

CAD-01213
copy for Sir A.

NOTE OF MEETING WITH DR JON WHITE ON 23 JULY 1991

Present:

Jon White, lecturer in public relations
Nigel Peace

Dr White referred to his recent book 'How to Understand and Manage Public Relations', and especially chapter 6 dealing with Investor Relations. He said that whilst at Cranfield (which he had just left) he had become aware that managers did not have the skills to manage relations with stakeholders and that firms simply did not think systematically about how to manage important relationships. Cranfield was the only school which provided training on the management of public relations; generally there was an important skill gap and managers were not receiving appropriate training.

2 Dr White said that he hoped the Committee would keep in mind the information needs of stakeholders other than shareholders, and of the media. He did not see the subject in terms of a conflict between the interest of the regulator (wanting to see accurate, objective reporting) and that of the company public relations manager (wanting to see the company presented in the best light). Rather, he saw it in terms of company management having to select what information to present, and in making the selection to reconcile the different interests of the various users. His point was that at present senior management were not taking properly into account the interests of the various stakeholders in making the selection.

3 Dr White suggested that management accountability would become a big issue in the context of the Citizen's Charter.

4 Dr White said that when the Committee's framework was defined, he might well want to put in a submission if that would be helpful.

NDP

4.9.91