

around for long. Lucas have agreed to meet the government and the workers to discuss their rationalisation plans for the aerospace division, so the Corporate Plan will be on the table again. Though in the meantime, Lucas have threatened Cooley with the sack if he takes too much time off to work on the Corporate Plan.

Time to rumble the grant givers

Anna Coote writes: A challenge to the fraternity of grant-giving foundations to make itself socially accountable will be made this weekend by one of its most distinguished members, the Barrow and Geraldine S. Cadbury Trust. The latest report of this trust (which is the largest of many set up by the Cadbury family) breaks with convention to publish detailed accounts not only of the grants it has dispensed, but also of the reasons why it made those grants. The trustees have come round to the view that all grant-giving trusts have a duty to reveal much more information than previously.

Between them, the trusts give away more than £170m. a year to charities of their own choosing. They therefore wield considerable power (in a gentlemanly fashion) among the organisations who spend their money on education, welfare, social and scientific research, protection of animals, aid to distressed gentlefolk and so forth. Rather more than a third of the money they give away is theirs by courtesy of the government and the taxpayer, in the form of exemptions from income tax, corporation tax, capital gains tax, capital transfer tax, development land tax, certain VAT waivers and discretionary rate relief.

The trusts have certainly not been falling

over themselves to let the public know what they are doing. A recent survey by the Charities Foundation showed that less than 40 per cent published financial accounts; 23 per cent provided records of the grants they had made; and only 19 per cent revealed even the bare bones of their trustees' policy. Those which dispense more than £1m. a year tend to publish regular reports, but they don't give much away about the background to their decisions. Little is known about the Foundations Forum (formerly the 'Donors Dozen'), an exclusive club of the top executives of the 30 largest grant-giving trusts which meets biannually.

Some foundations apparently forget that their freedom to distribute *largesse* has been conferred on them by Parliament and is maintained only by public consent. As one trust secretary put it: 'They behave as though they're doing people a favour by giving away their money. But they don't have any option. They've got to give the bloody stuff away!'

Building up the workers' blacklist

Duncan Campbell writes: Last week we were reminded again that personal freedom has nothing to do with 'free enterprise', by news from workers in a major undertakers' organisation that the Economic League is still bent on sabotaging the industrial careers of anyone whose political views are tainted by socialism.

Under the guidance of a Director of Research and Information, Mr Jack Winder, the League is organised in six regions, with offices and representatives in the larger industrial areas. In the North Eastern region, auxiliary offices have been set up in Leeds, Newcastle,

Sheffield and Hull. In 1974 the Scottish region established a new office in Aberdeen. This was apparently a direct response to increasing unionisation of oil workers, organised by the Inter-Union Offshore Committee and bitterly fought by most of the American 'redneck' employers. The League's new representative in Aberdeen readily agreed with a reporter that his job would be to help root out union activists in local companies.

Each area office has an unlisted telephone number. Companies which pay for the blacklist service must quote a verification or account number before being supplied with filed details on a prospective employee. The League subscribes, as discreetly as possible, to every left-wing and industrial paper. The index of names it has built up from that source is supplemented by details from employers.

The League is financially supported by most of the 'free enterprise' stalwarts, in a long list headed by Shell, including all the banks, Tate and Lyle and Vic Matthews' Trafalgar House Investments. Mr Matthews is also a member of the League's Central Council. To this must be added the wide range of large and small companies who pay for the League's blacklist and other information services. In 1975, these were found to include the publicly owned British Steel Corporation, whose subsidiary, Reinforcement Steel Services at Greenwich, was in the habit of checking all employees' names with the League. Unlike many countries, Britain has no privacy legislation to control information gathering (except where credit agencies are concerned). A lawsuit is possible if information is stored or used maliciously - but prospective employees have little chance of finding out what others are finding out about their private lives.