Galileu
Revista de Economia e Direito
Vol. XI, n.º 1, 2006, pp. 41-54

Economic Development and Social Cohesion At the Heart of the Matter

Joseph E. Bigio[1]

When we are celebrating, for whatever reason, we have a tendency to have a little portion of our mind unwilling to join in. We usually pay no attention to this. Why should we? There is nothing occurring that is likely to spoil the festivity. All is well on this occasion, for the moment. And there lies the rub. We have this unbidden sense, this tiny and usually well submerged sense of unease - that the joy may only continue well for a very little while.

Do you find this probable, now that I have drawn your attention to it? Well, I have a very special message for you; a message of Good News. It tells you, first of all, to be at Peace. Peace in your mind, whatever may be the orientation of your faith. Because, as soon as any one of us recognizes that there could be this tiny sense of unease, we are halfway to dealing with it. This is particularly the case, whenever we are top decision makers, or somewhere on the road to reaching that type of position. We simply need to know what causes the unease and how to deal with it. Easier said than done, you may say. Bear with me, please, before I propose an answer.

Meanwhile, although it is in a different context, I would draw attention to the distinct *'Malaise'* spreading and pervading many of the regions and countries that make up the European Union. It started to spread in early 2003, a month or two before the invasion of Iraq, and steadily grew in influence for each of the three years that followed. When one looks for the underlying reasons for this malaise, they are not hard to identify. Not only had the rate of economic growth been declining but, more significantly, however many new jobs happened to be created through innovation and new enterprises, the numbers of unemployed were relentlessly increasing. This was evident to the majority of citizens, regardless of the occasional blips in statistics that bolstered the hopes of various national authorities.

The simple facts of the matter are that, even as considerable efforts are being made to promote the increase of new small and medium enterprises and thus create new jobs, there is an ever-growing quantity of mergers and acquisitions that result, by reason of

1 Director, Centro de Estudos da Globalização, UAL.

the very nature of their aims, in the redundancy, dismissal or layoff of hundreds or even thousands of qualified and productive personnel. Clearly, this makes a mockery of the successes of the attempts to promote development with social cohesion.

It is surely worth remembering regularly that the aim of those who have been trying to construct a viable European Union was to create an enlarged, integrated Union, whose constituent nations can live together and experience worthwhile economic development with social cohesion in peace and security. So the fact that the desired economic development is stalled in its tracks provides clear reason for the malaise to prevail throughout many of the EU nations, however varied their particular circumstances.

Are there any primarily effective steps that can be taken to improve the situation in a both dramatic and viable way? Do we have the capacity to take these steps ourselves and are we willing to get involved?

Of course, the almost automatic self-defending response to these last questions is, "I doubt it", or something similar. And is this quickly followed by, "Anyway, this is not for me. Why should I get involved? I have another, much more significant, personal goal on which I need to concentrate completely, if I am to succeed in fulfilling my ambitions."

Naturally, this has some truth in it. As so many teachers of management have said throughout the years, we can do anything we wish; Anything; As long as we give it full and continuous priority. But, I venture to ask, assuredly our success, wherever we achieve it, is bound to be affected by the state of the economy. For the very simple reason that, nowadays, not just the economy of the region or country in which we aim to be active but the state of the global economy affects a considerable number of factors for success.

Perhaps what many of us may fail to recognize is that economic development is directly related to the question of social cohesion.

It is only through economic development that a community can create sustainable new places of employment *(jobs).*

Without Economic Development there can be no freedom from the scourge of mass unemployment. There can be no freedom from want. There is no freedom from want unless there is a chance to earn a competency for a life that is worth while.

Across Europe there are around 36 million souls who do not have any such chance. They are 'The Unemployed". Possibly 12 million of them are already called The Long Term Unemployed. More people will join them unless we can manage to generate economic development.

Meanwhile, maybe it is reasonable to postulate that:

1. A stagnant economy will remain in that state until a dynamic force changes it.
2. The dynamic force provided by technical innovation is directly proportional to the economic growth it induces, the constant of the proportionality being the inertia of the stagnant economy, and
3. For every instance of self-induced economic growth there will be a parallel positive multiplying effect on the creation of places of employment.

