



**City
of
Liverpool**

A. J. Stocks, M.A. (Cantab.)
Chief Executive
P.O. Box No. 88
Municipal Buildings
Dale Street
Liverpool L69 2DH
Telephone: 051-227 3911 Ext: 2

cc Prossoff.

The Prime Minister (The Rt. Hon.
Margaret Thatcher),
10 Downing Street,
London.

Your ref
Our ref SA/133/RMK/LD
Date 30th January, 1981.

*action office
questions*

Dear Prime Minister,

Proposed Closure of Tate & Lyle Liverpool Refinery

You will of course know of the decision of Messrs. Tate & Lyle to close their Liverpool Refinery with the immediate loss of approximately 1,570 jobs in the inner areas of Liverpool. At its meeting last Wednesday my Council received with profound dismay news of the decision which is likely to affect a further 1,500 jobs causing both irreparable harm to the economic life of the city and the destruction of the cane sugar refining industry here. This had already suffered an enormous job loss throughout the United Kingdom. The closure will also have a dramatic effect upon the finances of the Mersey Docks & Harbour Company and is bound to lead to further job loss there. The loss of jobs at Tate & Lyle could also lead to job losses elsewhere in the area especially in those industries with closest links to sugar refining - for example biscuits and sugar confectionery accounted for over 9,500 jobs in the city according to the 1977 annual census of employment.

The work force at Tate & Lyle's Liverpool Refinery tended to be on the older side with long service and the skills of the work force are such that the employees must find great difficulty in obtaining alternative employment if the closure proceeds. This must be so in an area with such high unemployment and in this connection you will be conscious of the fact that the January unemployment statistics showed 50,175 registered unemployed in Liverpool alone and 109,483 in the Merseyside Special Development Area. Most of the work force of Tate & Lyle in

Cont'd

Liverpool did however live within a limited number of parts of the city, parts where unemployment was already higher than the city average and the proposed closure will lead to a tremendous amount of personal hardship. It will also lead to a further weakening of the economic base of Liverpool and Merseyside and is my Council thinks something which should be resisted in the strongest possible way.

The Council feels that a decision lies in the hands of the United Kingdom Government and has called upon the Government to do all it can to ensure the continued production of sugar from the Liverpool Refinery. It has further called upon the Government to take steps to maintain the Refinery in operation until such time as discussions have taken place between the Government, Tate & Lyle, the employees and the trade unions in view of the serious effect the closure would have on other related industries and the further more cumulative effects on the economies of already impoverished countries which depend on the sale of cane sugar as a basic source of their income, such as Zambia and Jamaica.

My Council would strongly urge you and the Government to give this matter the most earnest consideration and take the necessary steps which will secure the jobs of the work force at the Liverpool Refinery and which would serve to halt the serious decline in employment opportunities in Liverpool and on Merseyside. I am sending copies of this letter to the Secretaries of State for Employment and Industry and also to the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

You may wish to know that a City Council delegation will be seeing the Chairman of Tate & Lyle next week, it is writing to the European Commissioner for Agriculture and is calling upon all consumers, trade unionists and community groups to mount a protest campaign to boycott the purchase of Tate & Lyle products until they reverse their policy to close the Love Lane Refinery in Liverpool.

Representatives of all Parties on the City Council would like to have the opportunity of seeing you and your Ministers concerned to develop the case and emphasise Merseyside's situation.

Yours sincerely,

A.J. Stocks

Chief Executive