



Worshipful Company of Arbitrators

The Mansion House
Wednesday, 31 January 2007
The Rt Hon The Lord Mayor of London
Alderman John Stuttard

Master, Wardens, My Lord, Sheriff, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Thank you for the Civic Toast and the toast to the guests.
Having looked around I can safely say that there is no
dispute. We are replete and happy.

Master, tonight you have kindly invited with the Lady
Mayoress and me Sheriff Richard Regan and his wife
Anne. We are being looked after by Swordbearer, Colonel
Richard Martin.

Happy Anniversary and welcome to the Mansion House. It
is fitting that you are celebrating here, because as I travel
the world enumerating the advantages of UK-based

financial services, right up in the list with 'rule of law' is 'speedy dispute resolution'. Your work in its various forms is undoubtedly one of the main reasons why the City is the largest international finance, business and maritime centre in the world. And soon we will even have a commercial court. I feel quite faint!

Last year we had to be a bit cagy about our position vis a vis New York, but we are now clearly out in front in so many fields. And that no doubt includes international arbitration. In fact, most Americans, coming from the home of fast food outlets like Arbys, have never even heard of people who resolve disputes and conflicts. Many define an arbitrator as a chef who left Arby's to work at MacDonald's.'

Now knowing what an amiable lot you are, I asked one of my staff to Google 'Arbitrator + jokes'. He returned crestfallen. 'What happened?' I asked. 'Well' he said, 'No jokes, just 10,000 entries telling you never to tell a joke because the next time you hear it, you will hear it in court!'

Yet it is good to be amongst friends this evening as I recently got into a lot of trouble with the good people of Gloucestershire:

I said in a press interview that Dick Whittington – my famous predecessor 600 years ago as Alderman of Lime Street – came from Shropshire. No sooner had I said it than BBC Radio Gloucestershire demanded a radio interview with me to explain myself. They had interviewed locals in a pub in Gloucester and the recording was played on Radio Gloucestershire. ‘Who does he this Lord Mayor this he is trying to steal our Dick Whittington?! Everyone knows he is ours.’

Then they brought out a ‘Whittington expert’ who had a wealth of evidence that Dick definitely came from Pauntley in Gloucestershire!

I replied that I knew he was a Gloucestershire lad but that he also spent some of his childhood in Whittington Castle as Oswestry in Shropshire. I said that we all owned Dick Whittington because he came to London to study and learn, to work hard and to make his fortune.

This year I have therefore been promoting Dick Whittington as a role model. We have played this up, including in the Lord Mayor’s Show. After the Show a small boy from our local primary school wrote about coming to watch the Show: ‘We had a lovely day. Lots of soldiers and bands. Then we saw the Lord Mayor go by in

golden coach on his way to Court to make a special promise to be more like Dick Whittington!’

London has been for many years a great centre of learning and a city of opportunity. Dick Whittington, came to London to be trained, to work and to make his fortune. Many of us have followed the same path. I was the first of my family for many hundreds of years to leave the North of England and to come South in search of a job. I was, what is now referred to as, an economic migrant. I may not have made a fortune, like Dick Whittington, but I did receive a first class training and I did enjoy the benefits of working in London.

Dick Whittington famously gave away his fortune to charity. The City owes Leadenhall Market to Dick Whittington, amongst other things. So one of the areas I am promoting this year is the contribution that the City of London can make to global prosperity through charitable works – money but also time, the encouragement of free trade, sharing of skills and cross border learning. This concept is behind my appeal for this year, “Sharing skills, changing lives”.

There are huge benefits to be gained from cross-border learning – the transfer of knowledge; the increased awareness of other cultures; the enduring relationships

that result; and the opportunity for business relationships – leading to greater trade rather than wasted aid.

Master, these thoughts accord exactly with your Company's charitable outreach. This evening may I especially commend your considerable donation to the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators which is allowing them to purchase expensive texts on arbitration for poor overseas students who wish to study or promote this form of dispute resolution in developing countries. This is the first rung on the ladder of acquiring your prized skill. I know that this worthy scheme has caught the imagination and increasing support of your freemen and liverymen. Congratulations.

Master, it was Groucho Marx who said "the perfect number for an agreeable lunch/dinner is two – oneself and a first rate wine waiter". Well tonight, you have disproved Groucho's maxim, as the hospitality you have provided has been truly memorable.

Thank you for a most enjoyable evening. As a small memento of our visit, I would like to present you with a gift - a leather credit card holder. You will not be surprised to learn that you have to provide your own credit cards, but being an accountant I have thoughtfully provided a calculator! I should also point out that it has been

embossed with my coat of arms *and* the City's shield so that should you mislay it, it will be returned to the Mansion House along with your credit cards and that will help the Mayoral finances enormously!

Thank you.