN REGION

To discuss certain differences which have occurred in connection with the North West Region of the League, including the motion which has been proposed for consideration by Central Council, by three Members of the North West Council, and previously circulated to Members of Central Council (a copy of which motion is enclosed) and to discuss the position in relation to the North Western Region generally, and to make such resolutions as may be thought fit. Other papers may be circulated prior to the meeting.

2) OBJECTIVES

To discuss a Memorandum (to follow) on the future objectives of the League.

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## THE ECONOMIC LEAGUE

### Industrial Dispute between the Economic League Ltd and Mr. Richard Brett, Regional Director, North Western Region

(Paragraph references refer to synopsis and  
addendum to synopsis already circulated)

#### Resolution dated 14 December 1987

"The Central Council of the Economic League an organisation which provides an industrial relations advisory service to industry and commerce is concerned at the mismanagement of the industrial dispute between the Economic League and its North Western Regional Director Mr. Richard Brett which has arisen over his terms and conditions of service. The President and Vice Presidents in the light of their long experience and extensive knowledge of the League and its internal operating procedures and in the interests of the League as a whole, should therefore be invited to investigate this dispute and to make such recommendations as they consider fit to avoid a similar incident arising."

1. The evidence of mismanagement of this dispute runs throughout the synopsis, addendum to synopsis and its accompanying documentation which have been previously circulated.
2. The incidents detailed below refer to particular examples which even in isolation from each other are of significance and collectively demonstrate such a degree of mismanagement that Central Council should be concerned with the maintenance of the reputation of the League as a good employer.
  - (a) D.G's letter of 19 June 1987 to R.T.B. threatening instant dismissal if R.T.B did not sign undertaking which gave R.T.B. grounds for constructive dismissal and defamation of character and which on 21 October D.G. had to withdraw. (Paras 2,3,4)
  - (b) D.G's refusal on four occasions during July/August 1987 to grant R.T.B's request for a meeting in order to defuse a rapidly worsening situation. (Para 4 & 23b)
  - (c) D.G's failure to inform Regional Chairman of his intention to suspend R.T.B. (Para 8)
  - (d) D.G's failure to observe League's disciplinary procedure in suspending R.T.B., which gave R.T.B. grounds for an action for breach of contract. (Para 7)
  - (e) D.G's failure to supply R.T.B. with detailed reasons for his suspension. (Para 8)
  - (f) D.G's failure to maintain agreements reached between himself and N.W.Regional Council. (Para 9,11,14)

- (g) D.G's threat to R.T.B. to withhold R.T.B's salary if he returned to work, despite having been reinstated by Regional Chairman. If implemented R.T.B. would have had grounds for an action for breach of contract.(Para 14)
- (h) D.G's letter to Regional Chairman of 2 December with copies to P & F Committee Members which was composed in such a defamatory manner as could have given rise to an action by R.T.B. for defamation of character.  
(Para 14)
- (i) D.G's failure to recognise R.T.B's reinstatement and his subsequent instructions to Head Office and Regional Staff not to have any official dealings with R.T.B. gave R.T.B. grounds for constructive dismissal. (Para 24,25,26)
- (j) D.G's refusal to meet or even speak to R.T.B. following his reinstatement. (Para 25,27)
- (k) D.G's involvement of Regional Coordinator Mr.Baker in the dispute which led to G.S.B. having to take legal advice as to his position. (Para 25,31,33)

Matters for consideration

3. (a) Does Central Council agree that this dispute has been mismanaged.
- (b) If so does Central Council agree to an investigation by the President and Vice Presidents in the terms of the Resolution.

Mill House,  
Upper Street,  
Hollingbourne,  
Maidstone, Kent.  
ME17 1UL

10th January, 1986

M. F. J. Barnes, Esq.,  
The Economic League,  
7 Wine Office Court,  
Fleet Street,  
London EC4A 3BY.

Dear Sir,

As agreed I confirm that I look forward to visiting your offices to discuss the appointment of your new Director on Wednesday, 15th January at 10 a.m. I hope the following details of my career to date may be of some help.

After leaving Rugby in 1959, I joined the Elliott Automation Group at Elstree. Initially I worked on the production of operator manuals for the auto-attack computers for the English Electric Lightning Fighter. This was obviously classified work. Subsequently I transferred to the commercial computing division. This was in the comparatively early days of computers and much of my time was spent thinking of possible new applications and producing trial programmes.

