

TOWARD THE GREAT MILLENNIUM
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The Third Millennium A.D. can become The Great Millennium: one thousand years of peace and well-being for all the inhabitants of the global village. Never before has a guiding image of this magnitude been viable. Now the vision is clear, realizable and urgent. The darkness has become so deep that we are beginning to see the stars.

The challenge is colossal. The dream is the first step to reality. Billions of people are waiting to respond to wise, farsighted leadership and a vision of hope and understanding. Hope, like fear, is contagious! The Great Millennium is an idea whose time has come.

We now live in one interdependent world with global communication, transportation, travel and trade. The next step is the globalization of understanding, which transcends tribalism while reducing breakdowns and acceleration breakthroughs. The dream becomes the energizer.

The human race has become connected by the machine. The medium has become the message. Myriad impulses originating in every corner of the world crisscross and interlink the human system ever more tightly. The entire world has become a single community!

Modern wars are neither affordable nor winnable. Nuclear weapons have no military value, if used, except in the hands of terrorists. Starvation and sickness, as products of short-sightedness and ignorance, are no longer necessary. Many things are now possible, including peace and well-being, as soon as enough human beings realize that the future of the human race is at stake.

It is now reasonable to prophesy that we are approaching the dawn of the greatest cultural epoch since the beginning of human life on earth provided that a fresh transcendent campaign for a positive future, already launched in the consciousness of billions, is as successful as it must be. The alternatives are too horrible to mention!

The options are clear. Time and again, supposedly inexorable forces have been reversed by human acts proceeding out of positive human decisions. Moreover, there seems to be a growing worldwide consensus in favor of peaceful progress toward a sane, sustainable global society.

Indeed, as violence and terrorism threaten, it is increasingly difficult, whether in the East or the West or the North or the South, to find anyone who is enthusiastic about continuing to live in the shadow of either socio-economic disaster or thermo-nuclear holocaust. More and more, it is realized that the money spent on the global arms race could eliminate all global socio-economic problems and, at the same time, accelerate the trend toward global cooperation in human matters. The opportunities are already contained in the problems so perceived.

This is an age of re-awakening, re-searching, re-thinking and re-inventing. It is also an age of convergences and trade-offs. In this fragile period of transition, small incremental changes in individual thought and action can tilt the balance toward appropriate social policies, locally and globally. The visions are clear for those who choose to see and consciousness is rapidly increasing at many levels.

The late great world visionary Buckminster Fuller speaks of "Six Billion Billionaires" meaning a world population by the Year 2000 with each inhabitant enjoying a minimal standard of civilized life with facilities and choices much greater than the real billionaires of only a few years ago. Shortly before his departure, Bucky explained:

For the first time in history, humanity has the capability to offer every individual a higher standard of living than any single individual has ever known. This can be accomplished through a design-science revolution. Design science is the effective application of the principles of science to the conscious design of our total environment.

Neither the great political and financial power structures of the world nor the population in general realizes that an invisible revolution - metallurgical, chemical, electronic - now makes it possible to do so much with so little (in terms of material, energy and time for a given task) that there are enough resources for everyone. Selfishness is unnecessary! Everyone can win!

With the finest aeronautical and engineering facilities of the world redirected from weaponry to livingry production, all humanity now has the option of becoming enduringly successful. All previous revolutions have attempted revengefully to pull the top down. If realized, this historically great revolution, the design-science revolution, will joyously elevate all humanity to unprecedented heights.

The Soviet futurist Igor Bestuzhev-Lada, past president of the International Association of Sociologists, believes "the world of tomorrow will be a world without arms, soldiers and wars. The billions that are dumped each year into the arms race will be more than enough for accomplishing the most daring projects. The transfer of the world economy to a peaceful state is perfectly feasible but, without halting the arms race, it is hard to count on the successful settlement of the many global problems including population, energy, minerals, resources, environment and food." As the mutual arms reduction programs become successful, the economic hardships of all hemispheres will begin to disappear.

