

Dunni Augusti

A quick glance

contents but must

of this is good.

cc for information

Sir Derek Rayner
Mr Allen

Mr LANKESTER

R 2/6

MR CHAPPLE'S ADDRESS "TRADES UNIONS AT THE CROSSROAD", ROYAL INSTITUTION, 24 MAY 1979

1. I mentioned that Sir Marcus Sieff had given Sir Derek Rayner a copy of the full text of this address for transmission to the Prime Minister. You told me that she had not seen a copy and I undertook to send it to you, with a digest.
2. I have side- or underlined parts of the address which may be of particular interest. Much of the text is a usefully astriugent view, from the trade union perspective, of its own history and the response of employers and management.
3. But the main thrusts of the address, from page 35 onwards, have to do with closing the gap between the two "sides" in British industry and also the gap which has opened between the trades unions and society, including the elected Government of the day as the representative of all.
4. The address is timely and attractive because it restates some of the basic principles which should inform the citizen's thinking about his place in a democratic society and also, very firmly, some of the principles which should inform the thinking of trade union leaders and members if they too value democracy. Mr Chapple quotes on page 42 a 19th century trade union slogan, "United to support, not combined to injure". There is a strong and welcome overtone in this part of the address of the hackneyed but nonetheless powerful principle that "no man is an island".
5. Coming to brass tacks, and some important ones, Mr Chapple suggests:
 - a. an early meeting with the new Government in order to negotiate an industrial relations agreement in return for a guarantee (sic) to reduce unemployment and create new worthwhile jobs;
 - b. getting the targets for administrative retrenchment right (page 39);
 - c. setting the trade union house in order, eg secret ballots (page 40), independent appeals machineries and participation, (page 41);
 - d. avoiding "annual pay disasters" which damage trade unionists more than anyone else (page 42);

e. support for the proposal that there should be synchronised bargaining and an annual meeting of the TUC, CBI and Government to discuss wage guidelines (page 43);

f. a "hippocratic oath" for trade unionists (pages 43 and 44).

6. One of the most interesting points appears at the foot of page 45, where Mr Chappell talks about the need to remove "deeply held suspicions and mistrust" so as to provide a lasting base on which to build the future. There must be many people who feel that the rhetoric of the "two sides" in society is shabby and unworthy; but he brings out the point that one has to work at this.

Cp

C PRIESTLEY
7 June 1979