

AFTERWORD

“The Risk of Democracy”: Teamnets as the Hope for the 21st Century

The flip chart marked “Concerns” had some interesting words in the middle: “risk of democracy.” We had just returned to the room after TransOceania’s Transportation Scheduling Project team met with its senior management. The team had proposed setting up an enterprisewide network to run a critical business process. To be more customer-driven meant involving the worldwide field offices. At the senior management meeting, Neville, the vice president in charge of the field offices, objected. He demanded that all field communication filter through his corporate staff. “We’re running the risk of democracy here,” he said. He didn’t want to risk people thinking for themselves.

Unfortunately for him, this vice president is out of step with the times.

*Successful companies are the ones that
run the risk of democracy.*

They create networks, small experiments in democracy. Teamnets—amalgams of teams working together in networks across boundaries—carry an underlying message. They emphasize both

the empowerment of the group and its members—as peers (which is why networks are so often simply contrasted with hierarchies).

Business leads the way in using networks as the cornerstone of a broad new organizational strategy. Grass-roots networks show the incredible power of how ideas galvanize energy at minimal cost. Personal networks enable us to be both local and global in our associations, to play many roles in many stories, sometimes leveraging awesome power. Just ask Bill Clinton.

Revolution by Design: The Clinton Teamnet

In the 1992 election victory of Bill Clinton over George Bush, the American people sent a clear signal for change. Among politicians, *known* to be astute networkers, Bill Clinton is an extraordinary one. His own vast network of contacts provided the organizational base for his presidential campaign. By tapping into both people and technology networks, he had unparalleled reach.

Fundamentally, Bill Clinton is now and has always been a net-worker. His story is one of dogged pursuit of a purpose and the disciplined use of networking to get there. We can personally attest to how long he has been honing his networking skills.

Like several hundred other Americans, we (Jeff and Jessica) met as students at Oxford University in 1968. Jeff was a Fulbright Scholar studying political philosophy; Jessica was an undergraduate studying on a one-year exchange. Shortly after Bill Clinton arrived as a Rhodes Scholar in the fall of 1968, Jeff met him at a Rhodes House function on Oxford's Parks Road. After talking a few minutes, Bill pulled out a black address book.

“What are you doing here at Oxford, Jeff?” Bill said.

“I'm at Pembroke on a Fulbright,” Jeff said. The Fulbright program had assigned Jeff to Pembroke College, where J. William Fulbright, the Arkansas senator, had studied, even housing him in

Fulbright's room. Ironically, Bill had interned for Fulbright the previous summer.

Bill wrote down the name of Jeff's Oxford college, then asked about his undergraduate school, and his major.

"Bill, why are you writing this down?" Jeff asked a bit skeptically.

"I'm going into politics and plan to run for governor of Arkansas and I'm keeping track of everyone I meet," Bill explained.¹

Bill Clinton's little black book must be very large now. Today, he can turn to aides, handing them people's business cards, letters, proposals, and even resumes as people give them to him. It is impossible to read an article about Clinton that doesn't reference his prodigious networking skills.

? "The human switchboard" is how one aide describes Clinton a few days after his 1992 election.²

? "Clinton comes to the job as the most thoroughly 'networked' politician of his era," David Broder, one of America's most respected political columnists, writes in the *Washington Post*:

"He has been part of every major movement in his party from the McGovern campaign on the left to the Democratic Leadership Council on the right."³

Clinton's personal networks, now a highly visible group known collectively as FOBs (Friends of Bill), demonstrate the power of overlapping and interweaving different aspects of one person's life:⁴

? His upbringing in his home state of *Arkansas*, population 2.6 million;

? His alma mater, *Georgetown University*, where he was class president in 1968;

? His two years as a *Rhodes Scholar* at *Oxford*, perhaps his most famous network;⁵

? His days at *Yale Law School*, where he met Hillary Rodham

(who was the first student to give a commencement address at her alma mater, *Wellesley College*), whom he would marry;

? His early days in *Democratic Party* politics, first working on Joe Duffy's Senate race in 1970, and then on George McGovern's presidential bid in 1972;

? His years as *governor* of Arkansas, beginning in 1979 (a post he holds for 13 years, with the exception of one loss after his first term), from which he builds a national base;

? His participation in the *Democratic Leadership Council* (DLC), positioned as a "third way" between traditional liberal and conservative politics; and

? His 1992 *presidential campaign*, which put him on the world stage.

