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1. It is an honour for me to be here at this prestigious Imperial College and I would like to thank the organisers for inviting me to share my thoughts on the major forces shaping the Information Age and some of the opportunities this would create for both Europe's leading information technology companies and Malaysia.
2. That we are having this dialogue is very appropriate as I believe Europe's traditional commitment to the pursuit of knowledge gives it an infrastructure that is critical for developing a highly competitive information sector in your economies.
3. Today, we come together on the eve of what I would like to call the "Century of the World", a century, possibly unprecedented, of worldwide peace and shared prosperity. This is because the forces that drive the Information Age will result in the breaking down of physical, social and economic barriers which can stimulate growth through "mutual enrichment", i.e if we chose so to do.
4. The world has truly entered a new era. In a borderless world the production of goods and services can truly be global. If we chose to cooperate rather than confront and exploit, worldwide economic development and prosperity is possible. Creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship are the scarce resources in a knowledge economy, and these cannot be confined by borders. These require the free movement of peoples and ideas which will enable companies, countries, and people to benefit from mutual enrichment. Every country and all the world's people should have access to all the competitive advantages of every kind everywhere.
5. Mutual enrichment is possible through the shared creation of value by means of webs of alliances between companies. The best companies will no longer be able to perform all their economic activities within their corporate borders. Like spiders, they would weave ever more intricate webs of relationships with other companies so that each performs the activity they do best. These

companies will collaborate across borders unaffected by distances and generate increasing returns as more and more partners and customers join their web. This is possibly the new model of development for the Information Age and it is likely that unless we are flexible and responsive to changes in technology, industry structure, or consumer preferences, we will be by-passed.

6. In an increasingly interdependent world, these webs will be so widespread and so busy trading and partnering that conflict will only hurt everyone equally. The fibres that link these global webs do not break or even bend at country or continental borders or cultural boundaries.

7. Four fundamental forces will be driving this globalisation: A massive communication network that can send information all over the world in real time; Capital that will truly be global and needing market discipline that transcends geographic or political boundaries; Companies that have aspirations for global market leadership and operations wherever it is economical and rational for them to produce, distribute, or market; and consumers whose taste for, and knowledge of, the world's best will determine what they will buy.

8. The prophets of doom believe there will be a clash of civilisations. But when business becomes thoroughly international as it will be in a borderless interdependent world, such a scenario is very unlikely. The civilisations would be so intermixed that the old-fashioned confrontations would be physically impossible. There may be tensions within societies and within nations as the 21st Century forces every country to become multi-ethnic and multi-religious. But such tensions can be contained. Malaysia has the kind of racial and religious mixture that will be common in all the world's countries of the 21st century, and Malaysia has shown that peoples of different ethnic and religious faiths can live and work together. They clash at their own risk and detriment.

9. The Century of the World will be an Age of Connectivity between peoples, places, information, and ideas. In this context, Asia has a special role to play in the creation of the World Century. For too long, nations have been in the grips of a 'beggar-thy-neighbor' mindset. Whether we like to admit it or not, most people and countries envy the success of their neighbours. If they can they would ensure their neighbours, far and near, will not make it. But in Asia today, at least in East Asia, we have jettisoned the "Beggar-thy-neighbour" mindset in favour of a "prosper-thy-neighbour" policy. This is not an altruistic policy. The simple fact is that when neighbours are prosperous we get less trouble from them. Better still they become good trading

partners for us. In the last decade or so trade between neighbours in East Asia has grown faster than trade between regions or in world trade. It is the "Prosperity-neighbour" attitude which has made ASEAN the fastest growing regional organisation in the world. It is also for this reason that we want to enlarge ASEAN by admitting the last three South East Asian countries.

