

23 MAY 2005

All Members

Group Operations Closures

Bank Seeks To Deflect Widespread Criticism With Slur On LTU

On Wednesday 11th May the Bank announced that it was to close 6 Group Operations Offices with the loss of 450 jobs which, due to their location, were likely to involve few redeployment opportunities.

Later that afternoon Group Operations issued a message on Interchange in which it attempted to deflect the widespread anger and criticism of its decision to shed hundreds of jobs by suggesting that LTU had leaked information about the closures to the media and, as a result, some staff heard about the closures from the radio. It also had the front to say that LTU had put its own publicity interests before those of staff. Quite how sacking 450 staff is in their best interests beggars belief, but the suggestion that LTU had acted inappropriately by leaking information is blatantly dishonest and needs to be exposed as such.

The reality is that the Bank knew perfectly well our intentions a week before the announcement was made and raised no objection whatsoever. The facts the Bank cannot dodge are explained overleaf.

Bank Reaches New Low

Given the Bank's behaviour how can any of us trust anything that senior management say? Arguments over policy are quite acceptable: making statements that are clearly untrue is not. And in failing to make a retraction of its false claims the Bank has reached a new low.

In the same week in which the Bank again

received severe criticism in the media because of unethical sales, its behaviour on this issue should concern everyone.

The Retraction The Bank Should Have Made

The Bank was given an opportunity to retract the Interchange message but chose not to do so, presumably because it hopes the issue will go away. What the Bank should have said to staff is:

"In our interchange message on Wednesday 11 May 2005 about Group Operations closures we suggested that LTU had issued information contrary to an agreement with the Bank. We now accept that LTU's plans were known to the Bank in advance and had not been questioned. We withdraw our suggestion that LTU acted inappropriately. The Bank regrets any inconvenience and offence our statement has caused."

Members will no doubt draw their own conclusions about who has acted with integrity on this issue and will recognise that this is just one more example of the Bank 'spinning' information to suit its short-term ends.

The Bank's reputation has never been lower both inside and outside the organisation.

The Facts The Bank Cannot Dodge:

- **The Bank's own documentation, which it gave to LTU on the 5th May, made it clear that staff would be told of the closures at 9a.m. on 11th May, either by Senior Managers or in a scripted announcement.**

At no stage until now has the Bank suggested that the announcements would be staggered and we have never

- **What is more the Bank knew on the same day, the 5th May, that we would regard the information as in the public domain at 9 a.m.**

This is the normal convention for such announcements - once the first group of staff have been told the information is out and cannot be a secret.

11 th May	9am	Swansea - Face to face announcement to staff	Neal Lucas & Roger Nichols
11 th May	9am	Plymouth - Face to face announcement to staff	Wendy Broome & Alan Davies
11 th May	9am	Cardiff NSU - Face to face announcement to staff	Martin Green & Di Moss
11 th May	9am	Scripted announcement to staff in Stockton & Taunton NSUs by Centre Managers	Centre Managers

been asked to delay our communications or press activity until some other unspecified time.

Above is a copy of the Bank's own timetable showing clearly that staff would be told at 9 a.m.

- **The Bank was also told the week before the announcement at 9 a.m. that we would be issuing a press release accordingly.**

It is regrettable that having said it would tell staff at 9 a.m. the Bank did not do so and has now tried to shift the focus of attention away from its own failings.

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