

COPY

Laboratories
TAL/IS

11th October, 1940.

The Director of Navy Contracts,
Royal School,
Lansdown Road,
Bath.

VERY URGENT.

Dear Sir,

We understand that you will have had transmitted yesterday, the 10th instant, from the Signal School Portsmouth, an urgent recommendation that assistance be granted to us in respect of Factory Premises which we have in view. In order to clarify the position I would give you the following particulars:-

During the past few weeks our production activities have been falling behind, and during the coming winter it seems extremely probable that there will be further curtailment in output due to air-raids, longer hours of darkness and that rather frequent interruption of gas and electric services from which we have recently been suffering

The Directors of this Company have decided that if possible, additional premises in a safer area should be obtained. The undersigned has made extensive tours and enquiries regarding suitable premises and the only premises available and which seem in any way suitable, are the Forest Brewery, Mitcheldean, Gloucester. These are situated some 11 miles from Gloucester, in the Forest of Dean, and are owned by the Cheltenham Brewery Company. They are offered for sale freehold. The main difficulty is that in the better portion of these premises there is at the moment a tenant who has a seven-year lease and vacant possession cannot be granted. The tenants are:- Messrs. - Collett & Company of Cheltenham, who are operating on a very small scale wheat malting. The Cheltenham Brewery Company are anxious for us to acquire possession, but see no way of persuading the present tenant to surrender his lease.

We accordingly approached the Ministry of Aircraft Production, Factories' Department, who firstly examined their records compiled in conjunction with the Ministry of Food, to see if the name of this tenant appeared on the lists as one who, at the Ministry of Food's request, should not be disturbed -- but these particular premises and the tenant concerned are not included in the reserved list.

Th Air Ministry would have been prepared to grant us the

OVER.....

necessary assistance by requisitioning the premises, but the percentage of our total output devoted to Air Ministry requirements is small in comparison with those of the Admiralty and Ministry of Supply, and they accordingly suggested that we should get in touch with the latter departments.

We have been in communication with H.M. Signal School Officers in view of the fact that we are now carrying out certain semi-experimental production work for them in connection with Phase Control and H.F.-Switch Units, and these Officers have also indicated that in view of the particular suitability of this Firm for carrying out work of this type, they would like us to undertake considerable further quantities.

The facts relating to our request for requisition were sent in a letter addressed to the Captain of the Signal School on the 7th instant and were further discussed by telephone during yesterday the 10th instant. Later in the day a Mr. Culkin of the Signal School telephoned stating that the matter had been carefully considered at the Signal School and that in their opinion it was a matter of considerable importance that we should transfer at least a portion of our Works to the new premises in order to provide not only for a satisfactory continuity of production but also to provide for larger output and more scope generally. Mr. Culkin stated that the Signal School had forwarded to the Director of Navy Contracts a recommendation to this effect and instructed us to communicate in writing to you the full details.

We understand from the Ministry of Aircraft Production that the usual procedure in such cases would be for the Government Department concerned to requisition the premises, and through their usual channels to make an valuation, fix a rental, etc., that would be paid by the tenant; that certain expenses in connection with the removal and transfer of the Works may be met by the Government Department concerned.

X. The matter appears to us to be one of some urgency as it is believed that if the premises are not obtained by us within a very short space of time they may be requisitioned for some other purpose. We should be pleased therefore to hear as to what action you propose taking in the circumstances. I would add that the undersigned would be prepared to meet your Officers at Bath or at any other place required, at any time to suit your convenience.

The premises have already been fairly thoroughly inspected and decided upon as suitable, but the Managing and one other Director of this Company, together with the Architect and the undersigned are making a further inspection on Monday morning, and, if required, we could proceed to Bath from there to discuss the matter further.

If you care to telegraph instructions to that effect, please do so/

to either "British Acoustic Films Ltd." - C/o the Caretaker,
Forest Brewery, Mitcheldean, Gloucestershire; or C/o the
Manager, Gaumont Cinema, Cheltenham.

Yours faithfully,
for: BRITISH ACOUSTIC FILMS, LTD.

Sgd.. T.A. LAW.

Chief Engineer.

X. This is particularly the case in view of the very large
number of bombs which have fallen close to our Works
within the last week or so.

P.S. The full address of the Owners of the premises is:-

The Cheltenham Brewery Company,
160, High Street,
Cheltenham, Glos.