10. You know you are experiencing problem with the few Asians and Africans living in your midst. But if the south remains poor the trickle of illegal immigrants might become a flood. Malaysia faces this problem. To counter the migration we are investing in labour intensive industries in neighbouring countries. If the world is going to be borderless it will be better for everyone to ensure neighbours become equally prosperous. Otherwise there will be massive migration which is bound to cause tensions in every country. Europe is especially attractive for the poor of the south and the east.

11. We have so far been dealing with the industrial Age and its problems. What will be the problems of the Information Age? We do not know for certain. We can postulate this and that but we have always been wrong when forecasting the future. None of us foresaw the invention of the microchip. But the microchip has already changed our life radically. And now with the advances in telecommunication we are going to undergo even more radical changes which can make natural borders and therefore nation states almost obsolete.

12. Europe of course has been taking down barriers between states for a fairly long time now. It was not because of the information age coming to Europe earlier. It was simply because you have been fighting such destructive wars against each other so frequently. You know that with the sophistication of modern weapons you cannot afford another European War. And so, beginning with an economic community you have now evolved into a European Union where borders between you no longer mean much. Still, even if you have some experience with a borderless world, you will need to know how it will function in the Information Age.

13. For this, Malaysia offers the Multimedia Super-Corridor as a huge test-bed for trying out not just the technology but also the way of life in the age of instant and unlimited information. With the liberalism and freedom of your society, how will it fare in an environment of total transparency? How will you manage for example the total and absolute corruption of your children through the internet and other nets as they make available ever more gruesome violence and explicit pornography?. How will you deal with the souls who are

going to be lost to the point of committing mass suicide, or the access to simple technologies for making cheap bombs and other weapons or even nuclear devices? Will there be anarchy or will the Governments discover themselves just in time before we go over the brink. I don't think the Multimedia Super Corridor will provide all the answers, but we can become a little bit wiser.

14. In January, I convened the first meeting of the International Advisory Panel of the Multimedia Super Corridor. This panel included industry leaders such as Jim Barksdale (Netscape), Larry Ellison (Oracle), Bill Gates (Microsoft), Nobuyuki Idei (Sony), Lou Gerstener (IBM), Bon Moo Koo (Lucky Goldstar), Jim Manzi, Scott McNealy (Sun), Kenichi Ohmae, Eckhard Pfeiffer (Compaq), Lewis Platt (Hewlett Packard), Hasso Plattner (SAP) and Masayoshi Son (Softbank). They were enthusiastic about our vision because they saw that we are serious about removing the obstacles that Industrial Age policies, laws, practices and attitudes had posed for them. They are of course enthusiastic about the total way we propose to go about doing this.

15. Firstly the Multimedia Super Corridor -- or The MSC, is physically a 15 km wide by 50 km long corridor that runs from the world's tallest buildings, the Kuala Lumpur City Centre, in itself an intelligent precinct, down to what will be the region's largest international airport when it opens in 1998. This piece of real estate is almost a greenfield site for the building of state-of-the-art cities and systems. Half way between the KLCC and the Kuala Lumpur International Airport will be two cities; one, the new administrative capital of Malaysia, and the other a cyber city where we will locate industries, R & D facilities, a Multimedia University and institutions, and operational quarters for multinational corporations to direct their worldwide manufacturing and trading activities using multimedia.

16. Both cities will have state-of-the-art communication facilities with fibre to all offices, business premises and houses. They will also be garden cities with large water bodies so as to make life pleasant and to stimulate creativity among the knowledge workers we expect to live there. The cities will be linked to Kuala Lumpur and the Kuala Lumpur International Airport by a brand new rail line and dedicated highways, while a system of light rail transport will move people within and between the two cities.

17. Putrajaya, the new Federal Government Administrative capital will itself become a test bed for an electronic Government. Equipped with the latest in telecommunication technologies, companies worldwide will

have a chance of providing, testing and experiencing electronic Government in a real Government environment. Needless to say supply of Government requirements in this area will favour companies located in the MSC.

