

Shaping the Great Millennium

by Don Toppin, Jan 15, 1994

The new millennium will soon be here. This third millennium has the potential of becoming truly great for at least one good reason: more people are concerned about the future than ever before.

If anything is important, this is it! The past is gone! The present is going! Only the future is coming! But this future has already been shaped by the thoughts and actions of both yesterday and today.

This is an age of convulsive change. Rethinking is urgently needed by almost everyone, everywhere. We are all involved in creating this future. Both decisions and indecisions will count!

Although there are myriads of problems, more people are seeking solutions. Many seemingly impossible problems have already been solved or are in the process of being solved. Most human problems are now solvable!

Questions are being asked for which there are a variety of answers. In fact, there are answers for questions that have not yet been asked. Great thoughts can lead to great actions. Little thoughts, like acorns, can also grow. It now seems clear that collectively we have reached a time when we can begin to conceptualize a great millennium of peace and well-being as a legacy to our grandchildren and generations to come.

As a step forward, my friend Peter Aykroyd has written a guide, which he calls "The Anniversary Compulsion," based on his experience as a senior organizer of Canada's Centennial Celebration in 1967. With foresight, Peter Aykroyd writes, "Hold your breath for the biggest celebration the Global Village has ever seen--an unprecedented worldwide celebratory outburst, the advent of the 21st century, the third millennium. Indeed may I add, "the creation of the great millennium"?"

We are now an invisible, informal world millennium network of autonomous people are organizations who are involved in what has been described as "the most far-reaching initiative in human history--a cultural campaign for hope and understanding."

This concept has been growing for many years and already has a life of its own which is transcendent. Several New Year's millennium balls have already been held. And Projects 2000 are many: Mankind 2000! Focus 2000! Health 2000! Environment 2000! Literacy 2000! Education 2000! Workforce 2000! Vision 2000! Global 2000! World 2000! Toward 2000! Beyond 2000! -- and of course Lever 2000 for the 2,000 body parts! And a mounting multitude of other Prelude Projects 2000!

A great surge of imaginative positive thinking is possible. For many people, hope will be restored. Hope with understanding is spreading throughout the global community. As challenges and opportunities are understood globally, action will be inspired locally -- and visa versa. Print, radio and television will speed the process and the details. Conferences will expand understanding. Dyads and triads will enhance the spirit. Little conferences between people can often make a major difference!

There have been conferences on the future since the first squirrels convened to consider the sharing and storage of nuts for the winter. Instinct becomes an ally and teaches lessons. Big events can magnify the energy and multiply the results.

For my first big event, my grandparents took me and my pet pigeon to the Celebrations of Canada's Diamond Jubilee on Parliament Hill in 1927 which featured the World Poultry Congress and the Prince of Wales. Much to my delight my pigeon won a small prize and flew the distance of 52 miles to her home-without a map or a compass. Thus, at a very age, I learned that

- Instincts can be powerful!
- Somethings are unexplainable!
- Miracles do happen sometimes!
- Intuition is a gift!
- Grandparents can inspire grandchildren... and visa versa.
- People, animals, birds and bees all have instincts to "come together."

Indeed instincts, as expressed in birthdays, holidays and anniversaries, are often quite compulsive. Combine these urges with the natural desires to discover and learn and you have a beginning for contests, concerts, campaigns, conferences and celebrations of many varieties.

The potential power of the year 2000 in generating a great millennium is beyond description. The magnitude of this power depends on how we harness it. As the present has been shaped by the thoughts and actions of the past, the future is being shaped by the thoughts and actions of the present. The big change is that, with information travelling at the speed of light, we shape perceptions very much faster than ever before.

The long history of war and poverty need not be repeated because the opportunity now exists to eliminate both within the lifetime of our grandchildren. In the words of Northrop Frye, "The effort to awaken from the nightmare of history is responsible for all the love and beauty in the world."

"As the symbolic Year 2000 draws near, it is timely for all of us to "join the spirit and marshall mind and hand" in a Great Millennium Campaign for a positive future of peace and wellbeing through understanding and harmony."

To spread this universal spirit in anticipation of 2000, I have written several songs for the Great Millennium, including "One in a Thousand Years."

*Once in a thousand years
There comes a celebration
And a time in every nation
To rejoice!
For the very first time
We face the world together
To determine how or
Whether life shall thrive!
So let us join the spirit
To marshall mind and hand*

*And let us build this spirit
To foster foresight grand!
Once in a thousand years
There comes a celebration
And a time for meditation
With love and joy!*

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DON TOPPIN is an internationally-known composer and social philosopher. He is one of the founders of Toronto/2000 and Chairman since 1980. He is also Honorary Canadian Life Member of the World Future Society. His books include "From Cradle to Grave" and "This Cybernetic Age."