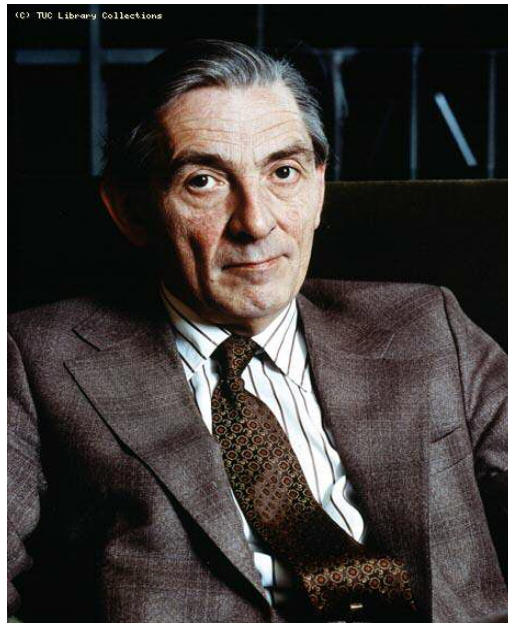


**A celebration of the life of
The Rt Hon Lord Murray
of Epping Forest
1922 - 2004**



Transcript of the speeches given
at the celebration held in the
Royal Robing Room
House of Lords London SW1
13 December 2004

INTRODUCTION

Lionel Murray made an outstanding contribution to British public life.

Born in rural Shropshire in 1922, despite his poor background he won a scholarship to Wellington Grammar School and subsequently to London University. After wartime service in Normandy and jobs in both teaching and industry he joined the TUC in 1947, rising to become General Secretary in 1973. He retired in 1984 after seeing the organisation through tumultuous times and was made a life peer later the same year. He died on 20 May 2004.

On December 13, 2004, some 200 of his friends and former colleagues gathered in the Royal Robing Room of the House of Lords to celebrate his life.

The event was organised by Baroness (Brenda) Dean and Lord (David) Lea, who are grateful to Lord Murray's widow, Heather, and her family for their co-operation.

The assistance received from the House of Lords authorities – in particular the Yeoman Usher - Brigadier Duncan - and his Secretary - Miss Joanne Fuller - were well beyond the call of duty, ranging from laying on facilities for guests to playing records of music associated with Shropshire by George Butterworth and Vaughan Williams - the latter in conjunction with Westminster Sound Systems - and the preparation of this transcript of the proceedings.

SPEAKERS

**Rt Hon Baroness Dean of
Thornton-le-Fylde**

General Secretary SOGAT '82, 1985 –1991

Brendan Barber

General Secretary, TUC

Wendy Waterson

Chair, Friends of Ironbridge Gorge Museum

Rt Hon Lord Armstrong of Ilminster

Cabinet Secretary, 1978 -1988

Rt Hon Baroness Williams of Crosby

Cabinet Minister, 1974-1979

Rt Hon Lord Kingsland

President, The Shropshire in London Society

Geoffrey Goodman

Journalist and author

Rt Hon Lord Healey CH

Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1974 -1979

John Monks

General Secretary, European TUC

Lord Lea of Crondall

TUC Assistant General Secretary, 1978 –1999

*(This contribution includes a tribute from
Rt Hon Lord Callaghan of Cardiff KG)*

RT HON BARONESS DEAN OF THORNTON-LE-FYLDE

My Lords, ladies, gentlemen and Deputy Prime Minister, could I welcome all of you here this evening to what is a happy occasion. It is the celebration of the life of a very special man, the Rt Hon Lord Murray of Epping Forest, or Len as we all really knew him.

He was born in Hadley in Telford in Shropshire and so we are particularly pleased that the Mayor and Councillors from Telford and Wrekin Council are here and also the Chairman of Shropshire County Council, but really a special welcome to Lady Murray and her family. All of you, you are very welcome here this evening.