18. The Malaysian Government has always been business-friendly. But we are going to be even more friendly to those who participate in our MSC. Knowledge workers will be able to get in and out of the MSC without hassle. They will be treated like special guests. Multiple entry visas will be given. Of course they must be genuine and companies operating in the MSC must vouch for them.

19. We will allow 100 percent ownership of companies, and unlimited employment of knowledge workers from abroad. We feel sure that where our people qualify, and many are qualified, you will employ them. But we are not going to insist.

20. We will not censor the Internet. But if you download and distribute illegal material you will be subjected to the usual laws of the country. We are hoping that one day there will be worldwide understanding as to what can and cannot go into the internet. But until then you will be free in the MSC.

21. Bureaucratic procedures will be reduced to the minimum. We will use one-stop agencies. Presently, the Multimedia Development Corporation (MDC) will act as a one-stop agency with authority to designate MSC qualified investments. You need only to contact MDC to clear any doubts that you may have or get any official sanctions.

22. Approvals for the few official requirements will be expedited. In Malaysia we move fast. The world's tallest building was built at the rate of one floor every four days. We also build buildings from above down. A good construction consortium will build Cyberjaya and they will undertake to build any building in double-quick time. The first building in Cyberjaya, the Multimedia University, will be up soon. But even before that, the University will already be operational. So if you decide to locate your headquarters or whatever building in the MSC, you can expect construction to be rapid, of a very high standard and at minimal cost. The first building in Putrajaya, the new administrative capital, is already going up and will be occupied next year. And of course many multimedia institutions are already operating in the MSC.

23. But the MSC of course is not a matter of buildings and highways. For the MSC to function we must have the necessary laws, cyberlaws. These laws are designed to facilitate the use of multimedia and include protection

of intellectual property, validation of digital signatures and computer transactions, prevention of computer crimes, laws on the convergence between telecoms, broadcasting, computers and other systems and a host of others not presently covered by existing laws. Some of these laws have already been passed by Parliament while others are being drafted. We don't think they are perfect. Amendments will have to be made as we learn more of the usage of multimedia and as new technology poses new problems.

24. We have also initiated work on seven flagship projects which will test the role of information and multimedia in a real-life human society. We are studying various proposals for one smart card to replace the many smart cards which are beginning to weigh us down literally. It is possible that a single card will contain all information about an individual including his identity, his licences and other official documentation, his electronic purse for daily transactions and his fares for all kind of transport. All information will be secured and exclusive. Through this smart card, we would be able to resolve some of the problems faced by a citizen relating to the society in which he lives.

25. We will also initiate the electronic Government, a multimedia university, media industry clusters, a web to enable companies to operate worldwide without having to do much physical travel, smart schools and the most effective system of distance learning and telemedicine. You can see that there are many areas which multimedia companies can participate in developing the best system for now and for the future. And of course what you develop and test in the MSC you can market throughout the world. There will be innumerable opportunities for business in the information-based industries.

26. But best of all you are going to participate in the shaping of an information age society. Like all things the good will always be accompanied by the bad. Being able to communicate with more people through the Internet will give you the opportunity to make new friends all over the world. But if you are going to be glued to your computer all your waking hours, you may lose the intimacy of personal relations and personal contacts. Your friends will be pictures and words on the screen and pictures and words are not the same as flesh and blood. We will become less than human if we never physically come in contact with our friends, or any enemies, for that matter.

27. People may develop new personalities and they may become quite unbalanced by the masses of information assimilated. We know of the Heaven's Gate people who

ended up committing suicide. Are they the only ones? Or are there many others with equally bizarre ideas?

28. A new field of study will be required if we are going to deal with the psychological changes which the information age can bring about. There will be opportunities to make use of the MSC to study these changes. Before we adopt the internet culture as standard culture for the world, wouldn't we like to know the possible contents of that culture, and how we can deal with them or influence them in a practical way? The Information Age should result in a greater world civilisation than any civilisation that we have known in the past. But much depends on our understanding of the new age.

