

Global Symposium

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THE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGE

Ladies and gentlemen, I do want to start by saying how chastened I am to be faced with an audience of this magnitude, and I say magnitude in two senses: one of which is the actual size of the group, and the other is its level of knowledge and experience. My humble experience is limited to two countries in Asia--Burma and India--and a thoroughly different way of life in the West to which I moved just 11 years ago, and to which I have found no difficulty in adapting. I think this probably arises out of the good background I had in the developing world. I think living in the developing world really gives you the ability to stand up to many things, including the necessity to adapt as you go along in life. I am delighted to be amongst you this weekend and I am highly honored that I have been asked to speak on the historic occasion of this Global Symposium and at this particular point in the proceedings.

I have had quite a lot of experience with the ICA in various circumstances, the most recent one of which was the Brussels Symposium. My husband and I were extremely touched and impressed by what happened in Brussels. The world of management education can be quite an ivory tower in which staff talk to people and expect them to listen. At the Brussels Symposium we saw that everybody--not just the staff--spoke and everybody expressed themselves freely and in a most helpful way. This is what I think is really meant by communication and dialogue: where everybody speaks and everybody else is prepared to listen. Quite often I think people talk about dialogue and communication, but they really mean a one-way process in which somebody told others what is good for them or what needs to be done and what is happening around them, and never really listens to what's coming back. The ICA brought home to us the fact that if you want to really get amongst people and situations, you have to listen to what's been said from the other side of the table.

Shortly after the Brussels Symposium we attended the Conference of Management Educators. Amongst the things said at this conference was that management skills today need to concentrate much more in the non-cognitive areas. This was very interesting because for a long time there have been management tools and techniques that have been talked about, and quite a few have been very good and followed for a long time. I know that in America the behavioral area has not been neglected in any way. However, in Britain, I think there has been a lot of skepticism about the behavioral sciences. The minute you talk about behavior, psychology and the need to assess people's behavior in groups, you can almost see people stiffen and wonder, "What's all this? Is it a bit of brainwashing that's about to happen or head-shrinking?" Nevertheless, I think that Britain is going to take notice of this particular recommendation to develop non-cognitive skills and I am sure that everybody else at that meeting will too. The conference was attended by many Americans and management educators from all over Europe.

At the Brussels Symposium we were impressed by the fact that we worked solidly from about 7:00 each morning until 10:30 at night. At Henly we have been used to people saying to us "Don't you think of anything else but work? You work us too hard!" When we were in Brussels we thought, "Well, it's nice to have

this experience to describe the next time our people say we work too hard at Henly." It was stimulating. Something carried us along and we didn't feel the strain of long hours of work. Most impressive of all was that at the end of this hectic weekend each participant at the symposium went off with a document which recorded all that had been discussed. Somebody had been beavering away in the background and produced a document. It wasn't something that had been prepared in advance. It contained everything that had gone on at that Symposium. Ever since that experience I have stopped bragging about the efficiency of Henly. I realize that there are other people much more efficient than we are! Anyway, I take it that this Global Symposium is a follow-on from what happened in Brussels, and I think it is very fitting, indeed.

I think we must all admit that looking into the future one faces certain problems. The rate of change in the world makes it difficult if not impossible to put down any firm plans. This planet that we occupy has been referred to as the Spaceship Earth. I think we need to protect it. We must be watchful over the natural as well as the social environment. The natural environment, happily, is being looked after with certain varying degrees of success by many dedicated groups. As long as there are groups looking at these things something is bound to happen, and at least the worst might not happen. On the societal front, I think ICA is one such group of people. I think that as long as ICA is working around this world there is hope for this planet of ours.

Despite the clouded and uncertain future, we should not be deterred in our plan to spend the time that we have together with our attention focused on the single most important factor in the whole situation: the utilization of the world's human potential. This is really at the base of everything that is to happen for the world's benefit. The challenges that mankind faces today are numerous and varied. The third world is very much the focus of attention, discussion and thought, both amongst people who are affected and people who care, and I think I cannot labor too much the fact that ICA are people who care. I think the results of that caring are manifest in the third world, Asia, Africa, Latin America, being just cases in point. Amongst other factors we are faced with today is the transnational or multinational corporation. There are two schools of thought: some say that multinational corporations are breaking up and will be operating in smaller groups. The other view, based on quite a lot of research, claims that the large units are growing larger. I think that the large size of any particular grouping might be a good thing for it ensures strength and allows an organization to do things that couldn't be achieved in small groups. In this light I am impressed to know that there are so many people working with ICA around the world and who are here today.

The other factor that presents a challenge to mankind is the technological developments that are taking place. They are a positive challenge and sometimes looked upon as a source of strength. Technology is not only affecting the employment situation but is invading every aspect of our lives, both at work and at home. Most of it is good, but there are some things which may not be so good. The people who look upon the fact that we might have more leisure are frightened because up to now leisure has been generally associated with either aristocratic privilege, ill health or old age. The general population doesn't accept leisure or the thought of more leisure, kindly.