Clearly, Clinton had been plaiting his political braid for a long time before he announced his candidacy, weaving together many differing constituencies. Like most campaigns, his depended heavily on networking, informally observing the Five Teamnet Principles.

? A very clear *purpose* focused the campaign. Clinton mentioned it in every stump speech. Someone wrote it on a white board in Little Rock headquarters as a reminder to campaign workers. "We all understood the message, the overarching theme: 'It's the economy, stupid.' Little Rock never wanted us to go off on a tangent," says Bob Randolph, a genuine local FOB who knew Clinton since they were both Rhodes Scholars at Oxford. After going to hear Clinton speak in Seattle, Washington, in early 1992, Randolph, a Seattle attorney, signed up to help, organizing Northwest Business Leaders for Clinton, and serving as deputy campaign director in Washington State.

? Some 3,000 independent volunteers (*members*) poured into Little Rock to help, with many thousands more shoring up the operation in each of the 50 states, then disbanded just as quickly when the campaign was over. "If you looked at the individual parts of the campaign, there were some weak links. Not every-

one in the world could drop everything for five months and move to Little Rock, so there were some people there who were just bodies. What it made me realize is that you don't need rocket scientists, but you do need teamwork and team players," Randolph says.

? Fax machines, cellular phones, and telephone conference calls kept the regional and state operations in constant touch with Little Rock headquarters, providing a very disciplined use of intense two-way communication *links* between Little Rock and the state coordinators every day.

? *Many leaders* populated the campaign, dealing with everything from political strategy to scheduling to fund raising to coordination. "At one point, the Little Rock hierarchy became atomized and factionalized. Running the campaign by committee was too slow. It required too many checks from too many people with too many titles. Finally, they put the political management in the hands of James Carville, the most astute political manager, and it worked," Randolph recalls.

? Multiple *levels* of the existing hierarchy were recruited to endorse and support the campaign—from five-star generals and corporate CEOs to the usual parade of national, state, and local politicians.

Clinton's campaign also combined hierarchical control with the creativity of networks. "It was a damn close-run campaign," Randolph says. "There was no true autonomy. In fact, it was almost like a military organization. We were operating within certain parameters. Loose cannons were not tolerated. But this was also different from a military organization because everyone was a volunteer, not a draftee. We recognized that if you are running a national campaign across 50 states with limited resources, it had to be centralized because there was a tremendous risk of failure."

It did not fail, with networking and hierarchy each playing its appropriate part.

Some Free Advice for the Consummate Networker

Will history remember Bill Clinton, the great facilitator, as the “network president”?

If he ultimately depends only on the power of his personal networks, the answer is no. If he extends his personal networking strength to encompass an organizational networking strategy, the answer is yes. The Clinton administration will fail to achieve its potential if it cannot activate the *teamnet factor* within a federal bureaucracy that interacts with business, labor, education, myriad other special interests, and ultimately all the people. Despite the bad press usually reserved for the federal bureaucracy, countless effective networks function among career civil service workers. A highly effective network at the executive level will empower similar behavior within and among departments that can benefit only from working together. If boundary crossing, horizontal management works for business, it will work for government.

Clinton's biggest challenge is not the economy, foreign hot spots, or other domestic issues; rather, it is the ability to organize to do something about these things.

CLARIFY PURPOSE: “IT’S THE ECONOMY, STUPID”

“Economy” is the single word that stands for focus and *purpose* in the Clinton administration. By clarifying their purpose into a clear set of goals, Clinton and his core set of advisers set out a strategy. Then, they must revisit that purpose often. At the end of 1992,

Clinton sponsored and chaired a two-day preinauguration, 300-person teach-in on the economy, precisely the type of get-all-the-information-on-the-table session that is the first step in launching teamnets. The more cross-government, cross-industry, cross-public task forces working on problems, reorganizing the government, and proposing action, the more successful the Clinton administration will be.

In an enterprise as large as the federal government, with the vast array of, quite literally, suppliers and customers, the top government teams must set clear goals that others can articulate and make specific at every level—by those who need to put them to work. Planning needs to involve the whole enterprise—the refinement and use of the natural network resource of commitment to shared purpose. Planning is most effective when it hears and integrates the “voice of the customer” —a 255—million—person market—from the very beginning.

Participation is a big part of purpose.

