

for publication

Letters to the Editor
"The Daily Telegraph"
111 Buckingham Palace Road
LONDON
SW1W 0DT

by e-mail only to: dtletters@telegraph.co.uk

Date 20 October 2010

Dear Sir

COMPREHENSIVE SPENDING REVIEW: PRIVATE ENTERPRISE-LED RECOVERY

Last Monday, you led with the letter to the Chancellor - signed by 35 business leaders - urging him not to waver in cutting the public deficit. They encouraged Mr Osborne to press ahead with his plans (revealed in today's Comprehensive Spending Review) so as to arrive at a healthier, more stable economy.

Sir Stuart Rose and the others reckon private enterprise should be more than capable of generating additional jobs to replace those lost in the public sector. However, a cursory look at the signatories reveals the majority are in high street retail, business services and scientific, technical or professional areas. Very few names represent mass-employment industries like construction that offer full-time job opportunities and long-term career choices to anyone.

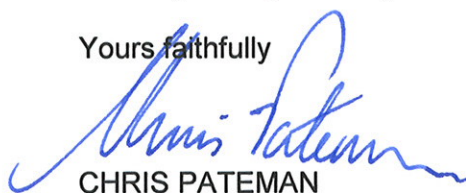
The Builders Merchants' Federation and others in construction and the building materials' supply chain firmly believe the Coalition Government must have a Plan B if we are to bring about the private enterprise-led recovery that politicians seek. We are stressing to ministers the value that housebuilding & home improvement offers for jobs & growth.

Our Plan B argues construction is the only industry capable of creating 2½ million real, meaningful jobs and the sustained economic growth necessary. Economic revival can come from local builders, plumbers and allied trades & professions (often small- or medium-sized family-owned firms), every day of the week, away from the London-based media, in the suburbs or market & coastal towns around the country. This activity equals genuine jobs and enduring growth at a local level, on a regional basis.

Investing to improve housing condition and fitting low-carbon solutions are central to our livelihood. Builders' merchants believe there is pent-up demand for work in many local authority areas - a demand which has been severely restricted by a lack of confidence and economic uncertainty. Our belief is supported by research carried out by Oxford University that found the market potential to renovate and insulate existing homes is worth up to £6½ billion p.a.

We are well-placed to deliver jobs & growth if politicians are up for it. What's stopping us ?

Yours faithfully



CHRIS PATEMAN
Managing Director

15 Soho Square
London W1D 3HL
Tel: 020 7439 1753
Fax: 020 7734 2766
Email: info@bmf.org.uk
www.bmf.org.uk

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