**Kamakura Speech [No. 16025]**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Remarks by Mr. [first name] Matsui, president of Matsui International Com-pany, Inc., on the occasion of his company’s 30th anniversary celebration.

kenji matsui, my grandfather, was a visionary. and all his visions were in color he retained a single-minded fascin-ation with color — one might amost say an obsession — all of his life. he also had what seemed to be a genetic aptitude for business and commerce. from the founding of his first company in 1923 — the matsui shikiso chemical company — until his death in [year] at age [no.], kenji mat-sui never stopped exploring, never stopped expanding, never stopped experimenting, never stopped inventing — never stopped searching for find news ways to insfuse all the spectra of a rainbow into pigments, paints, papers, and inks.

what began in 1923 with a staff of [no.] people in a small, [no.] square-foot facility on [name] street in kyoto, mit-sui chemical has today grown into an international cor-poration with more than [no.] of employees, offices in [no.] cities, and annual sales of nearly [$no.] but By 1987, it became clear that the company needed to do a better job of penetrating the u.s. market and other markets abroad. so toward this end, we established the mitsui international company as a wholly-owned subsidi-ary of mitsui chemical. we started out 30 years ago with exact-ly three exployees— a sales rep, a secretary, and me — in a small office on [address] in manhattan, with a couple of phones and a couple of desks. today, we’ve grown to more than 50 employees with offices in [names of cities], and our sales topped [$ amount] in gross revenues last year.

today the mission of our company remains what it was 30 years ago. but as both mitsui chemical and mitsui interna-tional head toward the third decade of the twenty-first century, our mission and our corporate structure have morphed along with the changing landscape of the mar-ketplace and the inexorable march of technology. to meet the challenges of an ever-more-competitive mar-ket, we’ve got to become even more resourceful, even more adroit, and even more reponsive than we’ve ever been before.

yes . . . we’ve been exremely successful over the last 30 years. and that success is due almost wholly to the great work, the dedication, and the commitment of our workforce. I believe we have one of the most loyal and hard-working group of employees that any company in our industry has ever enjoyed. but as has often been observed in business, ***“if you’re not moving ahead, you’re almost certainly falling behind.”*** something that’s good today, and maybe even “good enough” tommorrow, almost certainly won’t be good enough by friday. Why?

because things change — *constantly*:

the competition changes.

the marketplace changes.

new technologies arrive on the scene almost weekly.

customer preferences change.

the availability of raw materials changes.

and governmental rules and regulations seems to change as often as some people change their socks.

no company can afford to rest on its laurels. No com-pany can afford to ignore the changes occuring all around it, because more than likely, the competition *isn’t* making that mistake. That’s why we can never be satisfied with the status quo. we cannot ever afford to fall behind.

and the best way for any company to ensure that it doesn’t fall behind is to make sure that each and every one of its employees has a deep and personal interest in the company’s success, and more particularly a deep personal commitment to continuous improvement as the principal road to that success.

so i want to make clear to everyone here today, and everyone who earns a paycheck from mitsui internation-al, that henceforth the principal of continuous im-provement will become, and will remain, one of the cor-nerstones of our business moving forward. we must all understand — and ***embrace*** — the idea that: ***“nothing good remains good*** ***unless it’s constantly being improved!”***

so i’d like to take the opportunity of this 30th anniver­sary celebration to announce to every employee of the matsui international Company that, from this day for-ward, the phrase, *“if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it,”* shall henceforth be outlawed at mici. for this old adage is not only silly and stupid, it’s positively *dangerous*, for it leads to stagnation and, ultimately, to falling behind. so we will abandon this philosophy altogether and will replace it, instead, with the policy that: ***“If it ain’t broke . . .we’ll fix it anyway!!”***

what does this mean?

it means, first and foremost, that every matsui inter-national employee — and every level of the company — will make a personal commitment to figuring out how things can be done better wherever they work.

it means that we’ll look for problems *before* they arise, by regular maintenance, strict quality control and rig-orous, uncompromising inspection.

it means that we will as a company remain receptive to all serious suggestions about how we could do things better, faster, more economically, and safer, anywhere in the company. All good ideas are welcome.

it means that Even though we *believe* we’re doing a bang-up job with our customers, i want us to start taking their pulse more regularly, asking them how we’re doing, and then finding better ways of serving them.

it means that we’ll continue to engage in rigorous mar-ket research and product analysis, so we’ll never lose sight of what our competition is doing. our unimark bus-iness has until now been the bedrock of our business and the main driver of our profitability. in the years to come, we’re going to diversify and expand our business model, to exploit the emerging technologies of [list a few emerging technologies, products or processes].

and adopting a philosophy of continuous improvement means that we’ll of course continue to invest more in our *own* r&D, to make sure that we stay in the lead with respect to new products, new technologies, and new applications.

now, i think that, by and large, we’ve been doing a pretty good job at creating an environment and a mind-set of continuous improvement. but what i’d like to do today is to formalize management’s commitment to this philoso-phy, and to invite each and every one of you to make con-tinuous improvement part of *your* personal commitment to the company going forward.

THere’s an ancient japanese saying that goes: ***Ichi nan satte, mata ichi nan****—* One arrow can easily be broken, but a bundle of ten cannot. mici is a strong company because we are indeed a bundle of *human* arrows, each of us a talented professional in his or her own right, but all heading in the same direction, with the same goals and the same aspirations for success. with con-tinuous improvement as our mantra, let us now togeth-er create an even more glorious future for our com-pany than any we have known in the past, and let us — in the spirit of grandfather matsui — paint that future in a rainbow of color.

thank you.

and now i’d like to turn the microphone over to [full name of next speaker], who’ll have some remarks of his own to share with you before we move on with our 30th anniversary celebration.

[first name of next speaker] . . .

**# # #**