While more than forty thousand children – and many of their parents – die every day from malnutrition and lack of sanitary drinking water in other parts of the world, we, here in Europe, have no room for complacency. We too have a share in the number of hungry, homeless and, to far too great an extent, hopeless people. *Without freedom from want, they have no freedom to enjoy the most basic elements of culture or foster their own living spirit.* In the face of a situation like this, I don't think we have many alternatives to insisting that national, regional and local strategies be geared to the need for genuine economic progress.

There is little or no economic progress when growth occurs without development. Economic Development only occurs when the underlying rate of economic growth is both self-induced *and self-sustaining*, so that changes in the structures of manufacturing, technological and services industries yield higher productivity and higher real income per working person.

To induce the desired kind of economic growth, there has to be a steady supply of new initiative, innovation and enterprise[2] that accepts a hopefully properly calculated amount of risk.

There have to be many such Schumpeterian start-ups on a continued basis. Europe's nations each need to enact measures to cope with their own sets of problems. These should be measures of encouragement; not new sets of restrictive regulation, which very often turns out to be counter-productive. Structural and Cohesion Funds may help but they do not bring economies to life with wave of a wand. National and regional economies need to become vibrant as the result of the joint human endeavour of their young people. Their initiatives have to be motivated, recognised and properly rewarded on an ongoing basis.

2 C.f. *Europa I piate Poszerzenie* – Europe and The Fifth Enlargement – Joseph E. Bigio, p. 119, 119-30, Redakcja naukowa, Maria Dunin- Wasowicz, WSHIFM, Warsaw 2004

So how, in practice, do we sustain not just underlying rates of growth but, more essentially, the viability of the continuing enterprises that constitute development for the economy?

Again, before I submit my answer to this burning question, I hope you will find it in order for me to mention one or two of the basic assumptions that underlie my approach.

Profit is not dirty, but Greed is

Firstly, I find it manifest that Profit is not a dirty word. But, although this is often accepted as an essential conclusion, after people think about the proposition, I cannot help wondering how many of us understand why, from a social point of view, things cannot be otherwise. The reason seems to stem from such a simple premise.

For instance: in basic communities, as soon as the most minimal amount of specialisation appears on the scene, the cost of the time of the specialists has to be met by those who wish to have the skilled work done for them. The cost of this time is, to all intents and purposes, profit. How much profit there shall be depends on how unusual the specialist skill happens to be and, of course, how great the demand is for the resulting product or service. We only have to extrapolate from this scenario to arrive, eventually, at the profit motive that underlies the capitalist system.

Secondly, to me it is just as manifest that Greed does have all the connotations of a dirty word. Perhaps this is why it was listed as one of the seven cardinal sins. It signified excess. Excess, we may say, not just of self-indulgence but very often at the expense of neighbours; therefore an excess to be avoided, if at all possible, by those of us who allow our conscience to have a moral claim to be listened to.

To make it clear that I am not rambling away from the main points at issue, maybe I can tell you a story about a little boy named Isaac ('Ikey' in the Bronx area of New York City where he lives). Ikey was in a history class that was being given by a substitute teacher at his neighbourhood primary school. This teacher began her class by explaining that things would be different that day, because there was to be a prize for the person who managed to be the first to answer an important question correctly.

At this the kids set up a joint groan. Who wanted another fancy pencil or a special eraser or even a roll of sellotape? In response, the teacher promptly disabused them 'No, you are mistaken. Today's prize is not only something you like – a chocolate ice cream – but you will get it immediately – in class – as soon as you come up with the correct answer.'

Then came the question.

"Who is the greatest man in history?"

Sarah, in the front row, put up her hand. "I know, teacher."

"Well, Sarah?"

"Julius Caesar."

"Well, Sarah, I'm afraid that's not the answer. Caesar was a great man, but not the greatest in history. Who's next?"

David in the third row from the back managed to obtain attention and said, "I guess it was Napoleon, teacher."

"That's a good try, David, but even so it's not quite good enough. Napoleon may be said to have been considerably greater in his achievements than Caesar, but he wasn't the greatest man in history."

Ikey waves his hand and manages to give his answer. "Jesus Christ is the answer, teacher."

"Why, Isaac that is the answer. I have to admit I didn't expect you would be the one to come up with the real answer. But you are. You have the right answer. Jesus Christ is the greatest man in history. Come up and get your prize."

Ikey goes up and receives the prize. It's a Super Double Magnum.