*Invite everyone, some will show up, and
a few will stay to do the hard work. Everyone feels involved.*

Getting people involved in figuring out how best to do something is half the battle of getting something done. A well-articulated vision harnesses the power of teamnets, making participatory planning manageable. Research shows that what is most important to people is the feeling that they *can* participate, not that they actually *do* participate.

Don't be afraid to raise expectations. People can do great things by themselves when they have a clear view of the whole. A long-term plan with four-, eight-, and twelve-year targets will help. This future-look provides the context for making short-term trade-offs and decisions.

Plans that sit on the shelf are dead on arrival. Plans need to be living frameworks that people use directly as management tools, then continually revise to reflect the pace of change.

IDENTIFY MEMBERS: 5.5 HANDSHAKES TO EVERYBODY

Clinton's first task before he took office as president was to identify the 3,000 official members of the administration. Technically speaking, the people who occupy the political positions that the White House controls comprise its core network. The administration needs to involve every person who works in or for it, developing the plan around their part of the overall administration purposes.

But Bill Clinton must move beyond Washington, way beyond Washington. Never has a little black book meant so much. Now, he can take another lesson from academia to enhance its power further.

*The edges of a network amplify the
strongest message, not the center.*

"The strength of weak ties" is how Mark Granovetter, the social network analyst who discovered it, describes this strategy.⁶ To get the word out, you must get beyond your immediate circle of friends to the edges; the trick is to get to their friends, and then their friends. In a few hops like this, research shows you can reach anyone in the world in 5.5 handshakes.⁷ Thus, Clinton, the consummate networker, can amplify his message beyond his current political constituency to reach everyone.

CREATE LINKS: NETWORK SUPERHIGHWAY FOR TEAMNETS

This is where Vice President Al Gore and the John Sculleys of the world come in. Never has such powerful technology been available to link any administration and the value chain it dominates. And never has U.S. industry been more ready to provide it—except in time of war. Among the earliest members of Congress to understand electronic networking, Al Gore, one of the first candidates to carry around a laptop computer,⁸ has proposed a high-bandwidth fiber optic “national telecommunications superhighway.” The high-tech companies are ready with the world’s most sophisticated networking technology, providing the infrastructure that enables people to work together at a distance.

Technical links by themselves are useless. This is an infrastructure that supports human relationships of every description, economic and social. People don’t just need access to the key players in the Clinton administration; they need access all up and down the line and with one another. Imagine that in creating the electronic web we make possible the “Network Nation” that greatly facilitates teamnets at all levels, public and private.⁹

Democracies are about self-rule, about involving people in the decisions that affect them, and free markets of fully informed producers and consumers. Participation is vastly more possible today than it was 200 years ago, both technologically and organizationally. Participation is not just a good idea morally; it is a good idea that contributes to the bottom line and to the quality of life.

MULTIPLY LEADERS: WE DON'T HAVE A LEADER TO WASTE

While the presidency may seem the ultimate expression of political hierarchy, Clinton promotes multiple leadership through his team relationship with his wife, Hillary Rodham Clinton, and his newer partnership with Vice President Al Gore.

Multiplying leaders simply means recognizing that everyone has a contribution to make, and that no one can solve the world's problems alone.

Successful organizations of the 21st century have more than one leader.

By recognizing all the leaders that are “out there,” the country becomes stronger. Each cabinet department, agency, and interest group benefits from regarding itself as a teamnet with many leaders.

Make the 1990s “The Decade of Leaders.” It was his trip to the White House—as a teenage leader—that inspired Bill Clinton to become president. Every age group, young to old, every interest group, every skin color, religion, income bracket, trade and profession, has many, many leaders. Recognize, honor, and involve them. “We don't have a leader to waste.” We didn't write this line into Clinton's inauguration speech, but we certainly would have recommended it.

INTEGRATE LEVELS: CHIEF HIERARCH TO CHIEF NETWORKER

The new administration becomes the new hierarchy. It can encourage—or resist—bridges and pathways to business and the rest of the society it serves. Perhaps the most difficult task for any

networking effort is to stay connected at all the levels. The purpose of integrating levels is to keep everyone in the loop, minimizing surprises, and involving as many people as possible in an ever-renewing effort.

Unless Bill Clinton can inspire a new type of government management—one that works quickly, transcends partisan differences, and yields bottom line results for the country as a whole, there will be no domestic peace in the United States. The government needs to team with many partners. The more people the government teams with, the closer it will be to its “customer,” the people.