Can I say a personal note to you, Heather. Thank you so much for your support in this tribute this evening. Without you, we could not have done it, so we are very grateful for that. Thanks too, I know some of them are in the room, to our Government Chief Whip (I cannot see him now but I could earlier), Bruce Grocott. When David Lea and I went to him with the idea that we should pay tribute to this wonderful man, Lionel Murray, he was very open and receptive and actually helped us achieve this evening. We could not have done it either without Black Rod and his staff or without the Yeoman Usher and the attendants, many of whom you have met as you came in this evening, ladies and gentlemen.

What we wanted to do was reflect on the life of a man known nationally as the General Secretary of the Trades Union Movement. You would think that would be enough for any one person but not for Lionel Murray. He in fact, and it is reflected in the people here this evening, knew a very diverse range and huge number of people who are here to support us tonight. That was his life and in all of those parts in the service of his fellow man and

woman Lionel gave and gave of himself.

We are pleased to welcome Wendy Waterson of the Friends of Ironbridge Gorge Museum and also Lord Kingsland who took over from Lord Murray as the President of the Shropshire in London Society. They are just two of an enormous range of charities supported by Lionel Murray, the national ones such as the Carnegie and the DAT, the Anglo German Foundation, the National Children's Homes, Crisis at Christmas and the Wing Fellowship, which probably, David Murray, touches on you as the RAF. There were local ones too and many of those people are here this evening. They were equally important to Lionel, such as the Friends of Epping Forest, from where he took his title. The St Clare Hospice, Loughton History Society, Orbit Housing Association and, yes, there were others. So, it has been a lifelong period of giving, and during that lifelong service, Lionel was a member of the Methodist Church.

That Shropshire lad became involved in the very fabric of British society. Trades unions, yes, we know all about that, Government and public life. He gave of his time and of himself and sometimes at the cost of his own personal health. All of these aspects are reflected in the huge list of speakers tonight. Quite a number of them have chosen a profession that is not known for brevity of speech, but I can promise you that they have all agreed to take the self-denying luxury of keeping to the four minutes or so that we have asked them to make sure we have in this wonderful room. You can hear the mutterings going on can't you - yes, you can ditch your pages!

Before I hand to Brendan Barber after my very short contribution, I would like to pay my own personal tribute and testament to Lionel Murray, what he meant to me then as a young woman officer in the trades union movement in Manchester and absolutely proud to be so. He helped that pride in me, he was an absolute pillar of integrity and intellect. There is a saying "Do not suffer

fools gladly", well he never went quite that far but you could tell on his face when he felt there were some fools around him. Expediency never overtook Lionel Murray's values, they were with him in everything he did, every decision that he took and that was an enormous encouragement for a young woman trades unionist in Manchester at a very difficult time.

Many of you in the room will remember my abiding memory of him, when he was at a TUC conference and he was speaking and he was carried away and that wonderful quiff of hair falling forward - that was Lionel. He put his everything in everything he did. He was someone to look up to and to be proud of as a leader of the trade union movement and it is that which is my memory. That memory was capped on the very proud day when he agreed to be my sponsor to come into the House of Lords. I felt it was a privilege to sit alongside him. I felt it was terrific that he was a Member of the Lords and he was so valued from all sides of the House.

BRENDAN BARBER

Lionel Murray was General Secretary of the TUC when I joined the organisation in 1975. I had admired him very much before I joined the TUC and that admiration grew as I saw him working at close hand. To do the job of TUC General Secretary requires many qualities and he possessed these in great abundance. He had a clear vision of the sort of society he wanted to see, it was one where the most vulnerable received strong protection and where the different elements, employers, Government, and of course unions, whilst each pursuing their own objectives, were able to reconcile their differences and work together for the greater good of society.

Lionel Murray was a practical visionary. He was at his most accomplished and persuasive reconciling the apparently irreconcilable, resolving disputes and constructing deals, deals between Government and unions, employers and unions, and all too often between unions and unions. The difficult problems never crossed his desk, only those that others had deemed impossible.

He was a one-man conciliation service, but when he needed to take a firm stand, he did so with understated courage. I saw that on many occasions, but it was perhaps most visible in 1974 when he led the Belfast shipyard workers back to work in defiance of the sectarian attempts to bring down the Sunningdale Agreement.