In fact it is quite interesting that even in Britain, where the labor force is not particularly keen on work, people seem to have a neurosis about the advent of microtechnology because it threatens to give us more free time. This is a paradox.

We need to rethink our whole attitude toward work, the work ethic and ways of sharing available work. This relates to my favorite topic, women. There will be many more opportunities for women to enter the work force. The new technology will create a lot of career and work opportunities. The old tune that "this is man's work and women can't possibly do it," is going to change. The new technology demands pressing buttons and keys and women have always been said to be better at typing, so I think they will probably excel at doing these things. It's not going to be just man's work any longer. The old work ethic which emphasizes the importance of work as paid labor will also change. We have been taught that you work for money and if you work without a regular sum of money coming in at the end of the week then you're not really working. This will all have to be re-thought. It will have to be recognized that people who are seemingly unemployed because they are not bringing in a lot of money are in fact contributing to the well being of society or the community in which they work and live. The stigma of "he doesn't go to work at 9:00 and return at 6:00 in the evening so I wonder what's going on next door," will have to fade out.

This will call for a whole new concept of education for both employers, who sometimes badly need to be educated to deal with the new situation, and employees, who realize that changes are taking place. In Britain I think the trade unions need to be re-educated to deal with the situation because at the moment in their negotiations they tend to take the attitude of "no new technology" for that would mean people out of work. They have got to start talking about new technology because Britain in its present economic situation or plight will hardly be viable in the face of competition from other nations hooking into the new technology. The "I'm alright, Jack" syndrome won't hold much water in the face of the competitive edge that technology is giving people elsewhere. Parents will need to be re-educated and to re-think their attitudes. Currently they press their children to be educated for work in their terms. They say, "You've got to really achieve things at school so you can get on in the world" In the future "getting on in the world" is going to involve a lot of things other than just becoming the president or vice-president of a large corporation. Teachers in schools will need to be re-educated, because teaching the new technology is something rather special. Career counsellors will have to be re-educated to give youth the right counsel. Youth themselves will have to be re-educated because they have for so long been told that the only worthwhile direction in life is going out and getting a good job and earning a lot of money. This re-thinking has got to go right through society if the available leisure being forecast is going to be used to the fullest advantage of mankind.

The topic of human development is very fitting in relation to education because as I said earlier, human development is a two-way educational process, a matter of dialogue that includes listening. The whole idea of human development is very commendable and deserves a lot of attention because there needs to be human development of both individuals and groups. This doesn't apply only to the third world or the developing nations. Throughout the world human development is needed. We all could benefit from the development of our ways of thinking and our attitudes. We all need to get ourselves fully developed.



In management education this particular aspect of human development is going to be emphasized more. All the portents are there and I think that attention will be paid to this need.

My first contact with ICA came through my attendance at a Global Women's Forum. I attended the Forum without knowing that there was such a program as LENS. During the day I thought, "There is the germ of a wonderful process here and I am sure it could be applied to all sorts of situations, not just to community development." You see, I didn't know there were wiser people who had thought about it before me. Later I learned about LENS and saw the application of LENS to the situation of women. I think that it has great possibilities in that area in support of effecting creative change, for the process involves the people who are affected. It is in this area that I have the greatest admiration for the whole ICA approach, in which the people who are affected are involved. I think this is the root of the success of the ICA approach. ICA staff don't go about as if they are the experts with the prescriptions for other peoples' success. They take to bits any situation, allowing the people involved to say what they think about it, and then draw everything together, revealing the points that are relevant, and a strategy for dealing with the situation. That is such a wonderful way of handling any problem or situation. I think that the area of human development could really benefit from the application of ICA's method and ideas.

The Symposium that is starting today, has a subject which can very, very successfully be dealt with by a group such as you who are acquainted with situations and problems that exist globally, and who have experience in dealing with them. It is very important that all present devote their all to the discussion of the particular topic on the bill. I am certain that what will emerge will be as impressive and effective as what happened to us at the end of the Brussels weekend. Recently I was reading something about the reporting of a U.N. panel discussion on women and men in the next 25 years which quoted Alvin Toffler as saying "It seems to me that the one thing that can be said with reasonable certainty is that the next 25 years will not be serene or tranquil years on this planet but turbulent years." I believe that what's happening now is an enormous transformatory revolution on the face of the globe: the breakup of this industrial civilization and the emergence of a totally new kind of civilization, the outlines of which are by no means yet clear. It seems to me that the worldwide movement for a change in sex roles and for the recognition of women's rights is part of this historic transformation that I think will touch every conceivable aspect of our lives over the next 25 to 30 years. To me what we are looking at is a historic transformation of the entire social system, not simply the technological part of the system." What better occasion to recognize this transformation I can't imagine.