29. Clearly the role the MSC can play is unlimited. True almost every country has a project which will test the technologies of the Information age and Multimedia. All of them are important and probably quite unique. They may result in us knowing more about the applications of Multimedia and instant unlimited information. But I would like to claim that the MSC is the most comprehensive Test Bed devised for the purpose of learning and testing the technologies and their application in the Information Age.

30. Malaysia is quite conscious that it is not the master of leading edge technologies in any field. Even in the industrial age we lag behind, having achieved perhaps the status of a newly industrialising country. Certainly we are not leading in the field of Multimedia. We are not even experts in the needs of multimedia and the Information Age to be able to foresee and prepare the necessary infrastructure.

31. But we are prepared to listen to advice and act on them. In Malaysia, we hold extensive budget dialogues with the private sector, with trade unions, with NGO's yearly before we prepare our budget. The Minister of Trade and Industry holds similar dialogues with the private sector to get direct feedbacks and suggestions on what the Government should do in order to grow the economy, in order to cater to the needs of the private sector. And we keep our ears close to the ground for political feedbacks because we believe political stability is essential for a country's development.

32. And so for the MSC we have set up a powerful International Advisory Panel on which sit practically all the big names in information technology from America, Europe and Asia. We are serious about listening to them on how we should configure the MSC. And we know they are serious too, for many of them have already started

operating out of Malaysia, have booked sites for their facilities in the MSC. Some 1000 serious enquiries have been received, and 30 of the major players are among those who have committed themselves to the MSC.

33. These companies are already involved in the structuring of the MSC. Companies such as Microsoft, Sun Microsystems, Netscape, EDS and IBM have dedicated more than 50 full-time experts to work with the Telecom Ministry employees and its consultants, McKinsey & Co, to draft a new type of RFP or Request for Proposals to maximise the scope for the bidding consortia to pioneer new standards and solutions. The MSC may still fail of course but the chances are quite remote. Those who do not come on board now may find the going tough later. And remember, we are not developing the MSC just for ourselves. It is our contribution to the World Century of the Information Age. What you do and what you discover in the MSC will have worldwide impact and application for you and for the world at large. We are not being altruistic. There is a lot in this project for us but there is also a lot in it for everyone. It is truly an exciting experiment and you must admit that it has stirred up worldwide interest within the industry and outside.

34. Just in case you are still not convinced we are serious and we are business-friendly, I would like to give further proof of our commitment.

35. Malaysia is offering a ten point Multimedia Bill of Guarantees. The Government of Malaysia formally commits the following to all companies receiving MSC Status from the Multimedia Development Corporation within the physical boundaries of the MSC:

- Malaysia will provide a world-class physical information infrastructure;
- Malaysia will allow unrestricted movement of knowledge workers in and out of the country with no employment restrictions;
- Malaysia will ensure freedom of ownership of companies;
- Malaysia will allow freedom of sourcing capital globally for MSC infrastructure and freedom of borrowing funds;
- Malaysia will provide competitive financial incentives including no income tax or an Investment tax allowance for up to ten years, and no duties on the import of multimedia equipment;

- The MSC will become a regional leader in intellectual property protection and cyberlaws;
- Malaysia will ensure no censorship of the Internet;
- The MSC will have globally competitive telecoms tariffs;
- Malaysia will tender key MSC infrastructure contracts to leading companies willing to use the MSC as their regional hub; and
- Malaysia will provide a high powered implementation agency to act as an effective 'one-stop shop' to ensure the MSC meets company needs.

36. As you may know this is the third stop in my odyssey to drum up interest and support for the Multimedia Super Corridor. I feel quite sure that European Companies active in the field of Information Technologies will respond well to the project. We need your advice and your help. We need of course your investments, which will benefit us and will benefit you as well.

