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Human Factors and the Economic Goals

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COMMENTAIRES

« Human Factors & the Economic Goals » *

W. N. HALL

As I have thought about the relationships of Human Factors and our economic goals, my mind has kept coming back to the fact that there are two very real kinds of human factors, the first of these relates to whether we will have enough people with the right skills in the right places and at the right time, and the second relates to whether people are united enthusiastically behind these goals and are fully convinced that they can be and will be achieved, and that they are prepared to do whatever is necessary to achieve them.

This first economic goal is going to have to be achieved with the people we now have, educated as they now are, with the addition of young people coming out of our schools and universities in already planned numbers.

I believe that with appropriate and possible upgrading of the present group, with newcomers from the schools and universities, and with what I think is an achievable objective on immigrants with special skills, we shall have enough of the right people so that the 1970 objective will be possible in terms of human resources.

When I say that it is my conviction the job in total can be done don't think this means it is going to be easy. The program today speaks of « critical areas » and there certainly are many. The first critical point, in my estimation is :

ENTREPRENEURIAL AND TOP MANAGEMENT MANPOWER

A program for the period 1970 - 1975 may fail because Canada has not progressed rapidly enough in terms of technical personnel. If the 1965 - 1970 program fails it will be the fault *only of people like the business people in this room*. The technical people may produce all the ideas in the world, Mr. Jodoin's people may decide to make all the necessary sacrifices in training and moving, capital may accumulate in banks and insurance companies and old socks, and we can still have stagnation and unemployment.

* Address by W.N. Hall, President, Dominion Tar & Chemical Company, Limited, to the Business Conference Goals for 1970 to the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, Monday, April 12th 1965, at the Queen Elizabeth Hotel.

In our society it is the job of the entrepreneur, or in these days of big enterprises, of top management to imaginatively see the profit opportunities which will arise by marrying these potentials to a market at home and abroad. It is then the job to do some speculating and put all these things together.

In the capitalistic system the presence of these imaginative, chance-taking people is the *first* essential, and we have not produced as many of these as we should have in Canada. We complain about foreign ownership, perhaps we should be complaining of the shortage of one human resource, entrepreneurs.

The second critical area is in :

TECHNICAL PERSONNEL

We may well have trouble in obtaining personnel to do the research, designing and engineering to produce and install the facilities necessary to increase productivity, to produce new products and to increase production.

The Economic Council report points out that we have been graduating, on a per capita basis, only about half as many engineers as the U.S.A. at the bachelor level and only about a third at higher levels.

I have to do this, but it does seem time to lay on the table the problem of salaries for new scientific graduates. In pre-war days there was a large spread between American and Canadian salaries, but this closed and in the early 1950's there was very little difference. It is worth asking ourselves whether the fact that scientific and engineering salaries in the U.S.A. are higher with respect to salaries and wages generally in that country has something to do with the fact that a higher proportion of the population follows these pursuits in the U.S.A. than in Canada.

A third area of potential difficulty is :

AUTOMATION

Increased productivity will, of course, be brought about by automation and will result in the dislocation of the worker. Relocation of the worker will be one of the serious problems facing us. This will be complicated by the fact that the level of skills will be rising and we will have displaced workers on the market without adequate skills. Thus, in addition to finding a mechanism to give those dislocated mobility, a retraining problem is also involved. We also have to face the issue of those whose educational level is such that they cannot be trained.

Another factor of concern to the displaced, once he is relocated, is his loss of seniority and the lay-off protection and other benefits which go with it.

Thus with the displaced worker we have the problem of mobility, retraining and loss of seniority.

These are not easy problems to solve but they have to be solved. There have already been steps taken by the Government by paying part of the moving expense, and the efforts of the National Employment Service in locating jobs, and also by the formation of the Advisory Manpower Service through which research grants are made available for the study of problems created by dislocation of workers.

Industry, individually, or collectively, must play its parts, as must the Unions.

Some of you may have seen on the front page of our Annual Report a statement agreed to by senior officers of all of the international unions and syndicates with whom Domtar deals, and the Company. It is a clear statement of responsibility on both sides, and I should like to read it.

STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

- a) To attain an economically sound, competitive and profitable operation which will make possible :
 - 1. The satisfaction of consumer needs with quality products and services;
 - 2. Improved wages and salaries and other conditions of employment; and
 - 3. Improved returns to shareholders.
- b) To increase job satisfaction through measures such as :
 - 1. Full recognition by all concerned of the rights and dignity of employees;
 - 2. Opportunities for employees to confer with Management through their representatives on matters of policy and proposed policy changes which affect employees, including matters beyond those covered in the applicable collective agreement; and
 - 3. The development of informed interest and meaningful participation by employees in the success of the enterprise.
- c) Over and above the foregoing objectives, to recognize the promotion of the national interest and the growth of the Canadian economy as an overriding obligation.

I started off this list of specifics by saying that people like we in the Chamber of Commerce have an undivided responsibility to see that

the entrepreneurial imagination and risk-taking which is necessary is done.

We have a shared responsibility with labour and Government to see that the work force is able to and does do its share.

Let us see that no failure on our part either in what we must do alone or what we must do in partnership keeps us from making the most of our human potentials to achieve the target.

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