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Social Responsibility or “Telescopic Philanthropy”: The Choice is Ours

I am going to speak to you today as neither a friend nor foe of business, but as an individual expressing a few reflections of his own. Nevertheless, I think it is fair to warn you that I am immersed in the business world. Therefore, no matter how objective I may try to be, my orientation is bound to influence what I say. Complete objectivity is a state few can obtain and even fewer can afford.

My subject pertains to the relationship between public relations and corporate social responsibility. I do not believe there is a relationship between the two. They are not cousins or even siblings. They are even closer than identical twins. They are one and the same.

It seems to me that the whole subject of social responsibility was put into proper perspective about 100 years ago by Charles Dickens in his great and satiric novel, Bleak House. Of course Dickens didn't use the phrase social responsibility. That phrase, with all its connotations, had not yet entered the vocabulary of Victorian England, which still believed in the efficacy of child labor, sweat shops, and debtors prisons. In a chapter heading, Dickens calls his theme “telescopic philanthropy.”

If you've read Bleak House, you may recall one of Dickens' most memorable characters, a Mrs. Jellyby. There wasn't a worthy cause anywhere that Mrs. Jellyby didn't espouse. The farther the injustice from home, the greater her concern.

When Mrs. Jellyby first appears in the novel, we find her totally absorbed in the plight of the natives of Boorie-goola-Gha on the left bank of the Niger. Her "African project" -- as she calls it -- occupies all her time.

Then Dickens shows us the state of Mrs. Jellyby's personal affairs. Her house is strewn with paper and covered with dirt. Her children are in a dire state of neglect. Her son has his head stuck between the banister railings. She doesn't seem to notice, much less care.

For, you see, Mrs. Jellyby is obsessed with the Boorie-goola-Gha!

The depiction, as it usually is with satire, is grossly overdrawn. But it makes a point that applies to my topic here today.

In plucking Mrs. Jellyby from the pages of Victorian literature, you may think I am drawing a bead on the social "do-gooders" of our own day. And maybe I am. And yet I would be among the first to affirm that much of the social criticism has been useful. Much of it has forced us to focus on problems which we -- as a society -- had neglected for too long.

But the lesson of Mrs. Jellyby applies not just to social critics and reformers, self-appointed or otherwise. It applies with equal force to corporate executives, too. Especially to those executives who are charged with the responsibility of framing a suitable response.

A corporation's first duty, as I see it, is to manage its own affairs properly and profitably. That is the greatest service it can perform. A corporation has a duty to compensate its employees and reward its investors to the best of its ability. It has a duty to create favorable working conditions and to produce goods and services that meet the highest tests of safety and reliability.

I am not saying that good management is the answer to all our social woes. But I am saying that a poorly managed company can't make up for its inadequacies with good deeds that have no bearing upon its daily operations.

Please don't misunderstand.

I think it's useful for a corporation to support educational institutions or cultural activities ranging from the philharmonic to the ballet. A company ought to be congratulated for making a sizable contribution to the local hospital or United Way. It deserves accolades for putting Shakespeare on television -- either public broadcasting or a commercial network.

All these good works demonstrate a concern that goes over and beyond what is often derogatorily described as "merely making a profit."

But, in my opinion, not one of these activities identifies the truly socially responsible corporation. What's more, not one of these activities faces up to current issues of broad-based social concern. So far there have been no demonstrations directed against corporations that have decided not to support the opera or build playgrounds. But there have been innumerable demonstrations against corporations that have not moved quickly enough in hiring minority groups, promoting women to managerial positions, or installing pollution abatement equipment.

The point is this: a company that engages in visible good works may not be any more socially responsible than Mrs. Jellyby. A corporation isn't socially responsible because it supports starving artists by hanging their paintings in its lobby or displaying their sculpture on its lawn. To be truly responsible, a corporation must do something more than practice "telescopic philanthropy."

Does it surprise you to hear such a statement from a public relations man? It shouldn't. There are a lot of misconceptions about public relations. One of the most prominent is the

notion that public relations is the substitution of imagery for substantive acts. Another is that public relations people try to create a climate that will enable corporations to do whatever they damn well please. These views, of course, are quite wrong. One of the prime functions of the professional public relations practitioner is to act as mediator between the corporation and the society.

