

Ron's comments for Saturday 29th Nov. 2014

Mannkal's Outgoing Student Briefing

www.mannkal.org

I have 3 minutes....

1. Someone sent me a LinkedIn message earlier this year saying, "I'd like you to tell me exactly what you had in mind when you set up Mannkal Foundation. Was it to get people interested in politics?"

My reply was, "It was exactly the opposite. It was to get people more interested in themselves and their own ability to solve problems without getting the government involved (which usually brings on more problems than solutions)."

So, I'm interested in **CHANGE** and we want you to be facilitators for change.

We don't just mean cosmetic change, like changing one set of politicians for another bunch.

This is not change as the same political and bureaucratic apparatus remains in place.

That sort of change reminds me of the Admiral of a ship some years ago who had just inspected the living quarters on one of the ships and he said to the Captain, "This is no good, it stinks below deck and I think it is time for your crew to do something about it. For instance they could start by changing their underwear."

So the Captain immediately went below, called the crew together and issued specific instructions to remedy this problem. He commanded that Jones change underpants with Simpson and Brown change underpants with Ledger and so on.

So that is simply change for change sake, but it's not what I'm talking about today. I'm talking about fundamental change. What sort of fundamental change?

- a) Speak up when you see governments spending your own hard earned money on dubious populist causes.

For instance Perth currently is at risk of ending up with more football ovals than we have football teams.

- b) The problem is not just political either it has infected the business community around the world too. For instance, every day we see executives of public companies giving away their shareholders' money on various benevolent causes and then those executives go out and pose as 'philanthropists' themselves. It's not even their money to give.

This is replicated in a larger sense by the investment banks where you saw them bringing in the financial crisis by creating those defective derivatives and selling them off all around the world. Their actions were criminal and those investment banks were subsequently fined billions of dollars.

But, who paid the fines?

The shareholders. The executives didn't pay the fines it was the shareholders! The executives kept their jobs and their bonuses.

Why no outcry?

Simple, because very few understood the scale of manipulation that was going on at the time.

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- 2. What got me interested in the power of these short term internship opportunities that you're embarking on?

Well, I was lucky enough to be selected when I was about your age, back in 1968, to attend a Duke of Edinburgh Commonwealth Study Conferenceⁱ.

Prince Philip, himself, trained us on how to get inside the minds of community leaders and people at all levels, simply by asking the right

questions. The first question is never the one that gives you the real answer.

That experience, combined with an understanding of the free-market's ability to solve complete problems, has made all the difference in my own personal life and business life over those subsequent decades and I hope that your own experiences, as you go out into your various locations, will give you the same lasting benefits for the rest of your own lives.

It's as simple as that.

ⁱ See attached "Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh (Ideas Have Consequences)

*Pages from "Honore Misadventures"
by R.W. Hannon*

Prince Philip, The Duke of Edinburgh (Ideas Have Consequences)

On pages 11 and 113, I mentioned the circumstances of how I first became involved with HRH The Duke of Edinburgh's Commonwealth Study Conferences in 1968.

The following was written in response to Prince Philip's request for material for inclusion in the presentation book to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Commonwealth Study Conferences in 2006.

In HRH Prince Philip's 50th anniversary Conference letter he stated that, "In 1956, when the first Commonwealth Study Conference was being organised, the plan was for a single event to bring together 300 potential leaders from all nations of the Commonwealth. There were no plans for future conferences." Now, 50 years later, after so many six yearly conferences in so many countries, more than 2,500 leaders from over 50 countries have benefited from the Duke of Edinburgh's Commonwealth Study Conferences.

Similarly, when I enthusiastically attended the 1968 Conference, eager to learn and put into practice new ideas, concepts and knowledge, I had no comprehension of the life-long relationships that were about to be formed or that, 36 years later, I would still be continuing my involvement on a Candidate Selection Panel and an Organizing Committee for the 2003 Conference.

Both the conference concept and the beneficial effect on so many are classic examples of the old saying that "ideas have consequences".

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The influence runs deep with me personally, as I've shamelessly replicated some aspects of the conference organization within my own Mannkal Economic Education Foundation (www.mannkal.org), where young people are interviewed and selected for events that will expose them (many, for the first time) to economic and political philosophic principles that promote the virtues of individual responsibility (which is difficult) as opposed to the (easier) alternative of "living off" the efforts of unsuspecting taxpayers, many of whom are less well-off than the recipients of handouts.