This gets back to shared purpose and participatory planning. The Clinton administration can come up with a statement of work that scales from the Office of the President to the ban officer at the Small Business Administration and back up again. Work process design translates the Clinton “purpose” into goals that become the targets for the next level down. These sub-purposes translate into tasks that specific people can accomplish by designated dates.

Networking, as a macro-economic development strategy and a way to transform bureaucracy to improve productivity greatly, is remarkably responsive to the power of the “bully pulpit.” While President Clinton can’t do much about interest rates, he can do a great deal by speech and deed to show the power of teamnets. The president can significantly lower the “it can’t work here” cultural barrier and the high costs incurred overcoming it by all newly forming networks.

The most successful organizational transitions are those where the chief hierarchy becomes the chief networker.

Teamnets at the Grass Roots

Like many other countries in the world, not only business but also the *people* of the United States are already working in the new style. Big government is the laggard.

In the last three decades, grass-roots networking has mushroomed in the United States. Countless networks involve millions of people across the country who belong to voluntary associations, from self-help groups to special interest groups. Our first book on boundary crossing teamnets, *Networking: The First Report and Directory*,¹⁰ is not about business at all. Rather it chronicles the rise of grass-roots networks in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s, including a directory of 1,500 key networks, many of which still thrive in the 1990s. Fundamentally, America's grass-roots networks are small groups at a local level. They form all manner of larger coalitions that in turn aggregate into multi-leadered movements.

Teamnets form on all sides of issues. Regardless of ideology, voluntary networks have common organizational features, and they use similar tools to connect their members. Richly networked groups can be highly effective, both inside and outside hierarchies. America's history as an individualistic democracy is nevertheless also full of numberless groupings and associations, a characteristic of such remarkable note that the famous commentator on early America, Alexis de Tocqueville, wrote in 1840:

The political associations that exist in the United States are only a single feature in the midst of the immense assemblage of associations in that country. Americans of all ages, all conditions, and all dispositions, constantly form associations. They have not only commercial and manufacturing companies, in which all take part, but associations of a thousand other kinds—religious, moral, serious, futile, extensive or restrictive, enormous or diminutive.

Since we began our research in 1979, we have corresponded with networkers in more than 70 countries and have observed network-

ing grow from a local grass-roots activity to a global mainstream activity. Networks have impact everywhere in the world, and many networks are global in their reach.

THE GODDESS OF DEMOCRACY

The closing days of the 1980s left the world reeling from unprecedented events. Eastern Europe shed a half century of Soviet Communist rule, literally tearing down the wall that separated East from West. Inexorable forces unleashed in that remarkable year moved on at blinding speed to nonviolently sweep Communism from power at its very roots, the now former Soviet Union. The Cold War collapsed.

It is hard to remember how sudden this all seemed at the time. “If **I had** sat here on January 1, 1989, and told you that a million people would occupy Tiananmen Square for a month, you would have said I was crazy,” NBC News broadcaster Tom Brokaw said at the end of 1989 on the air. “If I had told you that I would come back to the United States with pieces of the Berlin Wall in my suitcase, you would have had me committed.” That is exactly what happened, seemingly overnight.

Nowhere is this clearer than in the spring of that year in Beijing. There, Hu Yaobang, a Chinese reform leader much admired by China’s long-standing democracy movement, dies. At exactly the same moment, Mikhail Gorbachev, the symbol of Communist reform, lands in Beijing, making the first Soviet state visit since Nikita Khrushchev’s trip in 1959.

Instead of covering official events, reporters, who have traveled to China from all over the world to cover the Gorbachev visit, find a completely different story unfolding before their eyes.

In response to the death of Hu Yaobang, the Chinese university students and supporters of the country’s prodemocracy movement, at least a million strong, occupy Tiananmen Square. No one orders them to come there and the government doesn’t want them to stay. Spontaneously, the students arrive from everywhere, and before

they know it, they are international heroes, standing in front of television cameras linked to satellite dishes, being interviewed by the world's press.

"Did you have any inkling this was coming?" Dan Rather asks his colleague, the two standing in front of the Goddess of Democracy. The Goddess is the students' rendition of the Statue of Liberty, one output from this phenomenal experiment in self-organization. The students form three major groups: one negotiates with the government; another carries out the highly media-visible hunger strike; and a third manages logistics in the square itself (green plastic garbage bags are much in demand).