The public relations executive provides a qualitative evaluation of social trends. He helps formulate policies that will enable the corporation to adapt to these trends. And he communicates -- both internally and externally -- the reasons for those policies. Public relations, I'd like to emphasize, is involved in all the steps -- from analysis through action to communications -- a corporation must take to meet its obligations to the public. And those obligations are numerous and constantly changing.

Since trends and change are so closely involved, trying to define a socially responsible corporation is like trying to define a socially responsible citizen. We know one when we see one. But we find it hard to come up with a dictionary definition ahead of time.

In any case, I'm not concerned here with definitions. Instead, I would prefer to explore the relationship -- the in-depth relationship -- between public relations and social responsibility so that we can make a fair assessment.

I plan, first, to discuss the nature of the corporation -- what it is and what we can rightfully expect from it. We don't, after all, condemn the automobile because it doesn't fly. And so we shouldn't condemn the corporation if it doesn't do everything we might want it to. But the corporation, like the automobile, is still quite a flexible entity. We can modify it and add extras so that it works for us in many ways.

Then I will discuss some of the new pressures that are being applied to the corporation to make it change. In this respect, I plan to emphasize two aspects of our contemporary society: the profound and growing conflict between individual and institutional rights, and the compression of time.

Finally, I will indicate how these social phenomena affect the role of the public relations executive as he tries to mediate between the corporation and the total society.

What about the nature of the corporation?

The first and perhaps most obvious point to be made is that the corporation is a conservative institution. It isn't to be found at the head of reform movements, and indeed it shouldn't be. It wasn't created to reshape society. It was created to produce the goods and services people want and need. That, traditionally, has been its mandate. Until recently, the public did not look to the corporation for much more.

The corporation is not moralistic by nature; it's pragmatic. The people who work for it and manage it are usually governed by one overriding impulse: they like to get things done. And they do. Consequently, it would be silly to condemn the corporation for not taking a leadership position in reforming society. I don't believe it's an oversimplification to say that it's difficult, if not impossible, to be a dedicated salesman one minute and a dedicated social reformer the next. They are not the same kind of men at all.

The pressure for change, then, must come from outside the corporation. And, indeed, in a pluralistic society such as ours, we have institutions that are far better equipped than corporations to serve as social critics. Churches, universities, government agencies and protest groups formed by the people themselves are far more suited to make value judgments about social goals -- and then seek to enforce them.

Institutions that help maintain the status quo have their place, too. They provide for stability, and they are not so prone -- as the saying goes -- to throw out the baby with the bath water. Corporations, no matter how ponderous, must adapt to both types of pressure. They must have built-in sensing devices that can detect changes in the social winds. The job of detecting those changes and charting a new course belongs to the public relations man. The real measure of a corporation is not whether it has organized itself to lead, but whether it has organized itself to respond to social change.

We must recognize, however, that not all corporations are the same. They are quite diverse in capability and background. They have a wide range of attributes. Indeed, the wider the range, the greater the enrichment of our society. Where diversity exists, so must tolerance. No corporation has a monopoly on virtue. No corporation has a monopoly on sin. This being the case, in studying them we ought to avoid the pitfalls of absolute judgments.

We cannot, and probably should not, try to develop a list of “Thou shalt nots!” that apply to all companies in all situations. Judgments must be made in context. It is very easy to say, for example: “Thou shalt not pollute!” But such an all-encompassing dictum may be damaging. It is much more difficult to say: “We find, in your case, we can tolerate X amount of emissions, provided that you do thus and so.” Such a relative standard may be beneficial to both the corporation and to society.

We can say that corporations have the capacity for responsible and irresponsible acts, and sometimes they can behave both ways at the same time. I know companies that have excellent pollution abatement programs but haven’t yet begun to think about minority employment. I know other companies that are strong on product purity and weak on occupational health. I

know companies that are responsive to social needs and others that have to be dragged screaming into the 20th century.

In short, corporations have the same capacity for contradiction and paradox as people. We might carry the analogy even further and say that the corporation -- contrary to popular conception -- is a collection of flesh and blood people. The corporation can't feel, think or act, even though you can sue it or hale it into court. Only people can be sentient. Only people can be responsible. A corporation run by responsible managers will be a responsible corporation. A corporation run by irresponsible managers will be an irresponsible corporation.

Henry David Thoreau summed it up much better than I in his essay Civil Disobedience. He wrote:

“It is truly enough said that a corporation has no conscience; but a corporation of conscientious men is a corporation with a conscience.”