This leads these young people to studies into the (often unintended) long-term consequences of many of today's short-term legislative solutions and policy proposals.

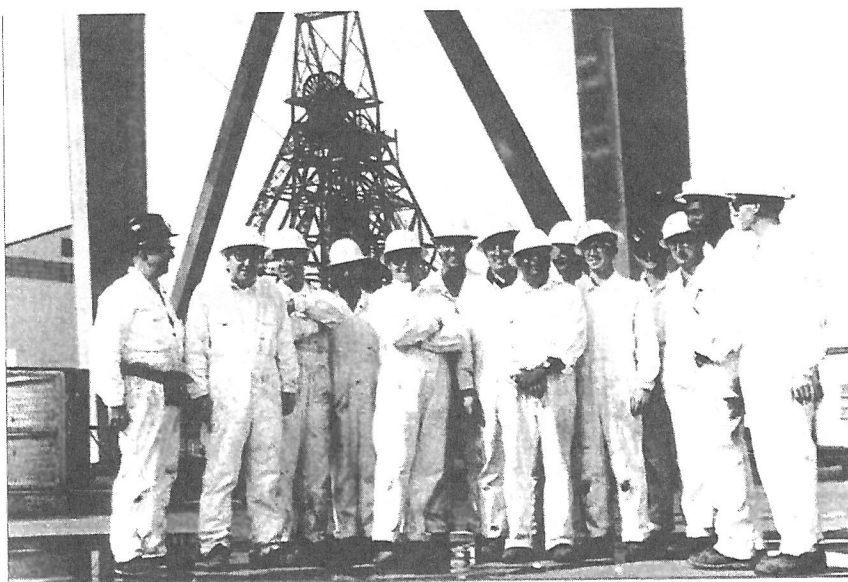
The rapid spread of hundreds of such free-market "think-tanks" throughout the world and their impact on policy formation—in particular the effect they are having in reactivating the previously moribund economies of the former Soviet bloc countries—is again living proof that "ideas have consequences", particularly when applied to the study of "liberty".

Liberty. It's a simple idea, but it's also the linchpin of a complex system of values and practices: justice, prosperity, responsibility, toleration, cooperation, and peace. Many people believe that liberty is the core political value of modern civilization itself, the one that gives substance and form to all the other values of social life.

The Mannkal Foundation's momentum is building to the point where it is taking me away from my life-long involvement in mining and management, and I look forward to writing a similar letter to that written by our Patron, HRH Prince Philip, in about 40 years' time, requesting that Mannkal Foundation participants might like to contribute to a 50 year commemorative book, just as we are doing now to mark the significant achievements of the Duke of Edinburgh's Commonwealth Study Conferences.



The 1968 "Z Group's" arrival at Mount Isa Airport (north Queensland, Australia). Keen and ready to solve the "human problems of industrial development" (the Conference theme). The delicate balance emerged then as it does today as to whether "people are for industry, or industry is for people".



The 1968 "Z Group" venturing underground to witness first hand the remarkable innovation and productivity of Australia's mining industry. Our group had a more important task; to question and analyse (again going "beneath the surface"), just how people in remote communities managed their family lives. In many cases their children attended schools some 2,500 kilometres from their homes. Lessons learned by our group, assisted greatly in understanding that first impressions are often reversed once the right questions are asked. Left to Right: Host; Bryan Askew [UK]; Cam Gallagher [NZ]; George Gaze [Aust.]; Rodney Gibson [Aust.]; Mal Binnie [Aust.]; Jim Fleming [UK]; Peter Gavi [India]; Ian Robinson [West Indies]; Bob Gallivan [Canada]; Host; Ron Manners [Aust.]; S. (Wanga) Waqanivavalagi [Fiji]; Les Morris [Aust.].



Some members of 1968 "Z Group" with hosts planning their strategies for the following day. Left to Right: S. (Wanga) Waqanivavalagi [Fiji]; Host; Rodney Gibson [Aust.]; Neil Cole (host); Peter Gavai [India]; Ron Manners [Aust.]

"The objective is for members to look, listen and learn in the hope that the process will help them to improve the quality of their decision-making when they reach the peaks of their occupations."

HRH The Duke of Edinburgh

In May 2006 (38 years later) a proud father enters Buckingham Palace with his daughter, Sarah Basden (nee Manners), who was representing Rio Tinto plc. The occasion was the 50th Anniversary Celebration of the Commonwealth Leadership Development Conferences—www.csc-alumni.org



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