Back at his desk, he is unwrapping it eagerly when he feels a tug at his sleeve.

"What is it, Mischa?" he asks, a little testily because of the tug at his sleeve.

"Ikey. How can you say it was Jesus Christ, when all of us here know it was Moses?"

"I know, I know", Ikey replies. "But this is business."

Unbridled competition cannot be justified.

Of course, you realize, don't you, that "But this is business" is precisely the worst approach we can take when evaluating a course of management action. The moral imperatives of our conscience must always, and I say it advisedly, *always*, be allowed to take precedence over materialistic considerations. However hard it is for us to let them do so. This is where I can affirm, without hesitation, the second part of the Good News Message that has been inspired in me by Our Lady of Fátima, to whom I acknowledge my devotion. The message is: 'Do not fear the consequences of taking the right decisions. There is indeed a way to practice what faith tells us we must do *with all our heart* even while fulfilling our business, professional or civic obligations. Help one another as the Lord has helped you.'

I speak as a Christian but I believe that the message is just as applicable to any person of faith, whatever revelation of the truth their culture brings to them. Peace and love for our neighbour are, in my understanding, values that imbue most of the world's great religions. Putting these principles into practice are the first, quintessential, steps toward changing the mores and customs that pervade our working, political, economic lives.

This implies that, however far any of us try to extrapolate from the simple premise about earnings and profit, we should in no way agree to the kind of unbridled globalisation that destroys the productive livelihood of so many thousands of active skilled individuals. The greed and utter selfishness that result from the adherence to this sort of business practice are, without any doubt, the two things that generate more unemployment, misery and degradation than most other characteristics of the human species.

In the face of such a record, it should be obvious to anyone with the least amount of compassion that the catechism of the capitalist manager needs fundamental reform. Some underlying principle needs to be changed. For instance, the principle that puts competitiveness ahead of all other considerations needs to be rejected. We need to remind ourselves that it is not immediate competitiveness that is the real purpose underlying the creation of an enterprise. It is rather the existence of a business that provides a good and sustainable livelihood for all of those who involve and engage themselves in the various tasks of making it prosper.

This fundamental change of principle hasn't been called for before now, simply because the figures and institutions of world finance have not been willing to recognize how very pressing the requirement is. Nor have most other people until, in the aftermath of September 11th, Afghanistan and Iraq, *some of the more thoughtful have begun to think about the intrinsically underlying causes. These, they postulate, could well lie at the roots of the hatred for what is seen as the insouciant arrogance and presumption of Western Capitalism.*

The basic aims of business.

The aims of enterprise and those of concern for the wellbeing of human beings are relatively easy to reconcile – as long as we recognize what the basic aims for business activity are. It may seem trite to discuss such a question when we might all be expected to have a well established concept of them in our minds. Nonetheless, I think it probably essential to do so, if only because we may tend to overlook their underlying importance in matters of competition. They lie at the root of why a business needs to be competitive. Allow me, therefore, to propose a 'thinking out of the box' definition that we could accept as a basis for this discussion.

The basic purpose of an enterprise is to make sufficient profit for it to be worth the time and dedication of the people, both corporate and individual, who devote their energies and skills to its activities. This implies that it must also generate enough profit to pay for the use of the capital and financing necessary for it to start and continue its business existence as a viable enterprise. This twofold aim is, I submit, all that is essential. All else is additional.

Cooperation vs. excessive competition.

Returning to the main question of why a business needs to be competitive, again the 'thinking out of the box' answer has to be elementary. *A business has to be competitive with others in a limited market, in order to be able to sell its services or material products in sufficient number to make the required basic levels of profit, or else it will cease to be viable. Again, I suggest that this is all that is basically essential to business survival.*

The next consideration, at this juncture, is how these activities affect the social structure of the community. Here I beg to return your attention to the third tenet I put forward at the beginning of my 'EUnomics and Competition Strategy' submission at the first EUnomics International Roundtable Conference in Lisbon, in early February 2004, namely:

The paramount justification for the development of economic strategies is raising the potential standard of living for the poorer eighty percent of the population.

Against this background of basic premises, it must surely be clearly in the interests of each region or community that new, viable, enterprises be created and, by virtue of their profitability, sustain and further develop their own existence. This brings us back to the principal question I posed: 'How, in practice, do we sustain not just underlying rates of growth but, more essentially, the viability of the continuing enterprises that constitute development for the economy?'