I need not tell you of the tremendous impact Thoreau's essay has had upon history -- from Ghandi to Martin Luther King. Many of the social reformers of our own day have seized upon Thoreau as their hero and done things in his name that he would surely deplore. But Thoreau, himself, was typically American in that the individual and not the institution (or corporation) was at the center of his cosmos. He would be among the first to note that executives can no more hide behind their corporate charter than professors behind their tenure or officials behind City Hall. Ultimately, individuals must accept full responsibility for what their institutions do.

When we consider the values that pervade American society, I would have to say this idea of “individual responsibility” is central to what we say and do. Our cultural heritage focuses our attention on the individual. We believe the individual is unique. I agree with that,

but I think we must recognize that the conflict between large institutions and individuals is the cause of much of our social unrest. Why? Because, traditionally, the idea of large institutions has gone against the American grain. I am not talking here about any political orientation of the Right or Left. I am talking about something that is ingrained in the American character. We have traditionally celebrated the individual and traditionally suspected the large corporation. The larger it is, the greater the suspicion.

It seems to me that this is one of the realities that public relations practitioners such as myself must face up to in the years ahead. We must find ways to reconcile the individual with the corporation. Or perhaps I should say the corporation with the individual.

I do not see how, given our advanced technology, we can dispense with large corporations. Advanced technology and large corporations go hand in hand. By that, I do not mean that all corporations and institutions must be large. I believe there is still room for variety in our corporate structures in terms of both shape and size. Nor do I mean that large corporations and individual rights are in conflict. Large corporations often seem to represent vast accretions of power. And that can be dangerous. But large corporations also represent vast resources which can enrich the life of employees -- to say nothing of shareholders and consumers. And that can be advantageous.

It seems to me that the healthy society is the society that offers its citizens the greatest number of options. I do not believe a healthy society is one dominated by large institutions or one controlled by small institutions. I think we must make room for each. Our founding fathers recognized this inevitable tug of war between the big guy and the little guy. The creation of a bicameral legislature -- the Senate and the House -- was an attempt to distribute power equitably. So it is that in our own time we must find ways to let large and small institutions coexist.

One obvious objective for the public relations man in the corporate environment is to make sure that institutions do not forget that they must serve people. Another way of putting it is that the human relations component of public relations cannot be overlooked. That applies, also, to the human relations aspects of business activity. Our long-standing tradition of individuality must be preserved within the context of a society that is no longer rural or agricultural, but technological and urban; in short, the kind of society in which the individual -- more and more -- functions as part of social and economic groups.

When we examine some of the major issues of the day, we can see the sources of conflict between individuals and institutions.

There was a time when the corporation could hire whomever it wanted whenever it wanted according to its needs. The criteria for employment were closely related to the efficient operation of the corporation.

Today that isn't enough. The corporation is expected to hire, train and even educate members of all minority groups so they, too, can find self-fulfillment in the mainstream of the economy.

There was a time when corporations made managers solely out of male employees and secretaries and clerks out of female employees. They did so out of the accepted belief (and here we see the status quo in operation) that the male was the breadwinner and, therefore, had the right to the higher paying job.

Today our basic views about the roles of the sexes has altered dramatically, and we expect corporate policy to reflect that fact. We are asked to respect women as individuals in the business environment and give them the same chance to advance as men.

There was a time when caveat emptor was the prime rule of the day. The corporation was expected to produce products that it could market profitably, and that was the limit of its obligation to the public.

Today the corporation is expected to recognize the “rights” of the buyer not only as a consumer but as a person. The corporation is expected to provide information that may affect the buyer’s ultimate decision whether to purchase a product or pass it by.

And so it goes. The social pressure is there. But that’s nothing new. Corporations have always been subjected to pressures of one kind or another. Today, however, there is a new element -- one that institutions never had to confront before. It is the element of “Future Shock.” Time has become compressed. Tomorrow is today. The public demands not only that corporations be responsive. But it demands that they respond right away.

Public opinion seems to develop and coalesce more quickly today than ever before. Yesterday’s stirrings become today’s demands.

Why is this so? The social analysts give several reasons. The population is generally younger, and young people tend to be action-oriented. The population is also better educated. And educated people tend to be more impatient. Or so the analysts say.