37. Europe is now a union of many linguistically and also culturally different countries. But the unification of systems in Europe has not been easy. And it is also difficult to change Europe's laws, industrial practices and policies to cater for the Information Age. In the MSC we are offering European multimedia companies an environment that is not hamstrung by policies and practices that cannot be easily changed to accommodate a whole new set of businesses, business practices and technologies. I am sure that European Companies are as ready to take up the opportunities and the challenges which have been taken up by leading edge-companies of America and Japan. I would like to invite you to join us in the creation of the Century of the World through Infotech provided by Malaysia's Multimedia Super Corridor.

1. There has been much talk of late about globalisation, a process or a state of affairs that holds much promise for the future of planet earth and not a little trepidation among the peoples of many countries for whom even nationhood has not delivered the things that they had expected. They are yet hardly nations, and now they are asked to forget their nationhood, some only recently gained, and go for globalisation, something that they cannot yet comprehend but which they know would be too big for them to handle.

2. The developing nations of the world far outnumber the developed. Most of them were until recently colonised by the imperial powers, all of whom were developed and all from the wealthy West. They, the colonised, had not forgotten those colonial days not so very long ago. They cannot forget that for centuries they had had colonial masters. Some were fair and proper, but most were overbearing and oppressive. But without exception they made it clear that they were the masters and the inhabitants of the colonial territories were subject people.

3. Admittedly most of these colonial territories did not exist as states prior to their colonisation. They were just vast tracts of land, without defined territories and boundaries and thus sovereignty and Government. The inhabitants largely had no concept of nation states; rather they were divided into tribes, which moved freely over whole continents sometimes, sharing the territory with numerous other tribes. Their loyalties were tribal and not territorial.

4. It was the colonial powers who delineated the colonial territories and created well-defined states, disregarding completely tribal claims. The boundaries were straight lines drawn on maps without any regard for local lores or rights. And so the independent states which emerged from these delineations were peopled by mixtures of tribes and races with no common culture, history or origins. Thus two independent states next to each other may have the same cocktail of races and yet be totally unrelated legally or politically. That these tribes and races never really accepted the dividing lines and boundaries was considered irrelevant. It suited the tidy minds of the imperialists to divide and separate them and to regard them as different entities and administrative units, and so they must accept the boundaries as fait accompli.

5. When decolonisation took place after World War II the independent nations which emerged were totally artificial. The inhabitants of different races and tribes had got along with each other during the colonial period, but this was not by choice. The colonial masters imposed from above a semblance of unity. Traditional tribal enemies had to live with each other at peace or face the wrath of the authoritarian colonial Government adept at playing them against each other or using one race to impose the rule of the colonial masters on the other and on the rest.

6. The artificial peace and harmony of the colonial territories were taken as real. Superficially together against the colonial masters, the different races seemed

united enough to be the citizens of the newly independent nations. But deep under the old animosities and enmities burnt.

7. Still these territories were aware of the artificiality of their boundaries and the entities they formed. The sophisticated among them, the educated leaders, appreciated the need to prevent a break-up of their new nation along tribal or racial lines. And so they determined very early on that the territories, ruled as a single entity by the colonials, should not be allowed to break-up to form separate states, whether the different races wish to or not. The regional organisations that these new countries formed affirmed and endorsed this 'no secession' principle.

8. Not all of these regional organisations subscribed to this 'no secession' principle. Some of these colonial entities did break up into separate states, while others broke up after independence. Only a few managed to stay whole despite the tribal and racial loyalties which tended to break them up.

9. But whether the ethnic, racial and tribal groups remained in the same entity or not, they had problems managing relations between them. The problem was compounded if the races were also unequally developed.

10. During the colonial period the only form of Government these peoples and territories knew were authoritarian colonial rule complete with detention without trial and banishment to remote parts of the world. Nevertheless these authoritarian colonial powers and their metropolitan Governments insisted that the newly independent countries adopt democratic forms of Government with which they had had no experience.