Communication explodes: wall posters, newsletters, radios, bullhorns, cassettes, photocopiers, video, fax, cellular telephone, computers. Universities, businesses, and even government offices in China allow their fax machines to send and receive. Foreign corporations, with operations in China, permit the use of their computers to send electronic mail messages. International telephone calls in and out of China increase dramatically.

It is perhaps the largest political demonstration in human history and certainly the most high-tech one. And the world is watching—live. Media feedback loops soar to a new level. "

- ? A Beijing University biology student, who heads the student delegation negotiating with the government, delivers a speech by bullhorn in Tiananmen Square.
- ? A Canadian television crew broadcasts the speech live, then interviews him.
- ? In Montreal, a television producer digitizes the video signal, and prints out a still photograph of the student.
- ? Chinese students studying there at McGill University then fax the photo back to their former classmates at Beijing University.
- ? The students in Beijing write a short story beneath the picture and photocopy it, enlarging it as they do. Then they hang it up as a wall poster.
- ? The wall poster, in turn, is broadcast on television again in an

eyewitness report about how students are communicating in Tiananmen Square.

Amplified bullhorn, broadcast TV, digitized photograph, phone and fax, photocopier to wall poster, and back on TV again. Just one of many full-circle feedback loops of interacting electronic technologies.

Suddenly, June 3—4. The Army opens fire on unarmed demonstrators and kills many. As the shooting continues, survivors run back and forth to telephones. Eyewitnesses phone out accounts all around the world. Reporters switch on their cellular telephones in Beijing and broadcast live and the world is watching.

When Business Is Like Politics

The China story underscores the potential power unleashed at the intersection of people and technology networks, culminating in an epic clash between raw hierarchy and a democracy movement. It also shows how the voluntary response by individuals directly plugs into participation in the great events of our time. The captains of industry all around the world share the same problems as the old leaders of China. The world is changing fantastically right before their eyes and they really don't know what to do about it. So some resort to primitive ways—brute force and rigid control hierarchies. It is only a temporary measure. The guard is changing and no one can stop it.

TECHNOLOGY AND ORGANIZATIONAL NETWORKS INTERACT

More global networks lead to an increasingly interdependent global economy, largely based on business-to-business and person-to-person relationships, rather than on state-to-state linkages. The

number of international companies and organizations has skyrocketed in the past two decades.

To play in the world economy requires open communications. So, China's leadership, desiring to be part of the global economy, opens up communications. China did this technologically, by installing a new national telephone system, and socially, by sending large numbers of students abroad. More than 100,000 were believed to have been in other countries in 1989.

Open communication in turn stimulates a desire for democracy, for a more-open political system. In China, communications and politics created an accumulating positive feedback loop. Events escalated to the dizzying hope expressed by the Goddess of Democracy, and then crashed in the horror of the massacre.

Tiananmen Square sends a message to hierarchies everywhere:
the risk of democracy.

Organizations and societies must change to effectively use new information technologies and to be part of the global economy. To be more competitive, closed societies will need to open up more. More open societies eventually lead to more democratic organization.

Does this apply to American business? Will accelerating use of electronic and digital technologies within a company lead to more decentralized and networked organizations? Will more peer-to-peer communications and distributed work drive corporate organization to less hierarchical and more democratic forms?

Imagine Deng Xiaoping, the leader of China, as the CEO of a multinational. Up from the ranks, this diminutive CEO has been a reform-minded leader, credited with saving the company years ago. Then, he installs an enterprisewide, globally distributed computer network that puts everyone in direct touch with everyone else. He pushes down decision making, encourages creativity, stimulates joint ventures, and cuts red tape.

When push comes to shove, this CEO also insists on traditional hierarchical control. He centralizes power in the hands of a small group of loyal executives. The contradictions fed by the new technologies lead the company into turmoil. Mass firings result. The

“old boys” win, but the company’s finances and morale are in shambles. It has severely compromised its ability to compete internationally.

It doesn’t have to be this way. Rather than fighting the driving forces, put them at your back. Make them work for you. Let them provide new energy for getting where you want to go.