He demanded the highest standards of himself and expected nothing less of the people who worked with him. He gave the impression that he read every word in that mountain of documents which Congress House then produced and the sloppy author could expect one of his famous internal memos known to us in the TUC as blue notes. "I see you have awarded so and so the OBE", he wrote to one staff member who had got in a tangle over which honour a member of the General Council had been

awarded, adding acerbically, "which is more than the Queen has done". Though, for all the demands he placed on the staff he was always keen to see that their contribution was properly recognised.

Some parts of the job did not come naturally to him but he worked hard to overcome his weaknesses. He was no natural media performer but nevertheless came across as a reasonable and sympathetic figure at a time when many considered unions anything but reasonable or sympathetic. He was no natural orator but when necessary he could command the attention of Congress or Trafalgar Square with a message whose content rarely lent itself to the rhetorical flourish. It was all part of the job and it was a job that he considered had to be done to the highest standards.

In 1979 he appointed me as press officer. It was a time when the Winter of Discontent was about to turn into the Furnace of the Thatcher Summer. It was indeed a challenging time for all of us as we moved from bargaining mode into campaigning mode, again something that perhaps did not come naturally to him but which he worked on with real dedication.

There were lighter moments. The *Evening Standard* at the time ran an advertising campaign on the basis that this was the paper read by the movers and shakers and they sought a comment from the man they, and the rest of the media, insisted on calling Len. His response was characteristically clear, pithy and accurate. "I only read this paper when it has been drawn to my attention that it has misrepresented the trade union movement". Strangely enough his comments did not appear in their advertisements, but it brightened up life in the press office.

For me, Lionel Murray set the standards to which I continue to aspire.

WENDY WATERSON

I first met Lord Murray, or Lionel as he was known in Ironbridge, when he became President of the Friends of Ironbridge Gorge Museum in 1993. We were honoured that such a busy and eminent man should accept our invitation to become President.

I had known of course that Lionel was a local man, having been born and brought up in what is now Telford, although in Lionel's young days Telford new town was far in the future. His childhood years were spent in and around the small townships of Hadley and Lawley Bank under the shadow of the Wrekin, Shropshire's mountain; towns which would later be swallowed by the new developments which became Telford. Educated in the local elementary schools, Lionel gained a scholarship to the grammar school and from there went on to London University.

In later life, Lionel's career took him away from his Shropshire roots and he eventually made his home in Essex. If we had imagined for one moment that a President living well over a hundred miles from Shropshire would mean a President in name only, we were mistaken. We were delighted to find that Lionel took his position very seriously. He was very keen to be involved in the Museum and the Friends' organisation. Although it required a considerable journey from Essex to Shropshire Lionel, always with Heather at his side, attended all the major events of the Friends. He was invariably present and read a lesson at our annual carol service each Christmas and he was one of the first to book tickets for our annual dinner where he regularly made a remarkably well-informed and knowledgeable speech. Both Lionel and Heather were always without fail at our annual general meeting, where Lionel would speak most enthusiastically about the developments which had taken place in the Museum during the previous year. There were regular

telephone calls too, enabling him to keep up-to-date with events in Ironbridge.

I found him extremely supportive when I became Chairman, and I know I can speak for previous Chairmen when I say that Lionel was always there ready with help and support if and when needed. He was extremely good at rallying supporters. Each time he spoke at one of our meetings he would praise the work which was being done by the Friends and thank profusely those responsible. He was most appreciative of volunteer efforts and particularly singled out for congratulations those friends who worked for the Museum voluntarily. Lionel surprised us all with his interest and enthusiasm for the Museum. I think too he knew the history of the area and knew of the great events which had taken place there in the 18th and 19th centuries, when this small part of Shropshire sparked the birth of the industrial revolution. I am sure he was pleased and proud to see it re-emerge under the auspices of the Ironbridge Gorge Museum into a world famous area once again and a World Heritage Site.

Lionel only stood down as President last year, in 2003, having supported us enthusiastically and loyally for ten years. His interest in the Friends of the Museum did not end with his tenure, he still maintained his contacts with Ironbridge and with the many friends he had in Shropshire. I am delighted to be asked to pay this tribute to a truly remarkable Shropshire lad.