11. It is doubtful of course that the newly independent countries would be able to manage whatever the form of Government they were to adopt. A local version of the authoritarian form of Government with which they were familiar would probably result in abuses of power and tyrannies. But trying to rule their countries through democratically elected representatives was certainly not the easiest thing for them to do. Besides, the previous masters were not going to allow them to manage even if they seemed able to adopt the democratic system. They were consistently harassed and badgered for not being democratic enough. And if they have minorities then they would be constantly accused of oppressing these minorities irrespective of the problems created by them. Nothing that the independent Government did was right in the eyes of the former colonial masters. The fact that they, the former colonial powers, had never practised

democratic administration was regarded as purely historical and irrelevant. The new countries must be perfect democracies according to the definition of the former masters.

12. Faced with the multifarious problems of tribal and racial divisions, lack of experience in Government and understanding of democracy and its workings, it is a miracle that any of these newly independent former colonial territories survive at all, much less prosper. But clearly all have survived even though some have to be propped up. Some are able to avoid civil strife and break-ups, though almost none have been able to resolve their problems. Only a few manage to prosper despite their past colonial problems, but these are constantly harassed and badgered for not becoming what their previous colonial masters wanted them to be.

13. The fact is that almost none of these former colonial territories are any better politically and economically than they were before they became independent. In many aspects they were still very much colonised. Direct political occupation has ceased but colonisation in other forms remains. The struggle for independence is therefore far from over.

14. Even those non-European countries which had never been colonised are not free from political, economic and social diminution. They too are being told how to run their countries, how to behave socially, how to maintain an environment safe for the rest of the world.

15. Devastated by tribal and civil wars, their resources manipulated through a market system controlled in far away places, unskilled in Government and economic management, these developing countries look set to remain developing economies forever. Some indeed have regressed and are likely to continue regressing. Debts piled up, accumulating until whatever revenue they collect merely goes towards paying off their loans. Whole countries have been made debt-slaves of the rich nations, working for their masters with no prospect of ever securing their release.

16. But still these countries cherish their independence, limited though it may be. It seems to them that anything would be better than a return to being colonies of others no matter how much better off they would be. And now these countries are faced with globalisation, a single world in which they know they will have little say, their voices drowned, and their interest ignored in the pursuit of global interest and objectives as defined by others.

17. What does globalisation hold in store for the developing countries? As interpreted by the developed countries globalisation means the break down of boundaries as barriers to economic exploitation. Every country rich or poor, developed or developing would have access to every other country. The poor countries would have access to the markets of the rich, unrestricted. In return, or rather by right the rich will have access to the markets of the poor.

18. This sounds absolutely fair. The playing field will be level, not tilted to favour anyone. It will be a borderless world. It will be just one world. The whole of planet Earth will be as one nation, and everyone will be earthlings, not subjects of countries or nations. Thus will globalisation be achieved.

19. But if there is only one global entity, there cannot be nations. Certainly there cannot be independence of nations. The newly independent nations will disappear together with the old nations, including of course the former imperial or colonial powers. Everyone would be equal, citizens of the globe. But will they be truly equal?

20. After thirty years or more of 'independence' the former colonies of the West have found out the emptiness of the independence they had won. They have found that they are even more dependent than when they were colonies. They have found that their politics, their economy, their social and behavioral systems are all under the control, directly or indirectly of the old colonial masters and the great powers.

21. In the bipolar world of the Cold War period they had at least the option to switch allegiance even though allegiance often amounted to acceptance of hegemony. In a unipolar world they have lost even the choice to submit. They have to submit to the successful superpower and its cohorts whether they like it or not.

22. With that experience it is silly to think that globalisation will mean more independence for them, or mean more equitability for them. Globalisation can only mean one thing - loss of the nominal independence they have with nothing to compensate.

