



W.0102

4 February 1985

PRIME MINISTER

MEETING WITH SIR DOUGLAS HAGUE - 5 FEBRUARY

Sir Douglas Hague will wish to raise two topics with you: first, progress in moving his own research council, ESRC, towards doing useful research; secondly, his concern at the failures of management of the four councils involved in the natural sciences, ie SERC, NERC, MRC and AFRC.

2. On his own council's programme, Sir Douglas will stress the shift towards trying to understand change in society and the acceptance or non-acceptance of change, for example the council's work on the public acceptance of new technology.

3. On the second point, Sir Douglas believes that at present the research councils are not 'managed' in the sense of the word which a business school would understand. This has implications both for the cost of their research and their selection of research fields which should be encouraged. With three of the four chairmanships of these research councils about to fall vacant, his views are important in selecting the new chairmen.

ROBIN NICHOLSON
Chief Scientific Adviser



AK

pps

pac.

Dmb
15/1

10 DOWNING STREET

PRIME MINISTER

CF

For meeting at
1700 on 5 Feb
pac.

You have agreed to see
Sir Douglas Hague later in
the month to talk about the
Research Councils.

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16/1

Would you like to see him with
a private secretary only?
Or - if Sir Douglas agrees -
would you find it helpful to
have Robin Nicholson there
as well?

Yes not

Dmb

01-353
5252 x 282

D. BARCLAY

14 January, 1985