RT HON LORD ARMSTRONG OF ILMINSTER

I did not know Lionel Murray as well as many of you here will have done, but I knew him for a long time. I first encountered him in 1958. As the Secretary of the Economic Committee of the TUC, he was one of the TUC team that came on 17 May, 1958 to give evidence to the Radcliffe Committee on the working of the monetary system of which I was the secretary. George Woodcock, then the General Secretary of the TUC, was one of the members of the Committee. He evidently looked to Len Murray to support and brief him for his contribution to the Committee's work because Len used to consult me from time to time on George's behalf about the business of the Committee. I had the impression at that time that Len was very close to George Woodcock. He spoke to me of George Woodcock in terms of considerable affection as well as respect and I should think that he shared many of the views that I heard George express on the role of the TUC and especially of its General Secretary and of the opportunities of, and constraints on, the holder of that post. I believe that when Len took over as General Secretary he regarded George Woodcock as the model he would prefer to follow, perhaps almost as a father figure.

During my time in 10 Downing Street with Edward Heath, when Heath was talking to the TUC and the CBI about counter-inflation policy, and in late 1973 and early 1974 about the miners' pay claim, Vic Feather was the General Secretary of the TUC. It was then that I first encountered David Lea but I do not remember seeing much of Len during that time. Curiously enough, I was more in touch with him when I went to the Cabinet Office in 1979. By that time, of course, Len had become the General Secretary. Relations between the Thatcher Government, and particularly Margaret Thatcher herself, and the TUC were of course distant and strained, but Len and I both thought it useful for us to be in touch with each other informally from time to time, particularly so at the time of

the Civil Service strike in 1981. It was so again a couple of years later when, because of the effects of industrial action at GCHQ on the flow of intelligence between the United Kingdom and the United States, the Prime Minister insisted on removing from the national unions their rights of representation in GCHQ. As the head of the Civil Service, with the agreement of ministers and with Len Murray's encouragement, I entered into negotiations with the Civil Service unions at their request with a view to seeking an agreement which would enable the unions to retain their rights of representation at GCHQ, but would ensure that GCHQ was excluded from any future industrial action. It is an open secret that I was able to agree with the Civil Service unions the text of a concordat which would have achieved this outcome to the satisfaction of the minister responsible for GCHQ, who I am happy to see here this evening, but the Prime Minister would have none of it. She wanted the national unions right out of GCHQ. I thought at the time that frustration of this outcome was one of the proximate causes of Len Murray's slightly premature retirement as General Secretary of the TUC. He had just had enough.

My memory of Len is one of great affection and respect for a highly intelligent quick-minded and plain-speaking man, a man of great integrity, as has already been said, a competent and effective representative of the TUC and a man of thought as well as a man of action. A man to whom patience did not perhaps come easily, with firmly-held convictions and opinions and with strong likes and dislikes held in check by rigorous self-discipline as well as by a sense of deep commitment to the trade union movement and to the TUC itself. A man of great good sense, a realist who understood what could and what could not be achieved in any given situation. A man in whose confidence and discretion one could implicitly trust. A man whom, although I did not know him all that well, I was none the less proud to call a friend.

RT HON BARONESS WILLIAMS OF CROSBY

I think in many ways the presence of such a wide range of people at this memorial service and such a wide range of speakers tells one a great deal about the huge respect in which Lionel Murray was held by those who knew him.

I want to begin by saying, as some of you will know, that Lionel Murray not only was born in very constrained and humble circumstances as the son of a farm working family in Shropshire, but also he lost both his parents at the age of eight in industrial accidents, or more precisely agricultural accidents. Yet he never allowed the sense of bitterness he might have felt about his childhood, and the limitations it necessarily placed on an extremely intelligent and able boy, to spoil the rest of his life or to turn to acid his feelings about his fellow human beings. It is a remarkable story that he managed to get to New College, Oxford when he came back from having fought in the war in the Shropshire Light Infantry as a lieutenant who landed on D-Day on the French beaches. He not only took a PPE degree at New College, Oxford but won a very rare accolade, not just winning a first for his degree in politics, philosophy and economics but a much rarer accolade from that great, if rather controversial, figure, Dick Crossman who was his tutor and who said of Len Murray - the highest praise you can ever get from anybody in Oxford - "he had a very good mind".