The first steps will have to involve incisive decisions to refocus the aim of dynamically competitive business. In principle, these need to move beyond Hayek's process of discovery. And, I submit with full conviction, they will have to imply a development of cooperative activities that are built upon the kind of patterns of deepening divisions of labour envisaged by Herbert Giersch in his address to the International J.A. Schumpeter Society in Münster (1994).

A full treatment of this theme is outside the possibility of a short communication such as this. Thus, at this juncture, I simply seek to show **how a responsible approach to economic development will furnish a viable substitute for the competitiveness that can so damage the social infrastructure and cohesion of any community.** (As you may well have noticed, this is particularly damaging as and when the 'acquisition game' becomes one where the aspect of human relations is for all intents and purposes ignored.)

To begin with, I submit that there is often a **highly viable alternative to a merger or other kind of acquisition.** This alternative, **a cooperative approach to dealing with the need to spread one's market,** *will usually have greater chances of long-term success.* In this respect, it is worth remembering that **mergers frequently result in the eventual destruction, rather than construction, of value** – most frequently by virtue of the differences in cultural contexts for the enterprises involved. Moreover, global synergies in either marketing or administration seldom materialize on a lasting enough basis to have made the exercise worth while.

This cooperative approach is something much more familiar to entrepreneurs than we might at first imagine. It is particularly present when people seek to develop an innovative process and enlist the participation of others in the related venture. Curiously enough, it is also something engaged in by people involved in associations to preserve some of their mutual cultural heritage. It is interesting to note that some sizeable international corporations are already starting the transition from predatory competitors to cooperating enterprises, happy to live side by side with a host of other, large and small companies and develop with them along parallel paths.

Deep Cooperation is an extension of the basic principle of cooperation. It allows other businesses to thrive, using their own comparative advantages. Its aim is to enable each extant enterprise to maintain a strong presence within a competitive world, from which all realize better results and greater share values. At the same time, each remains in a position to try to be the best at generating its specific markets.

Deep Cooperation is a catalyst for a better world, in which the economic advance of those that are involved in cooperating rejects the winner-take-all mentality. It is a prime example of the Socially Responsible Capital approach that I have been arguing in favour of for several years.[3]

---

3 *Opere et Studio pro Oeconomia*, Vol. 1, N° 2, Joseph E. Bigio, pp.91-105, WSHIFM, Maj 2004

PRODUCTIVITY IMBALANCES

Much attention is focussed on what we may call productivity imbalances. The executive summary from The European Commission[4] highlights an endemic factor in the subparagraph headed 'Strengthening competitiveness and employment creation'. It states "There are a number of areas in the EU in which structural problems deter investors and inhibit the growth of new economic activities despite reasonable levels of infrastructure and work force skills. These tend to be old industrial regions or those with permanent geographical and other characteristics that constrain development.

The challenge for cohesion policy in these cases is to provide effective support for economic restructuring and for the development of innovative capacity in order to arrest declining competitiveness, falling relative levels of income and employment and depopulation. A failure to do so now will mean the problems are even greater when action is eventually taken."

There can be no correction of the imbalances without increased opportunities for various kinds of productivity. Principally, these opportunities have to come from new 'niche' enterprises. These new businesses are founded by virtue of the initiative of a few of those more adventurous people that are to be seen in every segment of a nation's population. Their diverse initiatives are the very essence underlying the desired economic progress.

Nevertheless, just as there can be no economic progress without diversity, there can be little economic growth without the productivity efforts of the people who accept the risks of joining a new venture. And it is, to a large extent, upon the motivation of these people that the medium and long-term viability of business ventures depends.

I contend that there are literally hundreds of thousands of such people all over Europe, of all ages and degrees of experience and enthusiasm, who are ready and willing to throw themselves wholeheartedly into new venture. Indeed, in such situations it is often found that they contribute more than would normally be expected to the success of enterprises - at whatever level of qualification they can be used. The young have the enthusiasm, the middle-aged have the know-how, and those who are older and have been made redundant as the result of age-discrimination have vast amounts of experience to make available, especially to start-up companies that may well lack management capability.