I joined the Federation of Civil Engineering Contractors in 1963 as Assistant Secretary, Industrial Relations. I was responsible for the preparatory work for disputes hearings and wage negotiations. I was particularly concerned at that time with political disruption of major sites. I thus developed some understanding of the Unions and also of the very helpful role which the League plays.

In 1965 I took charge of the Federation's training activities. I developed a number of new training schemes, in some cases having to overcome union opposition in order to do so.

Since 1968 I have in addition to other duties been Secretary to the General Section of the Federation which has not only kept me in close touch with the major firms but also with all aspects of Federation policy apart from my own specialist interests. We now have on the Section Committee the managing directors of several of the largest firms whose sites have in the past been the particular targets of militant activity.

Up to ten years ago the Federation did not have any parliamentary activity beyond infrequent contacts with Ministers and we had virtually no truck with the Press. I proposed that we create a formal press and parliamentary effort and was put in charge of creating this. I think it is fair to claim that we now have a reputation within Parliament as a responsible and effective organisation and that we have become a lobbying force to be reckoned with. I have also built up personal relationships with many M.P's and more importantly perhaps with others with influential positions within the political system.

In 1973 the Future Planning Committee, which is concerned with the long-term strategic planning of the Federation's affairs was set up and I have been it's Secretary since then.



10th January, 1986

When the U.K. joined the European Community it added a potentially important new dimension to the Federation's affairs and for some years following accession I was also responsible for this.

From its establishment in 1979 I have been our Secretary to the Joint Presidents' Committee with the Building Employers' Confederation. This was another important new initiative particularly as both Federations give increasing emphasis to outside representation where effective co-operation is clearly vital.

I have represented the Federation on many outside bodies including on occasions both the Council and the Chief Executives' Group of the C.B.I.

I think well on my feet, am an effective speaker at public meetings and conferences and believe that I perform well on both radio and television.

I have obviously been with the Federation for a very long time. The challenge has been kept alive however by frequent changes and additions of responsibility. I have been put in charge of most of the new initiatives taken by the Federation over the last 15 years or so and this has obviously been refreshing and re-invigorating.

I have been closely involved in what one might call our diplomatic relations with the C.B.I. and the B.E.C. and other organisations.

I am a member and Secretary of a small group which seeks to bring together people from different industries with members of the Prime Minister's private staff. The group was formed at the time of the steel strike to maintain employer solidarity. Subsequently it played a useful role in circumventing some of the industrial opposition to reform of industrial relations law and encouraging the Government to pursue a more robust line. It played some small part in the coal dispute and now generally seeks to encourage sometimes disappointingly reluctant industry to support or, at least not to undermine the Government's efforts

I am now 44. I have had the experience of running successfully most of the individual departments within the Federation and now wish to take on the responsibility of making a success of an organisation as a whole. I would particularly like that organisation to be the League since, having had some limited experience of political subversion in one industry I would like to cover the broader field. I am concerned that the present Government's limited successes in this field and the apparent changes in the character of the Labour Party are engendering a dangerous degree of complacency.

I am married with three children, the eldest of whom is twelve. In so far as they allow me any spare time I spend it gardening, fishing, bird watching and restoring an old water mill. I am also on the Finance Committee of my local church and when I lived in St. Albans I was a member of the City Council there.