Len joined the TUC, as we know, very shortly after he got his degree and became a very crucial part of the economic department. I want to, if I may, leap to my own experience of him which was in the 1974-1979 Labour Government, when I remember time and again how stoutly he defended his basic belief in the concept of a Social Contract between labour, the employers and the Government, in the concept of industrial democracy and in his belief that it would be possible to build a consensus

between different people and different occupations that would in the end create a better community for all to belong in. As several people have said already, not least Mr Barber, he was prepared to take considerable risks and to commit himself with very great courage to bringing that about.

Lord Armstrong has already referred to the risk he was prepared to take in trying to get the GCHQ to agree to a no-strike agreement, which he believed would head off what would otherwise be, and turned out to be, a bitter and often painful confrontation with the Government of Mrs Thatcher. His approach started long before that. In 1974 he tried to get an agreement between the Heath Government and the Trades Union Congress about making an exception of the miners that would not destroy the concept of an incomes policy. It was rejected by Mr Heath but not because Lionel Murray had not used his best endeavours to bring it about. In those long and difficult years between 1974 and 1979, when the Labour Government was struggling to try to get agreement first to a voluntary and then statutory incomes policy, Len Murray was at the very heart of most of those discussions. He deeply believed that with power went responsibility and he had very little time for those who wielded power and rejected responsibility. He was, I think above all, a Christian Social Democrat, a man who brought to his concept and belief in socialism his very deep commitment to Methodism and the way in which Methodism had been certainly one of the parents of the Labour Party.

Turning to his later years he himself admitted, with that extraordinary honesty which jumped out of him that he could never, in a way, suppress - it was at the 1983 Congress - that he himself had misread history and he had underestimated the sheer degree of obsessive determination shown by Mrs Thatcher to try to effectively rule out the trade union movement from a real part in the community and the nation she was trying to build. He

looked back and said later this was his single great mistake, that he had never realised she was not willing to compromise and there was no compromise possible with her of the kind I have mentioned about the GCHQ.

I think that Len Murray was very deeply a man of community, a man who believed in community, and that was exemplified by his life in retirement when he not only made, as Brenda has said, a tremendous commitment to charity but also a tremendous commitment to his community that he loved in Shropshire and in Loughton in Essex.

It is perhaps crucial to end by saying - in the times we live in - that for Len Murray the key alternative activity outside his work was his family whom he deeply loved, deeply cherished and deeply supported, and he said when he was asked about his retirement that his main relaxation was his family. If I may say so, it is a great pleasure, and I think very much what Lionel Murray would have wished, that his family is here tonight with us as they were present at the moment at which he breathed his last.

RT HON LORD KINGSLAND

My Lords, ladies and gentlemen, toward the end of his life, Harold Macmillan said that when you are assessing somebody's achievement you do not look at what they did at the summit of their career. You look at the distance they had to travel to get there; and I think that if you measure the distance that Lionel Murray had to travel from those early days in Shropshire to what he achieved in the trade union movement and in other walks of life, you have to conclude he was one of the outstanding figures of the 20th century.

He did, indeed, leave Shropshire rather early on in his life after he was demobilised from the regiment in 1945; but his interest in the county endured. Towards the end of his life, he was able to involve himself in a number of organisations, one of which you have already heard about. The other one, over which I now have the honour to preside, is the Shropshire in London Society. I had to succeed Lionel and Heather, who really ran that Society brilliantly together; and, believe me, it was an extremely daunting task, so high was the standard which they set. Lionel Murray would never get involved in an organisation unless he could give it his fullest attention, which he did. Nothing was ever too much trouble to him, however trivial it might have appeared to other people. He put his heart and soul in it.

Indeed, I think wherever he went in life he carried part of the county of Shropshire with him. I do not think one can over-estimate the importance of his experience in the King's Shropshire Light Infantry. To fight with people from your own county in the most extreme conditions over long and arduous periods is something that you never forget, and the loyalties that are developed in your relationships with other men will last for a lifetime. That was a very deep experience which never left him.