23. The GATT negotiations which held so much promise have resulted in the WTO, the World Trade Organisation. What is the difference between WTO and GATT? The only tangible difference is that whereas the bilateral and multilateral trade agreements under the GATT were not internationally binding unless the parties concerned agree to submit to arbitration, the decisions of the WTO

will be binding on all the members. Member countries will be punished by all the other members acting in unison. If for example the WTO decides to apply sanction then everyone would be bound to enforce the sanction.

24. Even now when the Western allies decided to apply sanction against Iraq, all other countries are forced to follow suit. If a decision is taken in the WTO there can be no exception.

25. Iraq, Iran, Libya are all labelled as rogue states. But will only those countries who are similarly guilty in the eyes of the West suffer such economic blockades? Will such blockades not be also applied for other 'crimes' e.g. human rights violations, infringement of workers rights, exploitation of child labour, environmental degradation, etc?

26. Already attempts are being made to link trade with these issues. It is clear that the developed countries wish to use the WTO to impose conditions on the developing countries which will result not in improving human rights or labour practices or greater care for the environment but in stunting their growth and consequently suffering for their people. Already the developed West have shown that they are not interested in these matters in themselves, but are interested in these only in those countries which pose a threat to the West. If these countries are absolutely poor and produce nothing that constitute a threat to the developed countries of the West, the plight of their people in terms of human rights or labour practices or the environment matter not at all. But if these countries are competing with the West in any way then their records are scrutinised and threats issued. The net effect is to prevent the development of these countries and their emergence as newly industrialising economies.

27. Globalisation would leave these countries totally exposed and unable to protect themselves. True globalisation may result in increasing foreign investments in these countries. But such investment will depend on the competitive advantages that these countries have. If investments like trade are linked to labour rights and wages etc. then corrective measures taken by the developing countries will remove their competitive advantage. Without these advantages why should foreign investors invest in these countries.

28. On the other hand if a fairly successful developing countries were to open their economies to all and sundry, the huge corporations in the developed countries will overwhelm the small companies in the developing

countries. The huge banks for example will push aside the little banks of the developing countries. The big banks can afford to lose in a small country when they are making profits in their own country or in other developed countries. The local banks cannot afford such losses and will either shut down or be forced to merge and lose their identity. The same thing can happen to telecommunications companies, power companies, construction companies etc.

29. The effect of economic globalisation would be the demise of the small companies based in the developing countries. Large international corporations originating in the developed countries will take over everything.

30. Perhaps international anti-trust laws would be initiated and big corporations broken up. But experience has shown that the 'Baby Bells' soon grow and each becomes as big or bigger than their parent company. The same happened to the companies of the Japanese Zaibatsu.

31. The manufacturing, trading and telecommunications companies together with the banks will grow and merge, controlled and run by the huge core companies of the developed world. The little players from the small countries would be absorbed and would disappear. Their shareholders, big players when they were in the small companies, will wield insignificant authority in the huge conglomerates. And so will their CEOs and other executives, reduced to mere names on the payroll.

32. Nations differ not only because of their geographical and political compositions but more significantly because of their character and culture. Character and culture develop through the value systems of the society - the exposure to these values and of course to the experience and surrounding socio-political environment which members of a given society are exposed to.

33. Globalisation will result in all societies being exposed to the global culture. This is going to become more universal because of the development of Information Technology (IT). The unfortunate thing is that the IT industry, and all that will be disseminated through it, will again be dominated by the big players - the huge corporations owned by the developed countries. Governments and the world may have the best of intentions in terms of disseminating news and information but the IT corporations may have other views.

34. Today violence and sex already dominate the screens. Attempts to reduce this unwholesome fare have met with little success. The appeal of thrill and sensuality are

too great and too effective for the profit-oriented companies to eschew these themes. With globalisation the effect of the 24-hour thousand channel TV would be to standardise world culture as promoted by the broadcasting giants of the world. They are not likely to be conservative and responsible. They are going to ensure that their companies outbid each other in terms of profits.