Corning chairman James Houghton consciously restructured his company from a traditional corporate hierarchy to a “global network” over a six-year period. He did this because it is necessary to provide the “flexibility and strength” to meet growing international competition, he says.²

PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY

In the broad cultural context, global networks are both the stimulus for and the sociological response to electronic and digital technology. Networks are the singular organizational response to the driving forces of information, just as hierarchy developed in the Agricultural Era and bureaucracy matured in the Industrial Era.

There is a new politics that has not come from the barrel of a gun but from communication and shared visions. Networking is the basis for a new participatory democracy that extends the bureaucratic representation system to everybody. Information and the sources of control are no longer scarce resources. It is structurally and technologically possible to participate directly in the processes of self-governance on a local, national, and global level.

Networks link peers for a purpose. There is immense power in myriad people voluntarily interacting to effect a common cause. Teamnets emerge as people engage with others based on their values.

There is more opportunity for more people to be leaders. Networks need more leaders than hierarchies and bureaucracies. Leadership cannot depend upon force or policies for control. Networks link work to personal values, the most compelling source of motivation without

coercion. When teamnets work, people feel good about their contributions, feel valued by peers, and have an increased sense of self-worth.

The teamnet approach dynamically balances and creatively strengthens both individuality and cooperation. Rosemarie Greco, a nun-turned-CEO of a \$5.7 billion bank, sums this up as one of her essential learnings:

*There is unlimited power in the fusion of
organizational vision and individual fulfillment.¹³*

Networking is a natural way for people to work and function in the polity. Still, we need new skills and ways of thinking about groups to take advantage of the transforming forces of our time.

THE BIG BOOM

The way to play follow the leader today is to turn around and see who's behind you. In 1993, a new generation takes power, represented by a youthful president. The evidence is in that a new generation of change agents is indeed emerging.

The symbolic beginning of the baby boom generation is 1945. That year is fraught with meaning—the atom bomb drops on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the United Nations signs its initial charter in San Francisco, and ENIAC, the first electronic computer, is switched on in Philadelphia. The baby boom grows up in the aftereffects of these events: haunted by the specter of thermonuclear war; aware of an interdependent global society balanced on a fragile planet; and the first to grapple with computers and electronic communication.

To understand the unusual impact of this generation, you need only look at the numbers. Demographers often use the image of a python swallowing a pig to describe the post—World War II population bulge moving through the age brackets all around the world. Besides history, issues, and technology, the sheer numbers of this generation promote the formation of networks. So many people reach for so few traditional positions that they create an additional force to multiply positions in politics, business, and every other institution. The reason is simple:

*Hierarchies limit the number of power
seats.*

Demographers call the baby boomers an “unfavored” generation. In “favored” generations, such as the group just leaving power and the one that follows the baby boom, the number of contenders to the thrones is fewer. A relatively high proportion of a relatively small number of people fills the choice leadership positions. Conversely, in “unfavored” generations, like the baby boom, relatively few can reach the tiny top ranks of organizational pyramids. In a hierarchical world, the “boomers” are the most unfavored in history.

As the moment for taking power arrives for this generation, the “Plum Book” looks frightfully thin.⁴ Not only are the seats at the top limited, but the American workplace also is eliminating middle management. Between the twin forces of corporate downsizing and the simplistic flattening of organizational structures, the power spots are shrinking.

Without teamnets, this generation faces intragenerational warfare and the waste of extraordinary human resources. With teamnets, we can greatly expand leadership and encourage true empowerment.

GLOBALLY DISTRIBUTED GLOBAL WORK

Work-at-a-distance is not only about doing business better. It is also about how we collectively can address the really big issues of our time. People are, after all, naturally distributed around the planet. We cannot solve the world's problems by bringing everyone together face-to-face in one place.

The great promise of today's networks lies in their ability to accomplish work with physically distributed groups, work traditionally done by people in the same place.

By linking physically dispersed peers—whether people, groups, organizations, or countries—local interests can engage in global purposes. Local and global are complements in networks, both intrinsically important.

Distributed work offers flexible use of resources, access to limited resources, and load balancing. Human resources in particular benefit in a globally networked organization. Access to a global workforce will progress from a value-added convenience today to an absolute necessity tomorrow. By being able to draw on a broadly based resource pool, networks also have access to a richer and more diverse skill set than is available to a collocated group.

Speed in getting new work started and speed in dissolving teams upon completion of a purpose are differentiators in the marketplace. Organizations that tap people's skills while leaving them physically in place have great competitive advantage. This flexibility translates into more responsiveness and better solutions.

