

4.7.1973

Urban Systems Corporation Pty Ltd

3A Queens Road
Melbourne
Victoria 3004

Telephone 267 2077

Memorandum/instruction

Job

re

URBAN ECONOMIST

Lynn Fair x/or Ian Alexander

to

Tom Deen
McLEAN

from

George Clarke
SYDNEY

copies to A.Voorhees, J.Callow, I.Arnold. date

4/7/73

Thanks for your memo of June 28th re Mr. Lynn S. Fair. He has had a lot of valuable commercial experience combined with some administrative responsibility but is relatively undistinguished academically.

I have been scouring Australia searching for other people in this field. The fact is that urban economists are the scarcest commodity of any kind in Australia at the moment. Up until a few months ago there was scarcely any demand whatsoever. The limited demand that did exist was mostly filled by people trained as geographers and/or market researchers. Practically everybody working in the field in Australia has come up from schools of urban geography and/or market research firms. The true urban economist with capacities in social cost-benefit analyses is a very rare bird indeed. The best prospect I have at the moment is Ian Alexander, whose resume is attached hereto.

He is highly distinguished academically, but has so far had no commercial or straight consulting experience. He is aged 26 and has had up to 10 years of tertiary education and academic research. He began with a first-class honours degree in geography at the University of W.A. and then did 2 years full time to get an M.A. (with distinction), with a thesis "Land Use Structure and Change in the Central Area of a City (Perth)". This thesis was examined by a mate of mine, Professor Jim Rose of Macquarie University in Sydney. In Jim's examiner's report he stated that "this is a PhD thesis masquerading as an M.A. thesis". During 1970-72, Ian spent 2 years full time at the University of London gaining a Master of Philosophy degree in Town Planning. His thesis was a cost benefit analysis of alternative approaches to urban redevelopment. He did cost benefit studies of the official scheme for the redevelopment of the Covent Garden area in London and apparently came to the conclusion that in socio-economic terms it was better to go for minor rehabilitation than to go for major redevelopment. This thesis was awarded the RTPPI book prize for 1972.

For the past 11 months Ian has been employed in the Geography Dept. at the University of W.A. under Professor Martyn Webb, one of Australia's leading urban geographers. Martyn is employed

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* by USC as a consultant on a retainer plus fees, for specific major assignments. It is on this basis that we retain Prof. Encel in Sociology at the University of N.S.W. We have agreements with both of them that they don't do any outside consulting except through USC. They also help us in recruiting the best young men coming along in their fields. Martyn Webb has, over the last couple of weeks been helping me to sell Ian on the idea of coming to work for us. He has two other offers at the moment, one is to go back to the U.K. to carry on his academic research, another is to join NURDA, now the Cities Commission. I have just spoken to Ian by telephone from Melbourne to Perth. He indicated this afternoon that he would rather join us than NURDA but has sent a telegram to England for some clarification of some vague offer previously made from there. He wants another week if possible to think over our offer before deciding. I have told Ian that if he came to join us that he would be working on a wide variety of projects such as - CBD studies in Sydney and Adelaide, socio-economic cost benefit analyses, such as the F-18 and Geelong Freeways Study, some retail market research jobs, and probably also on CGV type projects like the National Highways Study. I have indicated that my belief that the variety of work and professional and intellectual stimulus that he would get with us would be far greater than working for a purely government organisation such as NURDA. He seems now to have accepted this.

If he comes we will have to give him this stimulus. I have also warned him that professional consulting work is far tougher and more demanding than academic or government work.

He is a quiet, earnest young man dedicated to work of high intellectual quality. Martyn Webb assures me that he is capable of very hard work, capable of handling three or four jobs at once and capable of producing fully written, fully documented reports, theses and papers surprisingly quickly.

Ian is currently editing his two theses for publication as two separate books. This means that he can't leave Perth until the middle or end of November this year. I have indicated to him that we will locate him either in Sydney or Melbourne, and pay

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him a total remuneration of up to \$12,000 together with first-class air fare from Perth to the East coast and \$100 or \$200 removal expenses.

* It seems to me that we could do with several people in the general field of urban economics and market research. Lynn Fair and Ian Alexander are two rather different types but I think we could use both of them.

In the last line of your memo of June 28 you speak of Fair's current \$13,000 year, and his expectations but you don't indicate whether it is US or AUST. I presume it is US - if so then we could meet a demand of US\$15,000 very easily. If your figures are in AUST then I think we should try to hold him to \$12,000 on a par with Alexander

Note - J. Callow

Please indicate what percentage of Ian Alexander's time you would be prepared to buy over the period November 1973 to June 30th 1974. If you are prepared to buy a minimum of 75%, then we would be prepared to locate him in Melbourne. If you only want him occasionally we would prefer to have him in Sydney.