

Letter to Stornoway Gazette by William Macleod

Weavers' General Meeting

Sir,

I would like to make a few comments about Mr R.H. Macleod's attendance at the weavers' branch "general" meeting on 26 February, 1976. As I explained to the meeting, the normal headings had been omitted and this had been the fault of the paper, not the union. As far as this union is concerned, he was completely "out of bounds", as this meeting, although incorrectly billed by the "Gazette", was for weavers only and not the general public as he suggests.

The weavers' delegate and weavers were wrong in helping him to attend without first obtaining union permission.

The subsequent report on the meeting in the "Gazette" (supplied by Mr Halford Macleod) was rather inflammatory and the figures quoted quite incorrect. This should have been discussed with the union before going to press.

Mr R. Macdonald, the Scottish secretary of the T & GWU, Mr J.S. Grant, and members of the Harris Tweed Association attended their respective meetings by invitation. The Press was given similar facilities for the second meeting.

Weavers have always been well-represented on both committees responsible for the restructuring investigations, and he can be assured that no decision would have been taken by them which could have been detrimental to the livelihood of the weavers. It has always been appreciated by all interested parties that the weavers' decision on the introduction of power-woven double-width Harris Tweed would be the final one. The panicky newspaper articles from other sources have been quite unnecessary.

The present conditions offered to the weavers, as far as I can judge, are completely unacceptable, and I am certain that the postal ballot count on Friday, April 16, will no doubt confirm this.

Yours etc

W. MACLEOD

Chairman, Weavers' section of the Transport and General Workers Union