

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT, AHMEDABAD

EIGHTEENTH CONVOCATION

MARCH 25, 1983

CHAIRMAN'S SPEECH

Mr. Palkhivala, Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen:

May I welcome you all to the Eighteenth Convocation of the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad.

We are particularly privileged to have amidst us Mr. Nani A Palkhivala, who needs no introduction to this gathering or for that matter to any gathering in the country. As a distinguished jurist, as a constitutional lawyer and as a diplomat you, Sir, have rendered yeoman service to our motherland. You are distinguished in so many fields, and by your own tacit admission you try and excel in everything you touch - if I may say so, you do it so admirably and so well. To me, your most notable achievement has been your steadfast adherence to basic values and principles - upholding the rights and dignity of citizenship - so very important and essential, as we move forward with our great adventure in democracy. I salute your efforts, for persons like you, Sir, constitute the conscience of our nation, and we thank you for your endeavours.

We are fortunate to have you here with us to bless the graduating class of 1983 as they stand at the threshold of their professional

career. I believe that the one quality the managers of today and tomorrow must develop is to listen to the dictates of their own conscience. It is never easy, but those like you, Mr. Palkhivala who succeed in doing so, form the cream of our society. In you is symbolized a combination of high professional expertise, the highest sense of integrity and a deep social responsibility - a combination which is rarely found in any age. I know that your presence on this occasion cannot but inspire our graduates to emulate your illustrious example. On behalf of all of us, a very warm welcome.

Ladies and Gentlemen, neither this Institute nor this occasion is new to many of you. With a humble beginning in 1962 when even the local people did not know of the existence of this Institute, we have come a long way. To-day if a list of premier management institutions in the world is drawn, the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad will surely find a prominent place. This progress has been achieved because of the ceaseless effort on the part of the faculty and staff, and it is proper for me on this occasion to commend their role and compliment them for their contribution. Institution building is a difficult process anywhere; in a developing society it is almost arduous.

You will forgive me if I feel proud of ourselves and gratified over what we have been able to accomplish in spite of many a times rather heavy odds.

But we would be violating our own tradition if we were to become self-complacent. Our very success, in fact, has raised the expectations of what our society demands from us. To meet these expectations we have been expanding our programmes and activities; to deliver nothing but the best, we have been continually updating our human resources and constantly reviewing and improving the quality of our programme. I have no doubt that we will continue to move in these directions, for as educators our primary responsibility is to lubricate the wheel of progress.

My young graduating friends, while stepping out of this calm and idyllic surroundings, you will be carrying perhaps a part of the image of this Institute. In your professional career each one of you will become an instrument to satisfy the expectations and the needs of our society. Tools and techniques you have learnt will certainly help you to face the challenges that await you, but remember, that you have yet to interact with another teacher without whose help your learning would not be complete. And that teacher is experience.

Our ancient scriptures have stressed on three stages of learning i.e., reading, reflection and practice. As of now, you have passed through the first and are getting on to the second. The third and last, and perhaps the best stage is yet to come. This should be the most enriching part of your life, if you make use of it. If you do not, no one will be there to share your regrets. The choice is yours.

I know that you will make the best use of your opportunities, and I earnestly hope that your professional excellence will be informed by a sense of social purpose so that one day you may rightly claim to have acquired that rare combination of professional expertise and social responsibility which Mr. Palkhivala personifies. And that would be your greatest tribute to this Institution.

Before I conclude, may I publicly welcome the distinguished Dr. I.G. Patel, as our new Director and wish him happiness and success in his new endeavour.

To you, the graduating class, my best wishes and luck be with you.