Of course, they always say that Shropshire is the graveyard of ambition; and indeed, anyone coming to Shropshire from outside with the intention of spending four or five years to develop their career there very quickly forgets any idea of promotion and simply drops anchor. It remains one of the two most feudal counties in England. Together with Northumberland there is a higher proportion of tenanted land, owned by fewer landlords, than in any other county in England. When Lady Williams pointed out to you that his parents came from the land, he would have had a deep sense of the gulf that lay between those who owned land and those who were landless; but it never in any way made him bitter or resentful.

He was characterised throughout his life by a really positive attitude to human nature, by a deep moral conviction and by one of the finest intellects I have ever come across; and he was a better read man than anybody else I knew in public life.

GEOFFREY GOODMAN

My friendship with Lionel Murray goes back a long time, back to the early 1950s in my earliest days as an industrial reporter for the *News Chronicle*, days when together we established something far more important than a professional relationship, the firm personal friendship based on mutually-shared political chemistries, if you like, shared generational experiences, war time and so forth. I think most of all we developed a personal trust that was not all that common even then between journalists and public figures; a trust I think based on his trust of me and I know my trust of him.

He was a very special trade union leader, as previous contributors to this salute to his achievements and memory have emphasised. Moreover, Lionel was very special at a time when trade union leadership was probably in its prime. The truth is he had the misfortune of leading the trade union movement when it was approaching a watershed in its power and influence, when the difficulties and the problems with which we are now so familiar were just beginning seriously to erode the trade union base of power and influence.

In fact, he became General Secretary following Victor Feather, at the most critical moment in the modern history of the trade union movement, in my opinion. From 1973 when he took over through until 1984 when he retired, was a decade of problems and challenges as fundamental in my opinion as any in the history of the trade union movement. Len Murray handled it with exceptional and remarkable skill, as others have pointed out, with great courage and above all with that quality which was in my view his hallmark, immense integrity with gentle decency. Of course, we know it was not a time for gentle decencies of life, yet he never veered from those special qualities. His deep moral and social conscience was badly wounded by Margaret Thatcher's approach. Despite all of those

obstacles he persevered and with enormous effort and courage he sought to civilise the growing conflict, as Lord Armstrong has already pointed out.

I shall never forget his courage at the 1983 Trade Union Congress, which I reported for the *Daily Mirror*, when against all the odds he fought for a policy which he described as "new realism". Sadly, his efforts then were in vain but I have no doubt, no doubt at all, that Len Murray's legacy of rational, practical radicalism, call it what you like, call it new realism or whatever, is one which the trade union movement will ultimately have to embrace if it is to survive the challenges of the 21st century. That message in my view will remain always as Lionel Murray's enduring legacy.

RT HON LORD HEALEY CH

My Lords, ladies and gentlemen, above all, Heather and the family, Len was one of my oldest and closest friends in the Labour movement for more than half a century. Our friendship started when I was working at Transport House as the Labour Party's International Secretary and Len was then deputy research secretary for the TUC. We used to play ping-pong together, occasionally with Frank Cousins, in the basement of Transport House. We had an enormous amount in common in a purely personal sense. We were both grammar school boys from the provinces, I from Bradford, Len from Wellington, and we both served in the Second World War, he in Northern Europe, I in North Africa and Italy, and then we both went to Oxford, I to Balliol, he to New College, and we both spent a very short time in the Communist Party - when we were young, I hasten to add! He, like me, found it easier to get the bosses to accept the nature of the post-war world, and there was a big gap at that time between the trade union leaders and their rank and file, which lasted I think until John Smith introduced one man-one vote and totally transformed the nature of the trade union movement. It was the end of the rule of what were then called the trade union barons.

When I was Chancellor, I had very good relations with the TUC, through the so called NEDC 6, the national economic and development commission group, and we developed a social contract which set the framework for relations between the unions and the Government from that time on. He was a very different person from some of the others I had to work with, like Jack Jones and Hugh Scanlon, the so-called terrible twins, but that was very typical of Len, and I suppose in a sense both he and I, having worked as officials for our movements, had a good deal in common with one another.

