

1. Mr Norgrove
2. Proposed Griffiths Prime Minister

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PRIME MINISTER

4 December 1987

The CNAA

*Very good news -
not*

Earlier this week I had a most encouraging meeting with Malcolm Frazer, the Director and Chief Executive of CNAA who replaced Edwin Kerr just over a year ago.

Malcolm Frazer, in implementing the post-Lindop strategy, is doing an outstanding job. In just over a year he has already achieved the following:

Staff restructuring

- the total staff has been cut by over fifty to 114 (of whom 5 are self-financing);
- three top executives have been sacked for incompetence;
- under the old system, the Director had five deputies: these have now been cut to 2;

Committees

- the committee structure has been axed: previously there were 18 Committees and 54 Subject Boards, each with an average of 20 members: these have now been replaced by a streamlined structure of 12 committees;

- the new committees have a substantially revised membership - two-thirds of existing members are new members and of much higher calibre than previously;
- power in the old system lay with the barons - 12 registrars, who had professorial status, and were in charge of large subject areas: 4 of these have now gone, the others moved and the power of registrars diminished;
- the new Chairmen of subject committees are an enormous improvement on their predecessors eg Walter Eltis has become Chairman of the crucial Economics and Social Science Committee, Ron Dearing has himself taken over the chairmanship of the Business Management Committee, Professor E Abel (currently chairman of the Universities' Physical Sciences Committee) has become Chairman of the CNAAPhysical Sciences Committee, and Baroness Cox has been appointed Chairman of the Committee for Health Studies.

Chairman

Ron Dearing has proved an excellent Chairman; and far better than Alistair Pilkington whom he replaced: in fact Frazer went so far as to say that the changes he has made have only been possible because CNAAPhysical Sciences Committee has someone of Dearing's calibre as Chairman;

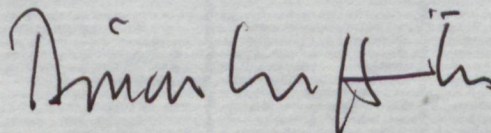
New Developments

- the CNAA is to start earning fees eg by acting as consultants for the Hong Kong Government on higher education, charging from publications etc.
- one of the most important developments is a scheme by which the CNAA acts as a broker between education and the training needs of industry. Over 250 companies have approached CNAA with a view to their assigning credit towards a CNAA qualification for their in-company training. For example, in-service courses at IBM are already credited towards existing degree programmes by Portsmouth Polytechnic and in-service courses at W H Smith by Oxford Polytechnic. In addition 17 leading companies (including British Aerospace, BA, BBC, Jaguar, Littlewoods, Sainsburys, Woolwich Building Society) are in negotiations with Polys about similar developments.

Conclusion

The CNAA is being changed in a fundamental way. Previously it was driven by the 12 barons and a vast committee structure: it was essentially an undermanaged institution; today it is slimmer, more efficient, of better quality and managed from the top.

Malcolm Frazer's present objectives are to raise the calibre of Council members, continue improving the chairmen of subject committees and to encourage new developments such as those mentioned. On his present performance the outlook for CNAA is better than at any time since it was started.



BRIAN GRIFFITHS