

From: Stephen Ross MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

30th April, 1981

*Dear Prime Minister*

Elliotts Turbomachinery Ltd., Cowes, Isle of Wight

As you have indicated on a number of occasions that you are always prepared to see an individual Member of Parliament where a major closure will seriously affect his constituency, I wish to avail myself of this opportunity at your early convenience.

The above Company will be closed by its multi-national parent, "United Technologies", unless a buyer can be produced within the next two weeks or so and although every effort is being made to find a purchaser, I am frankly not very optimistic about the outcome.

Elliotts are the third largest employers in my constituency with a labour force of some 500, reduced in the last 18 months from over 800. Their loss, and that of Ronsons who are definitely leaving, will probably add another 3% to our unemployment rate - already running at 10½%, the highest in the South of England. I have had every assistance from your Minister of State at the Department of Energy, Mr. Hamish Gray, who visited the factory recently and also from the Department of Industry. With their help and that of others closely associated with the firm, Merchant Bankers have been endeavouring to find a UK purchaser under a licensing arrangement. Some interest has been shown, but the American management is now pressing for a very early decision and have already brought in a team from the United States to sort out redundancies, removal of machinery etc. Elliotts are the only UK Company that can compete for particular types of turbomachinery required in most oil-related developments and up until the last 18 months, they had been extremely successful.

The workforce have been very loyal and recently entered into a 22 month wage agreement, the plant is modern and there is no doubt that given the opportunity the Company must have a bright

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future. It really is a case where the National Enterprise Board could play a vital role if allowed to do so.

My Secretary knows my whereabouts and can be contacted on the above telephone number if you will be kind enough to offer me a date when I can make my representations to you.

*Yours sincerely*  
*Arthur Ross*

Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher MP  
Prime Minister,  
10 Downing Street,  
LONDON SW1