But the main reason for the contraction of time, it seems to me, lies in the rapid transmissions of events. News travels faster than ever and in much more vivid ways. All we need to do is compare the Korean war with the Vietnam war to grasp what I mean.

The Korean war, just twenty years ago, was a distant encounter; it was halfway around the globe. The American public was no closer to it than the printed descriptions in daily newspapers or the words of the radio news reports. Pictorial displays consisted largely of

coverage in Life magazine. Ironically, Life is now defunct because it ceased to be as vivid or as fast as its competitors, mainly television network news.

The Vietnam war, by way of contrast, took place before our very eyes. Those of us who believed in Fortress America, who thought the nation was protected from the ravages of war, were quite wrong. The war invaded our living room. We literally watched it while it was going on. The impact was tremendous. How could it be otherwise? You actually saw the Vietnamese police chief put a bullet in his captive's head. You actually saw the planes dropping bombs. You actually saw your own soldiers shot in action. Mothers and wives sometimes saw their own sons or husbands. Rapid and visual communications thus became the overpowering factor in the time equation. More than anything else it generated demands for instant action and increased the tension between so-called hawks and doves.

Nor need we confine ourselves to the example of war. Compare the woman's suffrage movement in the 19th century with the woman's liberation movement of today. It was way back in the 1850's and 1860's when Susan B. Anthony and all the other "Bloomer Girls" first started to insist on extending the right to vote to women. But it was not until 1920 -- sixty years later -- that Congress ratified the 19th amendment to the Constitution.

But consider the instant impact of the woman's liberation movement. Indeed, one of the more activist groups calls itself the National Organization of Women -- mainly, I suppose, so it can parade its demands under the acronym NOW!

What's more, organizations like NOW -- and all the other social pressure groups -- have become quite adroit at using the public media to communicate their ideas and marshal public opinion in their favor. This puts a special burden on the corporation, for it means that what is

opinion today may very well be legislation tomorrow. The time element between communication and law is of critical importance.

Let us assume that the really significant social demands will eventually be enacted into law. This has certainly been the case in many instances: truth-in-lending, pollution abatement, equal employment opportunity -- to name a few. And all of them moved rather rapidly out of the public forum into the law.

The critical question becomes: When should the corporation react to rising social pressures and start its own reforms? It will be noted that some companies somehow manage to anticipate social changes while other companies always lag. The companies that anticipate change are far less vulnerable to criticism.

When to react to social change is a critical decision -- one in which public relations plays a crucial role. Those corporations which have reacted early and voluntarily to social changes are, by and large, those which are generally regarded as socially responsible -- or, at the very least, responsive to social change. Those who wait until the very last minute are usually identified and stigmatized as not responsive to social needs and requirements.

But the timing is important. The corporation that reacts too quickly may find itself penalized in relation to its competition, since it can usually be assumed that a response to social change involves an added cost. However, the corporation that responds too slowly may also be similarly penalized since failure to act may also carry economic penalties. What's more, the company that waits for legislation -- that is, that waits for government to force it into compliance with public opinion -- suffers a loss of reputation. And reputation is not just an abstraction. It often affects sales.

In my own company we publish a quarterly report which, in one issue, examined the relationship between economic penalties and corporate social responsibility. The title of the Report was -- Ecology and Economics: The Joining of Issues. We indicated at that time, and I quote:

“The boundary between what’s good for the environment and what’s good for business is no longer quite so clear. An enterprise can no longer make sound economic decisions without taking into account the environmental consequences of its acts.

“The way a company copes with its pollution abatement problems affects its balance sheet, its profit and loss statement, its price-earnings ratio, its ability to raise capital at competitive rates, and maybe even its ability to sell its wares. In short, environmental protection is now a business reality, and environmental decisions have become economic ones too.”

That’s the end of the quote. But I should add that that almost everything said in our Report about pollution can also be applied to most of the other vital issues of the day.

Timing, therefore, is critical. At what point in time should the corporation start to react to anticipated social change? The public relations professional enters into the decision-making process. And in doing so, he needs to keep his wits about him. It is his responsibility to convince management that there is indeed a groundswell of public opinion sufficiently significant to lead to social change. And it is his responsibility to participate in the policy determinations that will lead to an effective response.

I am not saying that the public relations executive is the only one in this critical position. Certainly, he is not the only executive who must relate to the public. The corporation’s marketing vice president must relate to the customer; the financial vice president must relate to the financial community and the shareholders. The personnel officer must relate to employees.