He, like Bevin, was the son of a farm labourer - Bevin was

the illegitimate child of a woman who worked on a farm and Len, of course, was the son of a man who worked on a farm - but he was essentially what I could only call an intellectual civil servant. He saw it as his job to find the best way of carrying out decisions which had been made and he was frightfully good at this. Like me, I suppose you could call him an apparatchik but I am afraid, and I know Robert Armstrong will agree, government cannot work without apparatchiks - can it, Sir Robert?

I think that the oddest period in his life, as of mine, was when he entered the home of the living dead in 1985. For those here who are ignorant of these matters, that is the House of Lords. He did a wonderful job there as Lord Murray of Epping Forest, but I think he made an invaluable contribution to Britain's public life throughout his long career and every one of us in this hall therefore owe a great deal to him. Thank you.

JOHN MONKS

In late 1977, nearly midway through his time as General Secretary, Lionel Murray appointed me to the head of the TUC organisation and industrial relations department. From then on, I worked with him during that very difficult period that saw the end of the Callaghan Government and the advent of Thatcherism and the attendant rise in unemployment, plenty of new industrial relations laws, lost industrial disputes and a diminution in union power. That watershed, to which Geoffrey referred, was a searing experience in both of our lives and I guess in the lives of many of you today.

In my mind and my memory, Len was a man whose life rested on four very solid pillars. First, was the family, Heather the children and of course later the grandchildren. Second, was religion and Methodism was never far away with Lionel. Third, and I did not know much about it was his charitable work. It came as something of a shock when I saw him on the television, with Crisis at Christmas and realised just how much of his very limited spare time he did give to charitable work. He never made a song and dance about it either. The final pillar was of course trade unionism and that was the aspect of his life that I certainly knew the best. What bound these four pillars together was the theme that we achieve more together than we ever do alone. Not for him, the egotistical "my way", much more "our way".

His view of the TUC's role was complex; it certainly was not a populist view. He certainly drew on the thinking of George Woodcock, the man who appointed him, and on Milne Bailey, an earlier predecessor of both of them as head of the TUC economic department. As Denis Healey said, he certainly had all the skills of a top class civil servant but I would say he brought extra qualities of leadership, maturity and commitment to the job of leading the TUC. His view was that democracy was not

just about electing a government every four or five years, it was about the way that people expressed their views, day in and day out, on a variety of decisions taken by a variety of institutions, and as far as the world of work was concerned trade unions were at the centre of those decisions. He believed that government should listen to the trade union movement because it is the accurate articulation of the voice of people at work. In turn, unions should share the responsibility for the difficult decisions necessary to maintain full employment; that cornerstone of keeping trade unions strong and allowing the Welfare State to improve and develop. This was not always an easily-received message in those parts of the union world which saw aggressive collective bargaining as the key vehicle for advancing socialism or regarded incomes policy as a check on their work place bargaining power.

What went wrong? Well, many books have been written about that. Perhaps what went wrong was that Government stopped listening to unions and the TUC, and there were questions which Lionel himself asked about whether we were an accurate conduit for the views of working people. Certainly in an era of decentralised bargaining there were plenty who took continued full employment for granted, a complacency that was soon to be shattered. The fact that the model failed in the UK at that time actually does not invalidate the model, it is still of course the fundamental principle of the International Labour Organisation, it is practised widely in the European Union and is perhaps working at the moment at its best in Ireland and in the Scandinavian countries. (It has had much to do with Ireland's surge to its present levels of prosperity and success.) It may not be centred so much as it was then on the trade-off between levels of income and employment, although that is still important in those countries where it works the best, but it is still highly relevant to long-term subjects like pensions and retirement ages and the balance between shareholder and employee interests, subjects on which the party in power,

and certainly a party in power without a huge majority, will find it very, very difficult to take popular decisions on without a broad negotiated consensus behind it. People who say it is a failed model, as passé as those flared trousers of the era, should remember that even fashions come around in cycles. Tripartism or social partnership's day has not gone even if the subjects alter.

In an interview conducted four years ago, Lionel was asked what he would like people to say at an event like this. His reply was that he wanted to be remembered as having served to the best of his ability. As so often, I am happy to echo his words.