As Chairman of the International Association for Arts in the Future, Takdir Alsijahbana, Rector of the National University of Indonesia, says: "There is no need for people to destroy each other." We are witnessing the greatest cultural explosion since 500 B.C. when transportation, communication and trade humbly began as man climbed upon the horse and rode toward the moon. The taming and utilization of the horse, a generally unrecognized milestone as important as the discovery of the wheel, portable type or electricity, seems to have contributed to a new world view as enunciated by Confucius, Buddha, Plato, Aristotle, Alexander and others and expressed in the Judeo-Christian and Moslem religions. According to this great oriental scholar, computers and satellites are now hastening another great leap forward in planetary consciousness which transcends all former boundaries. In the words of Peter Russell in his book *Global Brain*, we might well be headed toward a threshold point beyond which the momentum of rising consciousness will outweigh the inertia of the old ego-based model. If so, crossing this threshold would represent a major transition for humanity. When the "social atmosphere" rises sufficiently, enlightenment (understanding) will become the norm.

The book *Seven Tomorrows* by three SRI International futurists explodes the myth of a world conspiracy and shows clear alternatives that "can free people from the rigid lock of predeterminism." They

emphasize that no one is in control of history, certainly neither Washington nor Moscow, contrary to widely-believed myths. Instead, humanity stands at a unique point:: simultaneously, our problems are so acute and our communications network so widespread that, for the first time in world history, genuinely collective and democratic decisions are both demanded and possible.

The hour seems ripe for leaders of vision and goodwill from all cultures to join forces in addressing the critical concerns of our age. Indeed, the world is being tied together by modern communication, transportation, travel and trade. But as Orville Freeman, former President of Business International Corporation on Wall Street warns, "At this time of strain and major adjustment, the danger is that the world will fracture apart in an orgy of nationalist retaliation, protectionism, subsidization and a host of other devices that countries use to look after themselves and beggar their neighbors. A new group partnership of coordination and give-and-take is needed to replace the old hegemonic world structure. The necessary international institutions for survival an interdependent world can be built or rebuilt and the world can be spared nuclear war."

"The situation demands leaders who will shift the world's attention and resources from maintaining East/West hostility to restoring the natural systems that ultimately sustain all societies," concludes Lester Brown in *State of the World*. "Acting in their own interests, these two countries could set the stage for demilitarizing the world economy. Once it starts, demilitarization, like militarization, could feed on itself."

To those who are able to see and understand, the critical path to The Great Millennium becomes clearly visible. Increasing public awareness, as generated by scientists, physicians, educators, clergy, executives, scholars, artists, financiers and others (media specialists, etc.) and fostered by the communication explosion and the culture builders (us) will rapidly spread throughout the world until it becomes politically necessary to divert the annual trillion dollar weaponry loss to an annual trillion dollar "livingry" gain. Transnational institutions to facilitate the transition will come together.

The psychological origins of the macro-crises will become widely recognized and confronted. Social and economic pressures will lift. Simultaneously, a scientific environmental design for symbiotic cooperation will converge from the collective intelligence and creative will of a global population who, at long last, has regained hope.

It does not diminish the significance of the convergences to suggest less the arrival of an era of goodwill than the sentiment that drew The Butcher & The Beaver together in Lewis Carroll's "Hunting of the Snark":

The valley grew narrower and narrower still
And the evening grew darker and colder
'Till (merely from nervousness, not from goodwill)
They marched along shoulder to shoulder.

As the Butchers and the Beavers (East/West, labor/management, rightists/leftist, doves/hawks, etc.) learn that it is mutually advantageous to march shoulder to shoulder in the direction of a peaceful and sustainable global society, they will also learn to understand each other better - without nervousness - and with growing goodwill, trust and hope.

To help facilitate the transition, we have the underrated, underused United Nations and its far-reaching agencies plus hundreds of forward looking non-governmental groups and transnational organizations, who, even now, are trying to create a positive future by addressing a wide range of interrelated problems. Many of these organizations are capable of transformation to the new relevancies.

We can support these groups as well as making our personal contribution in our own unique ways. Indeed, each of us can share this *gift to posterity*.

Individually and collectively, because we are in harmony with a vast invisible network of other positive forces, we become co-creators of the miracle of The Great Millennium - a miracle which can be visualized and shaped - beginning right now!