---

4 *A New Partnership for Cohesion: convergence, competitiveness, co-operation* from the Third Report on Economic and Social Cohesion. February 2004. See link at http://europa.eu.int/comm/regional_policy/index_en.htm

In particular, it has to be worth recognising that, whenever the inevitable process of restructuring takes place, there is a way to bring about a virtuous result from the evils of making personnel redundant. Instead of just shucking off the burden of taking care of the erstwhile staff, or passing the task to outplacement consultants, the managers responsible for the restructuring can arrange that the existing enterprise set up new ventures, as separate small businesses.

These ventures it needs to encourage as either management buyouts or completely new initiatives aimed at exploiting a niche in the market. Moreover, although it may choose to back the new enterprises financially, it does not necessarily have to do so, so long as it is prepared to back up with financial guarantees the credit capital that the ventures require.

This kind of process is specially suited to instances of privatisation, when industries have to be closed down. A community of new small businesses needs to be created, located in areas that (had) belonged to the company. Financial control and management know-how has to be furnished, giving large numbers of people new hopes that they may, after all, continue to contribute to society through their efforts. Of course, not all of them will turn out to be successful, but at least they have a far better chance than if they are simply left to the hopelessness of unemployment.

'But where does the money come from?' is one of the prime questions we have to ask ourselves at every juncture of the processes of fostering cohesion. The recommendations make for good, practical approaches but who will put up the money involved in each different type of business development?

If I may, I refer you mainly to what I wrote in my essay on Socially Responsible Capital for a number of the answers to questions about how we get the finance involved and how it is channeled. Here, therefore, I will just venture some further thoughts, even though the inherent ideas may not as yet be completely underpinned. The details, I maintain, will always have to be tailored to fit each specific case.

First of all, I fully appreciate the contention that the funds allocated the CAP were intended to help redistribution between regions in France and Germany. Nonetheless, I gathered quite conflicting impressions from some statistics I saw some eighteen months ago, probably in The Economist, but it might have been in the Financial Times. The article in which they were included stated that 72.1% of the CAP money goes to large farms – for the large farmers who constitute not more than 13% of the total of agricultural communities. These 13% have, of course, very large lobbying power in Paris, Brussels, and various other capitals. The only thing that's going to change this situation is if the European citizens, through the European Parliament, continue to make more and more, and more, fuss until the politicians realize the game is no longer politically viable.

Meanwhile, if just 10% were to be taken away from the continuing allocations to the CAP and moved into cohesion or structural funds, a lot of the problems *that are envisaged where there may not be enough money to continue the level of regional assistance* would fade away. There would be sufficient money in the new scenario and there would be no need to raise further the level of contribution to the Commission's budget.

Secondly, if we bring our thinking down to the business level where people start new firms, naturally we have to look for other sources of funding to meet their needs for capital – credit capital in this type of case. In this context, I submit that a lot of countries forget about the possibility of state venture capital via such things as national or regional development banks. In this respect, it is interesting to note that from 2003 to 2005 the People's Republic of China is reported to have seen the creation of over 400,000 new small enterprises each year. This is over 1000 new companies every day.

Clearly, there must have been some state funding involved in one way or another, as well as recognition by local authorities, even if there will have been a lot of microfinance. If the Chinese can do it to spur economic development, surely Europe can take a leaf out of their competitive book.

Also for this business level, I can confidently propose that private venture capital can be regarded as a promising source of funding. There are a lot of venture capitalists around looking for enterprising new ideas. Venture capital can and does provide an enormous impulse, in partnership with imagination and initiative furnished by entrepreneurial citizens.

Other citizens - those who are risk-averse - are very often risk-shy because they recognise they would be unlikely to have sufficient management capacity to bring their idea/s and their company into viability. Entities similar to the British 'Chartered Management Institute' or a volunteer executive corps could be called on to provide much of the assistance necessary throughout all the various companies. Thus the people running them will get the necessary education and be able to develop management abilities through training on the job.

Finally, it may be fair to say that nowadays, in Europe, FDI might well have two acronyms, the original one for Foreign Direct Investment from outside Europe and, perhaps, ICBI for Internal Cross - Border Investment for that which goes between European Nation-States.

