

## **FAREWELL SPEECH DELIVERED TO STAFF AND SCIENTISTS OF IPCL, RESEARCH CENTER, BARODA**

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**January 8, 1988, Baroda**

Dear Friends,

I am sure all of you are wondering why we are assembled here today. The time has come for me to put all speculations to rest once and for all. After much thinking and extensive consultations with men of wider experience and wisdom for over a year, I have decided to leave IPCL for a while – to be precise – at least for three years. I propose to join National Chemical Laboratory, Pune as a Deputy Director and Head, Polymer Chemistry Division. While doing so, I am very happy to tell you that I am not severing my connections with IPCL, I will hold my lien with this company for a period of three years.

I can very well understand, both, the curiosity and mixed feelings caused by someone whose feet were steadily rooted in this Research Centre. It is only fair and necessary for me to clarify any doubts that may linger at my decision. As my colleagues and friends, I would like to be forthright with all of you.

My desire to seek a change was neither sudden nor abrupt. I came to IPCL as a young man of twenty six, in early 1973, armed only with a degree, some knowledge and no experience. Although the initial years were wrought with disenchantment, we soon got ourselves deep into the task of building an institution, a Research Centre at IPCL. It was also my privilege, along with many colleagues some of whom are still with us today, to provide a definition of what research we must do and how we should do it. In the process, we have today, one of the best industrial research laboratories in this county with an outstanding band of dedicated scientists and engineers well attuned to the culture and discipline of industrial research. Along the way new winds have blown; we have enlarged our activities, created new assets, taken risks and ventured into new directions; and I see IPCL as the only organization today in our field where scientific research stands the best chance of being converted into viable technology. Greater challenges lie ahead of us to ensure the realization of this vision.

Over this long period of association, I have personally matured as a scientist, a manager and a person. During the last six months, I have also enjoyed the privilege of leading this group. All this have been an unforgettable experience.

The question therefore is why I should leave at this juncture, when opportunities for both research and personal growth for me is unlimited. IPCL was my first job in India and after a decade it is still so. Firstly, I felt that a change of experience and environment would be desirable in further sharpening my creative urges. As someone said 'the window is not the

view, the window allows the view'. My exposure and experience has been in one environment and today I have an urge for another view. My future growth in IPCL would necessarily and progressively take me away from research to a manger of men and resources. I am not keen on making this transition at this point of my life. A laboratory like NCL today offers me the best opportunity to further grow as a scientist and gain greater stature and national visibility. The timing too is right – to build a second career – for the next 18 to 20 years.

Any change is wrought with uncertainties. Only the future can judge the soundness of my decision. But without risks, there are no opportunities.

As I said before, it is a heart wrenching decision because beyond my scientific endeavor, it is my personal relationship with every one of you that has made my fourteen years in IPCL very precious and memorable. It is our combined faith, harmony and letting me perform that has given me my stature and deep belief in the good and well being of this department. It is a part of my life which I shall always treasure, because I came here as a learner and leave, hopefully, as a leader, because you helped me to become one.

Our association is not one that will come to end upon my departure. I will continue to seek your help and cooperation in my new endeavors. I shall still feel responsible for the success of the many activities that we have just initiated at our Research Centre; because, consciously and subconsciously, I still belong here.

Thank you for your patient attention.