

Private Client eNews – 17 October 2007

Blue Monday

Nothing to do with the New Order track but the tale of the Conservative Party being forced to give up a claim on a £10 million bequest from a businessman this Monday when the High Court ruled that the donor was mentally unfit when he signed the will.

A pharmaceutical tycoon from Ealing left his entire fortune to the Party after claiming that Margaret Thatcher could save the world from a satanic plot. The Party will now face demands for hundreds of thousands of pounds in legal costs as well as repayments of some of the deceased's donations.

Mr Justice Henderson determined that the deceased lacked "testamentary capacity" when he cut his son from the will. "His natural affection for Zoran had been poisoned or distorted by his delusions."

In an earlier hearing the family said that their attempts to retain contact with him were rebuffed and that he even refused to eat the chocolates they sent him at Christmas because he thought they were poisoned.

Although the Party's policy was to refuse donations if there were any doubts about a donor's capacity, the deceased's offerings were accepted. Letters submitted to court show that he once gave £13,000 "in the name of the magic number 13"?

The deceased made a will in 1974 leaving his riches to Zoran, but in 1987 he wrote to David Mellor, his MP: "I have to make my will . . . It is important to me that this wealth doesn't finish up in the hands of destructive people — satanic monsters."

Mr Mellor declined to assist but a City firm obliged and, after an allegedly long lunch at Simpson's-in-the-Strand, the deceased signed a fresh will leaving his entire estate to the Conservative Party.

A Conservative spokesman declined to comment but noted that the money had not been transferred into party coffers pending the case. The Party accepted that the deceased was eccentric but said that his letters demonstrated a love of language and an "appreciation of metaphor and hyperbole."

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