Yours faithfully,

  
M. D. Noar

BBC 2 TV PROGRAMME 'OPEN SPACE' ON 'BLACKLISTING'  
THURSDAY 12 JANUARY 1984

1. Dramatis Personae

- Jack Dromey - National Officer, TGWU; Secretary, SETUC. An unelected professional agitator best known for his activities on the Grunwick picket line. Not a Communist but described by Trotskyists as a 'Stalinist'. His wife is Harriet Harman, MP, who was formerly legal officer of the National Council for Civil Liberties.
- Alex Lyon - Former Labour MP and ex Home Office Minister, he describes himself as Chairman of the Campaign against Political Vetting and Victimisation, which has so far failed to hold its inaugural meeting scheduled for November 1983.
- Alan Thornett - TGWU. The original 'Cowley Mole'. The programme said he worked for BL for 24 years. It would be more accurate to say he worked against BL. Once the prime industrial agitator of the WRP, he fell out with the leaders and set up his own Trotskyist organisation, the Workers Socialist League. Writes in 'Socialist Organiser', under the pen name 'Bill Peters'. He failed to give a full account on the programme of the reasons for his dismissal by BL.
- Aidan White - NUJ. Implicitly accused one prospective employer of failing to check references he had provided. The question arises, were those references at all checkable or did he use the common extremist tactic of giving referees who are uncontactable, obviously in the hope that the company will not take them up?  
Failed to mention his membership of the SWP.
- Nigel Williamson - 'Tribune' reporter who was recently seriously taken to task for distortion by Lord Underhill, former national agent of the Labour Party. Provided inaccurate and outdated information about the League on the programme while accusing us of similar inaccuracy.
- Peter Kingston - Fleet Street Press Agency. Not named on the programme, he was the individual who telephoned and recorded a conversation with Jo Wood while pretending to be carrying out genuine research into the People's March for Jobs. Jo Wood dealt with him well.

continued . . .

- Ferry Stevens - A welder who claimed he had been blacklisted by construction companies in the London area. ( This is almost certainly the same man who in 1981 unsuccessfully stood for election to the Communist Party's national executive. He was one the three men Peter Kingston (named at bottom of first sheet) asked Jo Wood to check and from which she cleverly deflected him.
- Larry Gostin - Secretary of National Council for Civil Liberties - an American busybody new to NCCL.
- Gerry Gilman - General Secretary, Society of Civil and Public Servants. His role was to complain about restrictions on the political activities of civil servants. He rather contradicted others on the programme when he said: "Now I can't imagine private companies would seek to discipline shop stewards who for instance sought to campaign about the decision to close a particular factory".

COMMENT

Apart from Gerry Gilman there was no politician or trade unionist of substance.

The content was sheer propaganda. It was not possible to find one provable fact in support of the assertions against the League.

16.1.84



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7, WINE OFFICE COURT FLEET STREET LONDON EC4A 3BY

Telephone 01-353 7672

19th December 1988.

## TO ALL LEAGUE SUBSCRIBERS

Dear Member,

Last month Radio Moscow broadcast an item about the Economic League. In spite of Glasnost, it was a fairly obvious propaganda attack upon us, but arguably no more biased or unfair than one or two other recent programmes about us by our own domestic media.

The League will, of course, always be attacked by those on the extreme Left and their sympathisers just as it is by those on the extreme Right. We have never considered it worthwhile to reply individually to such attacks since we are sure that most people and, certainly, most companies, can see these attacks for what they are. It is, however, perhaps useful from time to time to put on public record what the League does do for British industry and how it goes about it. Accordingly, the following is a brief account of our work, which you may wish to use in responding to any enquiries which you may receive.

### "Understanding Not Strife"

The League has existed for 70 years precisely to counter the highly damaging view that is sadly still being actively advanced that industry must always consist of two opposing "sides". The League was one of the first organisations to promote the idea that every company should in fact be a united team with a single common purpose where class antagonisms and "them and us" attitudes have no place.

At least as damaging as the deliberate promotion of politically motivated divisions within industry are those divisions which arise from simple ignorance or genuine misunderstanding.

The League was founded on the principle that the best antidote to both these sources of division is wider and better understanding of basic economics and the facts of industrial and commercial life. The League seeks to achieve this understanding through its own publications and courses and through its contacts with member companies, other industrial organisations and the media.

The League also sets out directly to counter the activities of extreme revolutionary groups of both the far Left and the far Right, particularly as they affect industry.

Continued

Founded in 1919

These groups know that they do not enjoy any real measure of support among any significant section of the population. Accordingly, they attempt to achieve their objectives by non-democratic, often covert means.

a) Entryism

One of their better known techniques is that of "entryism" - that is secretly putting their supporters into legitimate democratic organisations either to undermine them from within or to influence their policies. The League has consistently frustrated efforts to infiltrate, for example, the trade unions and genuine campaign groups by publishing the facts and drawing public attention to them.

b) Front Organisations

Another of their techniques is the creation of innocent sounding front organisations who pursue political campaigns without revealing their true background. The League regularly answers queries from firms who have been approached by organisations or individuals often for help with "research". Many of these are entirely bona fide but some are not.

c) Support Groups

Anarchist and far Left groups are often active in the "support groups" that spring up during major disputes. The League is often able to identify the true background of such groups. When the genuine employees are made aware of the real character of these "supporters" they are usually quick to distance themselves from them.

d) Company Infiltration

Finally, the extremist groups seek to put their members into key positions in companies either to steal information from them for a variety of purposes, or to create discord or physical damage within them. There is no shortage of evidence in the form of training manuals for the activists and well documented case histories to substantiate this.