For outsourcing we might also take a similar attitude. Outsourcing can mean that the rich countries take advantage of the cheap labour in the less developed countries in Europe. Problems may begin to arise, however, when they use one European country for the time being but eventually find that it will be cheaper to do the work in another - the Ukraine or Byelorussia, for example. Of course the problem will be mitigated, if we start immediately to create technological industries - little ones, not hundreds of them, not thousands, but hundreds of thousands of new ones, because this re-employment necessity is a situation facing vast numbers of the people in a wider and wider Europe.

All of us, across this wider European scene, are faced not just by a constant rate of change, but by a constantly accelerating rate of change. It is not merely a rapid rate of change. The velocity of change is increasing month by month. This means, I submit, that we have to engineer our way through chaos, to engineer our way through change, and engineer our way through constantly upsetting instability. This it is possible. It is always possible if the political will is there to back those who wish to put their energies into achievement.

THE OPTIMISATION OF RESULTS

What tends to be overlooked, in our extremely fast-changing world scenario is that there is a further and serious threat posed by the ever-growing world population. Either there will be greater numbers of unemployed people or we shall have to create enterprises at a much greater rate than has heretofore been possible.

Therefore, instead of destroying existing enterprises that, with good management, are still viable, every approach has to be used to maintain them in existence. To do this it will be necessary to make capital, finance and management skills available so that the enterprises can continue to provide productive roles for the often very large numbers of individuals who have contributed to their previous growth and existence.

As I have no shame in reiterating time and again, to consider the effect that management decisions would have on the humans who will be affected by them is at one with a good neighbour mindset. It reaches much further than what is known as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), which often turns out to be little more than window dressing for sales and marketing. Socially Responsible Capital, however, involves a modified approach to the bottom line.

The central precept of this approach is that the ultimately sensible manager should aim not for the short-term maximisation of shareholder value but rather for the 'optimisation' of medium and long-term results. In essence this means that the management of enterprises cater for two sets of interests on an equitable and commensurate basis. Both the interests of the shareholders and the interests of all the people who collaborate in producing the profits are catered for.[5]

Clearly, best efforts from all those who collaborate are most likely to be forthcoming on a continuing basis, if individuals recognise they will not be tossed aside as soon as they are judged to no longer be of prime benefit to the short-term profitability picture. Indeed, it is surely worth stressing the fact that, by virtue of a far more motivated work force, the likely result is a much more stable level of profits in both the medium and longer terms. In my visualisation, it is the kind of Good Neighbour approach to business that can enable the nations of the EU, as well as its neighbours and trading partners, to achieve economic development with social cohesion.

POSTSCRIPT

Points arising from the discussion period after the presentation of

"At the Heart of the Matter of Economic Development and Social Cohesion." Warsaw, 06/04/27.

And I do mean the core considerations.

In my visualization, the essence of the unemployment crisis should not be attributed to the amounts, however large, of <u>cross-border</u> M & A. It has nothing to do with differences of corporate nationality.

Instead it resides in the mistaken philosophy that administrators are not to be expected to be held responsible for the fact that they make mistakes, sometimes some Horrendously Big Mistakes, for which the solution is always 'restructuring, redundancies and reshuffling of managerial roles'.

Naturally, those who pay for these changes are always the collaborators who, at first, were regarded as key personnel. It is never the financiers, nor the people who made the arrogant, self-justified decisions that all below the top of the hierarchy recognized as sure to come unstuck.

Moreover, the restructuring processes are all in the name, naturally, of increasing competitivity. When, in truth, it is all in the name of greater short term profits – to satisfy

5 The inter-actor corresponding to the required routines will be the social and professional identity of the collaborators in each enterprise. The members of its organisation will be carriers of replicating routines constituting social traits and the dispositions to act in a particular way within each enterprise. There will be a consequent change in routines that will change behaviour patterns. The consequent business culture will be modified by virtue of these newly established behaviour patterns. C.f. *Socially Responsible Capital*, Joseph E. Bigio, EDIUAL, Lisboa, 2002

the analysts and financiers. As if greater competitiveness automatically derives from Bigness and better financial manipulations of the operations of the enterprise/s.

If the realities of the situation are faced down, the solution lies with the administrators devising innovative ways, by dint of sweating out how to produce what the customers require at attractive, not necessarily cheaper, prices. This they do by co-opting the collaboration of all their productive colleagues. (c. f.: Mary Parker Follett (1868-1933), who wrote: "Our contribution is of no value unless it is effectively related to the contributions of all the others concerned.")