

CENTRAL SECRETARIAT

Regd. No. CG 7 / 1990

Nothing should be written on this Cover except as indicated by the Headings

XTRA-VISION

N.B.—All references, including those from one person to another within the same Branch should be shown below, and transit should take place through the Registry. Instructions to “put away” or “bring forward” the file should be initialled by the officer concerned. When not in action the file should be returned to the Registry. In all references to this file the number and year should be quoted as above.

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Regd. No. CG 7/1990

DD 8875571 500 3/89 H2854

LEAH BURNSIDE

PUBLIC RELATIONS

2 January 1990

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

Richard Needham MP
Minister for the Economy
Stormont
BELFAST
BT4 3SW

Dear Minister:

I am writing to draw your personal attention to the difficulties which are besetting our client Xtra-vision Video Films (NI) Ltd. Xtra-vision plc is a company publicly quoted on the USM in Dublin and London. The Company is capitalised at £62m and owns video chains in the Republic of Ireland, USA and England (Manchester and London) as well as in Northern Ireland.

You may already be aware that since the Company opened up its Northern Ireland subsidiary in July 1989, it has been bedevilled by vicious rumourmongering which alleges, inter alia, that: they are a front for the IRA; that they are receiving money from Noraid; that C J Haughey is on the Board.

Normally a company can survive unfounded, malicious and utterly ludicrous rumours but in the case of Xtra-vision the motivation for the rumours seems to be the preservation of the racketeering arrangements of the paramilitaries and their fringe criminal associates. The rapid growth of Xtra-vision has upset these people and prompted a hostile backlash of rumour, intimidation and bomb attacks designed to frighten the Company out of Northern Ireland. A copy of our statement of 19 December 1989 taking a public stand is enclosed.

One category of rumour which is giving particular difficulty to counter is that members of the security forces are banned from Xtra-vision premises. As far as I can establish this is untrue and denied by the RUC but the rumours persist regarding an official army and UDR ban on personnel using their stores. I have had discussions with the RUC on the rumours and the source of the attacks.

157 High Street.
Holywood.
BT18 9HU
Northern Ireland.
Tel.(0232)428232
Fax.(0232)428233

2 January 1990

Richard Needham MP

I would be grateful if you would raise this matter with the security forces to see if such a ban exists either officially or unofficially and to refute it so that a degree of commonsense could be restored.

After six months Xtra-vision's investment in Northern Ireland stands at over 65 shops employing about 300 people. The Company plans to have 100 shops by Easter employing 400 people. As Minister for the Economy you will appreciate that this is substantial inward investment in the Northern Ireland leisure market which compares well with other inward investment initiatives and all without Government financial assistance. Where you could help, however, is by using your good office with the business community and the security forces to enable a legitimate, publicly quoted, international company to beat the video racketeers and restore its good name.

For our part, as their PR consultancy, we will be seeking to associate the company with the numerous sponsorship opportunities that exist during this year and 1991 so that people in general will recognise their commitment to the local community.

Yours sincerely
Alan Burnside

ALAN BURNSIDE

Enc

MM/14/90
FROM: N HAMILTON
DATE: 9 JANUARY 1990

MR WILSON

XTRA-VISION

1. In my desire to secure greater involvement from the private sector, I have been in consultation with several Advertising Agencies and Public Relations Agencies, through personal contacts. As a result of those contacts, I now have an offer from Xtra-Vision for the Company to become directly involved in some youth training schemes and DED have suggested to me that the next stage should be a formal meeting involving the Company, DED and myself to come to some views as to how the Company could become a recognised training agency under YTP/JTP.
2. All of this happened before the recent bomb explosions at Xtra-Vision shops in Portadown, Ormeau Road and Cregagh. This, together with rumours about the Company's non-involvement with the security forces and the Company's policy of buying up existing video outlets, causes me to stop and take stock of where we go from here. I enclose for your information a copy of the recent letter which the Company's PR Consultant has now sent Mr Needham, together with copies of the application forms which it uses. I am told that it is the reference to Employers on form A which has caused difficulties with the security forces although the Company has now changed its procedures and is using form B.
3. I would be most grateful for your advice as to whether there are any reasons why I should not proceed to formalise relationships between the Company and DED. Clearly I do not want to initiate further action which might, at the end of the day, cause us difficulties should there be any reasons why we should not take

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up their offer of help.

4. I am sure that from recent publicity, your normal source of advice on such matters will be aware of the background to this Company.



NIGEL HAMILTON
CENTRAL SECRETARIAT

1617

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6/90
FROM: R WILSON
DATE: 22 FEBRUARY 1990

cc Mr Hughes

MR HAMILTON

XTRA-VISION

1. You minuted me last month about the wisdom, in the light of recent rumours about this Company, of encouraging it to become a recognised Training Agency under YTP/JTP.
2. I can confirm that you should disregard the rumour and treat the Company for this purpose as you would any other.

R Wilson
R WILSON
CENTRAL SECRETARIAT

1896

M/S [Signature]

*He open a new file (CG) for mess papers
+ return to me.*

S 13/3

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