The League believes that companies in common with political parties, campaign groups and charities have a right to identify these people and to protect themselves against their activities. Indeed, the League would suggest that companies have a duty at least as much to fellow staff as to shareholders to do so.

Accordingly, League members can, as just one part of the comprehensive evaluation which all companies should make of potential recruits, check to see if they are known to the League as active members or supporters of one of the revolutionary groups of the far Right or far Left.

The League gives straight factual answers to such questions. The League does not itself advise for or against employing anyone. It is always for the company to decide whether or not any information supplied to them is relevant to the job they have on offer or not. The League is happy for companies to put any information supplied to prospective employees to give them a chance to deny or explain it.

Continued

Equally, any individual who believes that he or she may appear in the League's records is free to check with us and will be told precisely what information, if any, is held. Accordingly, although the Data Protection Act does not apply to us because our records are currently not on computer, we are already on an ex-gratia basis freely giving individuals the rights they would enjoy if it did. The people in charge of this work have training and experience in the collection and evaluation of such data and the League is satisfied that the service operates on a fair and professional basis.

### Advisory Services

#### a) Lobbying

A further League service derives from the fact that as Governments have become more and more involved in industrial affairs companies, either on their own or on an industry basis, find an increasing need to lobby for or against some policy or specific item of legislation.

While the League would not itself take part in any such individual campaign it can often give very valuable advice to members on which parties, groups or individuals are likely to be helpful or hostile.

#### b) Cuttings Service

Most companies also subscribe to commercial cuttings services for mentions of the company name or particular issues affecting them. These services operate efficiently so far as the mainstream media are concerned, but usually ignore the fringe political papers and one-off leaflets and magazines.

Any mention of any member company in any of the papers read by the League is immediately referred to them. It can sometimes happen that articles containing allegations about a company or its senior managers are widely circulating within the company before management even gets to hear of it. Often the original source is not quoted. Swift and accurate notification to management by the League can allow such allegations to be scotched before damage is done.

#### c) Industrial Relations

Most major companies do, of course, have substantial professionally staffed personnel departments to handle industrial relations issues. Many firms are also members of the appropriate trade associations who are often able to give additional industrial relations advice. There are firms, however, who do not have such resources available to them and, in these cases, the League is able to help with advice on legislative and general industrial relations issues.

#### d) Training Courses

From time to time the League organises training courses and seminars. These cover a range of topics within the general objective of promoting the success of British Industry.

Continued

What The League Is Not

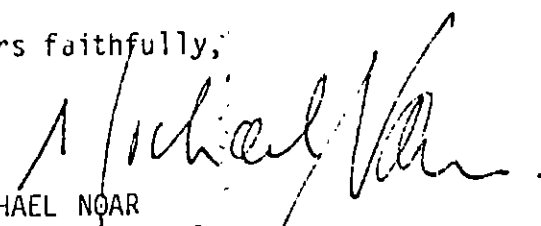
The extremist groups and parties who make regular efforts to discredit the League, often describe us as "Right-Wing" or "Anti-Union". We are neither of these things.

The League supports the whole of the democratic centre of British politics. In fact the Articles of Association prevent us from taking sides in party politics. The League believes that unions can have a key role to play in securing good industrial relations and over many years has worked to achieve that. Senior Trades Union leaders have participated in League functions at both Regional and National level.

The fact that some sections of the media have seen fit to launch attacks on the League indicates the concern experienced in militant circles at the effectiveness of the League in combating their activity aimed at undermining industry and the economy.

Recent industrial legislation has provided a more equitable balance between management and Unions to the benefit of both. However extremist organisations will be awaiting a more favourable climate for industrial action and any opportunity to foment trouble. The League is prepared for this threat, and with the continued support of its members and by the efforts of its staff will ensure that any future threat to the economy is frustrated.

Yours faithfully,



MICHAEL NOAR  
Director General.