Both the organization and the individual benefit from distributed work. A networked workforce is a happier and less stressed one. By greatly reducing the pressures for relocation, the costs in dollars, family stability, and community support are enormously relieved. People are happier because distributed work requires personal commitment to a project, and thus some alignment of team goals with individual goals.

Only by learning how to do networked work can everyone

affected by a complex problem come together to solve it. Humanity can avoid the inevitable alternative of authoritarian control and perpetual crisis. By creating effective teamnets, we can solve our collective problems.

What we are looking for here are planetary benefits. The synergy of the whole. A networked planet would be truly extraordinary.

NETWORKS OF NATIONS

As generational transition transpires in Washington, we see the empires and superpowers of the Industrial Age completely losing their hegemony. In the early 1990s, the Soviet empire disaggregates internally and externally. Though feeling the effects of the global recession, Japan and other Asian countries are on the rise. The European Economic Community is coming of age. Leaders of the world are addressing concerns that they can resolve only on a global basis: the interlocked economy, global warming, ozone depletion, AIDS, nuclear proliferation.

If there is not to be one world government, or one or two dominant superpowers, what is the vision of how to live together on this one planet? What is a mode of world governance that will in fact work? Does a World Hierarchy served by a Global Bureaucracy seem right?

With the little-noticed death of the internationalist dream of a One World Government in the past few decades, there is a pregnant vacuum waiting to birth a new vision of global governance.

The emergence of *networks of nations* is upon us. This vision of the future sees multiple international networks where the members are sovereign nations. Each nation integrates into the global whole and yet remains an independent entity with its own integrity and substantial self-reliance.

Networks are a natural for nations, even very hierarchical ones. They protect sovereignty while increasing cooperation and benefits. Teamnets of nations are peer-based and relationship-rich ways to deal with our world's megaproblems. Myriad international relations

at all levels—grass-roots, academic, trade, professional, religious, cultural, and personal—thicken the links among the people of the world.

LEARNING ACROSS BOUNDARIES

Here are some of the ways governments can take a page from business and grass-roots networks:

- ? Learn from business how to apply discipline to networks, leverage smaller bureaucracies, and operate in leaner, flatter hierarchies.
- ? Learn from the grass roots how to deliver what people want for the lowest cost with the broadest access and highest participation.
- ? Learn from the pioneers on the electronic frontier how to leverage new network technologies to involve people at every level of decision making. Electronic town meetings only scratch the surface of what's interactively possible.
- ? Learn how to quickly develop and use a global telecommunications highway to enable faster, better networking in every sector.

Here are some of the ways teamnets will affect business in the 1990s and beyond:

- ? Jobs, jobs, jobs. By revitalizing small and medium-sized companies through flexible business networks, employment will increase. Rebuilding local communities and regions through large-scale economic network development—including focus on the smallest and poorest levels through micro-enterprise development—will bring unemployment down further.
- ? The trend to restructure organizations from hierarchy to networks will accelerate. Driven by the clear business benefits of speed, flexibility, and power, networks enable companies to compete successfully on the global stage.

- ? As the baby boom generation gains power, corporate governance will become more democratic. The pressure from sheer size to increase leadership will combine with learning gained from grass-roots networks.
- ? The major social issues of the 1960s—such as minority and female participation at all levels and greatly increased awareness of environmental factors—will permeate business in the 1990s. Business will pay more attention to the “double bottom line,” focusing on companies’ social as well as financial performance.
- ? The never-ending, ever-faster technology change driver will continually add to networking capability in the years ahead as far as can be seen. As always, networks driven by technology will leap out ahead and pull on organizations to reorganize into more flexible and smarter forms.

Global People Network

The world today needs a vision. We need to believe that with honest work our lives can improve, our children can prosper, and our environment can flourish.

- ? “*Small is beautiful*,” the economist E. F. Schumacher pointed out.
- ? “*Do more with less*,” the design scientist Buckminster Fuller advised.
- ? “*Think globally, act locally*,” the Pulitzer Prize winner Rend Dubos inspired.

To this short list, we add a phrase that is the essence of our networking vision:

- ?? “*Global people network*.”

We live in global times—personally, environmentally, and economically. Teamnets enable people to reach across differences. Networking solves problems in a way that contributes to the metasolution of the global *problematique*: it enables people to work together better.

We are one planet and many networks—the organizations of the future in a world that works.