And the chief-executive officer must relate to everyone. And woe be to any one of them who fails to recognize his multiple responsibilities!

But the duties of the public relations executive are more explicit and quite different. The differences are twofold:

The first difference is that the public relations executive must -- as a result of his training and background -- understand the role of communications and know how to assess and respond to pressures for change.

The second difference is that the public relations executive is the one person charged with the responsibility of maintaining contact with all the corporation's publics. The financial vice president focuses, almost exclusively, on the financial community and shareholders. The marketing vice president focuses, almost exclusively, on the consumer. The personnel vice president focuses on employees. And the chief executive officer -- while fundamentally interested in all publics -- has a number of other equally important matters on his mind which, of necessity, always seem more pressing.

So it comes down to the chief public relations officer. He sees it all. Hopefully, he sees the interrelationships. He sees that the consumer is also a shareholder. He sees that the shareholder may also be an employee. He sees that any one of these constituents of the corporation may also be a member of the local Izaak Walton league and the first to report to the league that an effluent from the local plant is damaging his favorite fishing stream.

In a sense, the public relations professional doing his job for the modern corporation fulfills a role that may be divided into four parts:

First, he serves as the sensor of social change. He perceives those rumblings at the heart of the society that augur good or ill for his organization. In a way, he is like a radar man. He

gives the early warning. And, after detecting the yearnings and stirrings, he interprets the signals for the management team.

His perceptions, of course, cannot be founded on intuitive judgments and guesswork. He must be objective and analytical; he can bring the insights of the social sciences to bear upon his conclusions. In analyzing change, he must have a strong sense of reality. He must identify the situation as it really is, not as he imagines it to be. He must be able to separate enduring social changes from current fads.

Let me give an example of what I mean. When the subject of automation first came up, it was taken very seriously. Yet the social consequences of automation, while great, have not really shaken up the corporation. On the other hand, when Women's Lib first hit the streets, it was not really taken very seriously. Yet the consequences of the Women's Lib movement have had loud repercussions in many a hallowed corporate hall. It is, as the examples indicate, the job of the public relations executive to make distinctions and to say to his management: "Look, you may think this stuff is nonsense, but it is a potentially powerful development. So let's start to make plans."

It's also the job of the public relations executive as corporate sensor to keep the attention of his management focused on the problem. How often have we heard businessmen who should know better claim that the critics of business are trying "to tear the system down." Now I have no doubt we have our revolutionaries, but the current mood isn't so much one of insurrection as reform. Corporate managers have enough to do without going through the enervating motions of setting up straw men so they can knock them down.

Consider Ralph Nader -- who hardly qualifies as the businessman's best friend. Even Nader declares that his objectives are not to destroy the system but to make it work within the

context of a free market economy. Nader is basically a populist and reformer. He is not making a fundamental attack on capitalism or democracy.

The second role which the public relations man must fulfill is that of corporate conscience. I trust you will not infer from this that a person must be a public relations professional to be sensitive -- or that public relations people behave in ways that are either more moral and ethical or more in the public interest than executives with different titles. There are others in the corporate hierarchy who may possess the same amount or even more of these attributes than the individuals responsible for public relations. But the fact is that being the professional corporate conscience is not part of the job description of other executives. It is part of the job description of the chief public relations officer.

The third major role of the public relations professional is that of communicator. The tendency is to think that communications is his only role. That is hardly the case although it is an important function.

Communications relating to social issues moves in two directions -- internally and externally. Most often, the emphasis is placed on external communications. Although external communications is important, it is, in many respects, secondary to and dependent upon an effective internal communications program. Let's not forget the lesson of Mrs. Jellyby and focus on the distant problem before we resolve the one at home.

What happens when a corporation responds to a social issue? Take minority employment as an example, since it is a problem faced by almost every corporation in the United States. Let's suppose that a company adopts a policy of representational employment. Representational employment is founded on the premise that if a certain minority group -- say blacks -- comprises a certain proportion of the population -- say 11 percent -- then, all things being equal, members

of that minority group should comprise 11 percent of the company's work force. What's more, members of that minority group should be found at all levels of employment from the assembly line to the executive suite.