LORD LEA OF CRONDALL

First, may I thank all the speakers for their contributions, which I think you will all agree have provided a fitting tribute.

I first met Len Murray in November 1963. I had invited him to lunch to discuss a forthcoming TUC programme of work on transport policy, at the end of which he asked whether I had in mind seeking employment at the TUC. I responded positively and he then told me I would be interviewed by Mr George Woodcock who would ask me only one question, which would be: "Mr Lea, have you any aspirations to become a Member of Parliament?" to which the correct answer was, "No, Mr Woodcock". "Have you got that clear?", Len then asked me, and I said I was sure I could remember that. So came the red-letter day and I was shown into the presence - Len was waiting in his own room - Woodcock gestured me to sit down and mumbled something into his ashtray. Assuming that this must be the \$64,000 question, I immediately responded, "No Mr Woodcock". "No?" he came back, "I thought you were applying for a job here!" Anyway, on my way out from the interview I thought I would tell this little tale to Mr Murray, thinking it might amuse him. Amused he was not. He gave me a stare which would have wiped the smile off the face of the Sphinx. I came to know that stare very occasionally, but it was normally deserved, and this perhaps allows me to say - even given all the ups and downs - that we worked very closely together for 20 years and I came to value his personal friendship and that of Heather.

I would also like to take this opportunity to reiterate Brenda's thanks to Heather for her wonderful support and her co-operation in planning this event.

Some years ago my bank manager asked me to pass on his good wishes to Len and I naturally asked how he knew him. "Oh, he pulled me out of a blazing tank six days after D-Day". I did pass on the message but it was not a topic I heard mention of before or since. If I may employ an understatement, showiness was certainly not part of his style.

Arising from his war-time experience his commitment to reconciliation with the people of Germany was a cause to which he gave his unswerving commitment, both through trade union contacts, and through his work on the board of the Anglo- German Foundation. In that connection we are pleased to have with us here this evening a long-standing friend of Len's, Lord Dahrendorf; Lord Croham, former Permanent Secretary of the Treasury and a former Chairman of the Anglo-German Foundation, and its current Chairman, Mr Brian Rigby, whom we first came to know when he was Deputy Director General of the CBI. I am glad we can record that connection as well.

We are also very pleased that the Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott, whose history as a trade unionist and involvement with the TUC – Labour Party Liaison Committee goes back a long way, has also been able to be with us. Also to be recorded is our pleasure at welcoming Geoffrey Howe - Lord Howe of Aberavon. His path crossed, in every sense of the word, with Len's for much of his professional life. I recall working with Len on a project of expelling 22 unions who refused to deregister under the 1971 Industrial Relations Act when Lord Howe was Solicitor General under Ted Heath. I think his presence here testifies to that degree of respect between people of integrity in our industrial and political scene, which I am sure we all believe, is a mark of a mature democracy.

That sense of the paramount importance of personal integrity, which, as others have pointed out, was the hallmark of George Woodcock too, was the reason he

became associated with the dictum – it sounds almost like a catch phrase – “We will deliver what we said we would deliver”. It was an article of faith, and he ensured it was never breached. That is the first among many reasons why the efforts of the great majority in the trade union movement in the 1970s to make the Social Contract a success are, I believe, recognised, and likewise the TUC’s role now being rehabilitated despite the Greek tragedy of 1978/79.

Speaking of which, I have received the following tribute from Lord Callaghan, himself of course a lifelong trade unionist as well as having held all the senior Offices of State in the land. I have indicated to Jim Callaghan that I would read it to you. This is his tribute:

“I am very sorry that I cannot be with you to join in the celebration of Lionel Murray’s life and work. We were good friends at a very difficult time in the life of the Labour Party and the trade union movement. I admired his judgment and calmness when things were most difficult and his capacity to see both sides of an argument even when he came down heavily on one side. He never sought to inflame difficult situations but rather, instead, worked to find constructive solutions and he showed the same qualities in all other aspects of his life. It was a life well lived, and I thank him for it, shared for so long with Lady Murray” - James Callaghan.

I have expressed our deep appreciation to Lord Callaghan for that impressive tribute to Lord Murray, and I think you will all agree that it would be appropriate for it to be the last word.

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