



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

17 June 1983

*Dear Mr. Lee.*

Thank you for your letter of 13 June.

I am very pleased to see that the first International Free Enterprise Award is to be made to one of the greatest living economists, Professor Friedrich Hayek. Professor Hayek combines erudition, the highest intellectual integrity, the most fertile imagination and enormous moral courage.

He was one of the few great intellectuals to stand firm and resolute in his opposition to that great tide of Socialism which swept much of Europe over the last 60 years. That tide has now turned.

Professor Hayek will tell you that I am really not a Tory but a latter-day Whig. It is true that I believe passionately in the freedom of the individual, in free enterprise and in open trade. But these ideas were never the exclusive preserve of Whigs. And it was a great Tory Prime Minister, Sir Robert Peel, who ensured passage of the Corn Laws and set in motion the great free trade era of the Nineteenth Century.

Fortunately for us all the Tory Party did not congeal for ever in its mid-Eighteenth Century mould. It developed organically like any other group of human beings. It assimilated and adapted ideas from the late Eighteenth Century onwards. In these last decades of the Twentieth Century, the Tory Party can be proud of adopting much of what was good in the Whig tradition. While we should

/not be swayed

not be swayed by passing fads and fancies, we nevertheless must and do recognise those fundamental freedoms which Professor Hayek has spent so much of his life explaining, illuminating and, if I may say so, promoting. We wish him many more years yet to come in this task.

Yours sincerely

Raymond DeLiber

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Michael Ivens, Esq., C.B.E.



Prime Minister

DUTY ✓ CLERK,

The Prime Minister asked for  
a copy of this letter.

BM 17/6