

The Labour Party Head Office

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From: The Leader's Office

13 April 2005

Dear Dr Cotgreave,

I am writing on behalf of Tony Blair to thank you for your letter to him dated 5 April in which you inquire about Labour Party policy on scientific matters.

As I am sure you will understand Mr Blair is at present in the middle of the general election campaign, but he hopes that the enclosed extract from the Labour Party Manifesto will be helpful to you.

Mr Blair appreciates your interest in writing to him.

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely,

Rima Howard

RIMA HOWARD

Dr Peter Cotgreave
Director - CASE
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Science and innovation – key to Britain's future prosperity

In today's knowledge-driven global economy, Britain cannot compete on low wages and low skills. Science holds the key to unlocking Britain's economic future. Only Labour has the vision to make the investment necessary today to unlock wealth creation tomorrow.

In an increasingly competitive global economy, our ability to invent, design and manufacture the goods and services that people want is more vital to our future prosperity than ever before. A strong science base and a steady supply of science, engineering and technology skills at all levels is crucial for the UK's innovation performance and long-term competitiveness.

Our ten-year programme to promote science and innovation will see £2.5 billion invested in science over the next five years. This additional investment will:

- create world-class research and centres of scientific excellence
- create sustainable and financially robust universities and public laboratories
- increase business investment in R&D, and allow greater knowledge transfer between business and universities
- engender skills that are responsive to the needs of the economy and a better understanding throughout education of industry's needs.

While many British small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), particularly those linked to universities, are world leaders at embracing

innovation, far too many still fail to embrace new technologies and new ways of working. We will encourage SMEs to better understand the business potential of the intellectual property regime. We are working through the Small Business Service and Business Links to promote innovation and knowledge transfer.

We have made great strides in the number of people gaining skills to university graduate levels in science. We also need to ensure that we are increasing the number of people with intermediate and high-level skills including technicians, in order to sustain our position as a world leader in science. The quality of our research and our strengthening links between universities, research institutions and industries will help us become the country of choice for talented entrepreneurs and world-class companies.

We will not tolerate the actions of animal extremists. The UK has one of the strictest licensing systems in the world for the use of animals in medical research, with animal experiments only taking place where absolutely necessary. Animal research has helped save hundreds of millions of lives and it is unacceptable that people legitimately working in this field become the target of extremists. We have already strengthened the law to clamp down on people who use unlawful and dangerous means to protest against lawful animal testing. We believe people have the right to campaign lawfully and peacefully against the use of animals in scientific research, but they do not have the right to endanger people's lives, put medical breakthroughs in areas like AIDS,

cancer and Alzheimer's directly at risk or to drive important jobs and business investment away from the UK.

We are also committed to increasing public confidence in science. Britain has remained at the forefront in crucial fields like fertilisation treatment and stem cell research and we want to ensure people feel confident in future medical advances.

Promoting manufacturing

Manufacturing is crucial to our country's future prosperity – it creates a sixth of our output, employs 3.5 million people and produces more than 60 per cent of our exports. The manufacturing sector is also vital to innovation and accounts for most of the scientific developments in the UK.

Our vision for the manufacturing sector is one where we fully exploit advances in science and technology and embrace the opening up of world markets. The manufacturing sector has been through a tough time and global competition is intensifying. But recent developments show the industry has turned a corner. Britain remains one of the world's most popular destinations for inward investment. Recent reports continue to point to growth in manufacturing with new business expanding and export orders picking up, recent ONS figures also show the sector is performing well.

Our Manufacturing Strategy launched in 2002, the first in over 30 years, focuses on the seven areas that are crucial to the long-term health of British manufacturing:

- Economic stability – allowing businesses to plan for the long term.
- Investment – utilising modern, efficient processes and equipment to drive up performance.
- Science and innovation – helping manufacturers exploit the UK's strong science base to create innovative, high-value products.
- Best practice – raising productivity and competitiveness by continuous improvement.
- Skills and education – developing a skilled and innovative manufacturing workforce.
- Modern infrastructure – providing effective transport and communications networks.
- The right market framework – providing the business environment the manufacturing needs to compete globally.

Since publishing the strategy we have:

- launched the Manufacturing Advisory Service, which has been hugely successful in offering practical advice to manufacturers
- strengthened the provision of skills and training to meet the needs of employers and their employees through various schemes including Apprenticeships and Sector Skills Councils
- improved Labour's Research and Development Tax Credit, first introduced in 2000, which has supplied £700 million of government support for business R&D
- invested heavily in national research, to ensure our science base remains world-class
- set up Innovation and Growth teams in key manufacturing sectors, to address strategic challenges and opportunities.

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Forward not back – Labour's 2005 manifesto

Dear Dr Peter Cotgreave

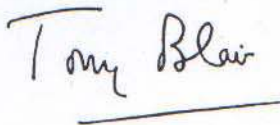
Last week, together with my Cabinet colleagues I launched our manifesto for a third term. It is a manifesto rooted in the values of both the Labour Party and the British people.

I am proud that it is a policy rich, comprehensive document setting out a clear agenda for government. Amongst all the modern means of political communication a party manifesto remains the most important statement of what a party will do if elected.

I believe a strong science base and innovative business sector has the capacity to not only deliver economic prosperity for all but can also help us address some of the key challenges we face in health, the environment and international development.

I believe this country is better, stronger and fairer than in 1997. But there's a great deal more to do. And this manifesto shows how we will do it.

Yours



Tony Blair
Prime Minister and Leader of the Labour Party



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