35. Today's youth already wear the same uniforms - the jeans. They keep their hair long and as untidy as possible. They only care for the pleasures of life. They have little regard for traditional values, for age and the family and institutions such as marriage and family. The problems of 'lepak' and 'bohsia', the careless disregard for virtuous life-style -- all these are related to the exposure to foreign cultures.

36. The good aspects of foreign culture do not get an airing. They are not interesting and entertaining. Besides, good foreign cultural values are fast disappearing, victims of the same assaults by the media.

37. The present economic problems in the Western countries are the result of the changes in their culture. From being a disciplined and hard-working people they have become totally uncaring and unrestrained, demanding always less and less work, more leisure and more and more pay. Naturally their costs go up and they become uncompetitive. Faced with competition from the East and the new industrialised countries, they lose out. Their economy regress and they are unable to recover because their new culture has set in and cannot be changed back to the old values which had brought about their success in the first place.

38. Unwilling to give up the 'good life' as they imagine their way of life to be, they want to reduce competition by others through converting their competitors to their culture, their way of life. This they claim will result in their so-called level playing field, in which they stand more than an even chance to regain their superiority. And so again globalisation will result in the small nations remaining unable to catch up with the developed world.

39. But globalisation will not be confined to the economic and cultural field alone. The breaking down of borders will result in the powerful truly dominating the weak. Although the military forces can be a global force belonging to no particular nation, the fact remains that the financing and the command and control will be with the most experienced and the most skilled. And the poor nations are unlikely to dominate the military forces

which will oversee the peaceful relations between countries and regions. We have already seen what happens to Bosnia, where the fate of the Bosnians has been sidelined by the political interests of the European Powers.

40. The law will be enforced by those countries which will be the most influential. Already we have seen how the President of a country had been arrested through a military operation by a powerful neighbour, taken back for trial and subsequently committed to prison in the neighbour's country. This involves the exercise of extraterritorial powers not provided for by any agreement. But there is nothing that anyone can do but accept the extraterritorial rights of the powerful.

41. If the globalised world is dominated by a few countries then anyone can be arrested and tried by them. Of course criminal leaders should be dealt with but what if the criminal leaders are from the powerful countries which control the global military force. Will the leaders be apprehended and brought to trial in a small country which has been the remote victim of the crimes of these leaders? It is most unlikely.

42. A globalised world is not going to be a very democratic world. A globalised world is going to belong to the powerful dominant countries. They will impose their will on the rest. And the rest will be no better off than when they were colonies of the rich.

43. History would have turned a full circle within just two generations. Fifty years ago the process of decolonisation began and in a space of about twenty years was virtually completed. But even before all the colonies of the West have been liberated, indeed before any had become truly and fully independent, recolonisation has begun. And it is recolonisation by the same people.

44. They will of course refer to this as their burden, a responsibility which they have imposed on themselves. They will tell the world, the global community that they have no wish to impose themselves on anyone. But in a world where there is so much poverty, turmoil, riots and instability and frequent massacres, those responsible must not shirk their duty. They are only doing it for the good of everyone.

45. 1984 has passed and gone. Big brother did not make his appearance. But that does not mean that Big Brother cannot appear after 1984. The technology for global scrutiny by Big Brother is available now. It remains for those in control to make use of this technology, and

1984 will become a reality.

46. This is what globalisation may be about. This is a gloomy prediction. It is pessimistic. It does not contain much hope for the weak and the poor. But unfortunately it is entirely possible. And it will be unless the weak and the poor appreciates now this possibility and fight tooth and nail against it. There are ways of fighting the powerful. It will be a kind of guerilla war. But it can succeed. And that war can only begin if there is understanding of what globalisation can mean.

47. Of course globalisation may bring about Utopia, a paradise on earth, a world of plenty in which everyone can have everything. But nothing that has happened so far seems to justify this utopian dream.

48. Just as the ending of the Cold War has brought death and destruction to many people, globalisation may do exactly the same and maybe more.

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