Now, its one thing to adopt a policy of that nature -- and a number of companies have. But it's quite another thing to make it work -- especially in a corporation that has several locations. The first task is to convince employees that the policy is not make-believe. The people who must make an equal opportunity policy work are not at corporate headquarters. More likely than not they are in the field offices, in the divisions, and in the boondocks. They are in personnel: the interviewers, recruiters, managers and so forth. If they don't believe the corporation means business, then nothing will happen.

Then there's the matter of informing present employees that as of a certain Monday morning they will be working alongside a newly-eligible group of employees as a result of the corporation's new policies.

Internal communications must do more than tell or inform. Its primary function is to bring about understanding. The greater the sensitivity of the issue, the more important the need to communicate effectively. The internal communications program must make available to all affected employees the information that will enable them to understand not only what is happening and what they are expected to do about it, but why the new policies have been adopted. And, of course, there must be ample continuing communication to indicate how the program is progressing.

The success of any new policy, no matter how well intentioned, will depend to some considerable degree upon how well the corporation has handled its internal communications.

Indeed, we can't even think about communicating this information outside the corporation until the policy has taken root and is working.

Communicating with the public outside the corporation is an equally difficult undertaking. The problem for the public relations man is to convince the public that the corporation is, indeed, being responsive. Critics on the outside looking in tend to question a corporation's sincerity. All too often they mistake a real and genuine response for a seeming response. When a corporation asks for time to make an adjustment, the critics declare that the company is merely stalling in the hope that it won't have to act at all.

The fact is, as we have noted, that the corporation is often slow to react. It's that kind of a creature. It's easy enough for the chief executive officer to issue a public statement that literally reverses a long-standing policy overnight. But it's just as difficult for the chief executive to mandate change as it is for the President of the United States, on certain matters, to mandate change. Policy changes are not enough.

If the corporation informs the public that the company has a new policy, the public may very well respond:

“So what! We're not interested in knowing about policy changes! We're interested in substantive acts. What have you really done?”

And if the corporation does not inform the public that it has, in fact, changed its policies, the public can accuse it of failing to take action.

The problem of external communications, therefore, becomes quite tricky. It is impossible to cover the details of public relations techniques within the scope of this speech. It is sufficient to point to the difficulties and to indicate that the public relations executive must

convince the public that his corporation is responsive, that it is taking actions that exceed mere policy statements, and that genuine progress is being made.

The fourth function of the public relations professional is to serve as corporate monitor. I am tempted to use the word ombudsman here, for I think it is in the spirit of an ombudsman that the public relations officer should regard his job. Obviously, he can't be an ombudsman in the strictest sense of the word. But since public relations is involved with public issues, there is a need for constant monitoring of corporate policies and programs to make sure that they do, indeed, match public expectations. If the programs are not functioning or if they fall short of expectations, it is his job to agitate for new programs and new policies. It seems to me quite natural for the public relations practitioner to adopt this posture. If he fails to do so, he fails to live up to the requirements of his job.

Perhaps what we are saying is that social accountability is just another management art that corporations are going to have to learn. In the long run, the corporation which does the best job of managing its operations will also do the best job of adapting to social needs.

In presenting my views I have developed certain fundamental ideas under eight main points. It may be well to summarize those points as I conclude.

Point 1 is: A corporation can't compensate for its inadequacies with good deeds. Its first responsibility is to manage its own affairs profitably.

Point 2: Corporate social responsibility defies precise definition because no two corporations are exactly the same. We know a socially responsible company when we see one, but we can't completely describe it ahead of time.

Point 3: We should no more expect a corporation to adopt a leadership role in changing the direction of a society than we should expect an automobile to fly. The corporation was simply not designed for that role.

Point 4: Most of the pressures on corporations stem from two developments -- the growing conflict between individuals and large institutions, and the compression of time.

Point 5: The public relations function must separate issues from fads and work out a timetable for the corporation's response and adjustment.

Point 6: In planning for social change, the role of the public relations executive is critical. He must judge which issues are real and which are merely fads, and he must help decide when the corporation should start to make reforms in policy.

Point 7: The public relations executive has four main roles. He must be the corporate sensor, the corporate conscience, the corporate communicator, and the corporate monitor.

Point 8: The corporation must communicate to -- and convince -- the public that it is indeed being responsive to the changing expectations of society and that it is not merely stalling for time.

Well, in public relations language, that's all I have to communicate right now. I thank you very much.