

AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT

N. S. W. DIVISION ANNUAL DINNER

Sydney, N. S. W.



Presentation of John Storey award to Mr. W. W. Pettingell

Speech by the Prime Minister, Mr. John Gorton

5 FEBRUARY 1970

Mr. President, Mr. Pettingell, Ladies and Gentlemen:

One of the great pleasures for me tonight, and I am sure one of the great pleasures for you, is that before I came it was stipulated that I had not come in order to make a speech or to leave a message with you, but merely to appear on an occasion which seems to me to be one which deserves the greatest support which the government of this country can give.

I come for two reasons. One is because this is a gathering of the Australian Institute of Management, and as the politician of caricature says "In this gathering I say without fear of contradiction that the Australian Institute of Management is an extraordinarily fine body of men." And if there may be some amongst us who cavil a little at men being selected, then to those I say that I fall back on the legal precept that the greater includes the less.

And I mean this because what is required in this or other developing countries - for we still are a developing country - is capital, wherever we can get it, to the greatest degree that we can, subject to some small reservations as to the conditions on which it comes; and labour, which on the figures recently released, is getting more and more in demand and less and less available.

But there is something over and above that, for what use is capital, what use is labour if it is not managed in such a way that from it the greatest possible benefit is received for the country? You can have a factory in which you have adequate machinery, in which you have a workforce of competent people, but what can you get from it if management is not capable of utilising what is provided?

It is true, I think, as our trade union leaders would say and indeed I would say, that what is produced in a country is basically produced from the skills and the devotion and the work of the man on the factory floor, the man who runs the lathe, the foreman, and the people in the work force. It also remains true that in any given factory you could have exactly the same skills on the factory floor, exactly the

same number of people, but you could have a production which was small if the management was bad, or a production which was great if the management was good. And this is the great contribution that can be made to the growth of this country and to the well being of all who are in it. And because the Institute of Management does this, it is one of the pleasures to me of coming tonight.

There is another, Sir, arising out of something which you said in the course of your speech. I think, if I may paraphrase, you said that in the world today everybody knows what everybody else has - and wants it. If I may speak personally for a moment, I am not unfamiliar with that approach! But this is not necessarily a bad thing, provided those who want it are prepared to earn it, are prepared to see how it has been achieved and to put in the effort and the brain power and the devotion which is required to get it. In this case what you have said is good, but of course if somebody, some other country sees what has been attained here and wants it, and doesn't want to put in that kind of effort, but merely expropriate it or take it away, then this does no good at all.

And because this Institute of Management seeks to disseminate amongst the people of this country the techniques by which these things can be attained, that is another reason why I think it is of such significance to this country of Australia.

But the second reason why I am so glad to be here is that it is a gathering to honour Mr. Pettingell, whom I see not for the first time today. You will have heard, if you didn't know before, he is indeed a man for all seasons. Indeed, hearing of how he sailed a partly finished boat to Hobart, one can only tremble for Ted Heath if that boat had been finished before he started.

But seriously, Sir, no words of mine can add to the record which was read to the assembled gathering as to what you have done and what you are continuing to do. A man who has always sought the most direct route to whatever it is he sought to attain, and who I am glad to say is still doing it. He has been one of the pioneers of business management in this country, one of the people who has recognised that it is necessary if you have a factory force, if you have people working for you, to mobilise their talents, to utilise their skill to the greatest possible extent, and to realise the full potential of those for whom he is responsible in his sphere, to the benefit of his company, to the benefit of the people so utilised and to the benefit of the Australian nation.

I am glad to say that there is a growing realisation of the importance of management and of the importance of research. You will know that there are experts coming to Australia on February 24 -

(some of you will have dealt with them before) to advise on the setting up of a School of Business Management in this country, a post-graduate school, a real attempt to bring the techniques to the younger people who more and more will be taking over management in the expanding economy of our nation.

And it affords me pleasure, not only that this is happening but that I will be able to get a bit of my own back by going to industry and saying, "Now you can provide the money that is required for the setting up of this school for the benefit of everybody." I still remember somebody promising me \$10 million if we did it and I intend to collect that IOU. Of course that will only cover a part of the cost!

But because of what you have done, Mr. Pettingell, and what those others in this room have done and are doing, because of the overriding significance of management for the full realisation of what we can do, because you are here tonight being honoured and because of those who are here to honour you, I have had the greatest delight in being able to be in some small way associated with this function.

May I finish on this note? A short time ago, I went to Adelaide to deliver an address called "The William Queale Memorial Lecture" on management and training for management, and used these words, or something like these words: We have seen just recently the most extraordinary occurrence in man's history. We have seen people walking on the moon. The planning for this was started a decade or more ago. The people who took part in that journey deserve all the tribute we can pay them. But they could not have got there, they could not have walked on the moon, they could not have come back, had it not been for management techniques, for management planning, for the overseeing of every detail which led to that great and successful adventure. If that is so in a dramatic way, then if the same devotion and the same techniques, are applied to providing in this country the greater opportunities that are possible, this may be even greater than the success of the management techniques which led to the journey to the moon. This is very largely in your hands and in the hands of people like Mr. Pettingell, and it is for this reason I have been honoured to be with you tonight.

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