

The Inextricable Links and The Trojan Mice

Peace • Education • Religion • Technology

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“.....religious totalitarianism has to be fought in schools, mosques, churches, and synagogues and can be defeated only with the help of imams, rabbis, and priests.”

The Real War, Tom Friedman, November 27, 2002

It is long past time for a national – indeed international – discourse about a constructive dialogue with respect to American neo conservative, hegemony ambitions. The reason for the discourse is - really and truly - to have a serious global discussion about current American policies and practices which will, in large measure, decide the fate of the 21st Century.

Even while recognizing the large number of meetings and conferences related to the issue, it is impossible to overstate the need for one of a kind as envisioned here.

Having said that, the qualifier is this. The foundation of such discussion, its framework, and the kinds of persons who could best lead same must be reasonably defined prior to launch. Also, the settings and the platforms for the discourse itself must be carefully thought through. If not, the whole idea will be dead on arrival.

A starting place.... for a safer, saner world

The purpose of this paper is thus to provide a starting place designed to lead to agreement about leadership, framework and platforms. For the most part, the people who can most intelligently contribute to goal achievement are mentioned here. However, along the way, we shall find others of like stature. And, in time, a structured discourse can begin, one which I say must never lose sight of the ultimate goal -- that the discourse should morph into real world application of policies, programs and practices that make for a safer, saner world.

The base premise is that peace, religion, education and technology are all inextricably linked; that isolation of any one from any other is a serious preventative to either deep analysis or appropriate 'real world' follow up. Having said that, let me re-state what must be obvious: There is no use going forward until both the crucial elements have been identified and the means for affordable collaboration put into place. Doing otherwise would be like offering a cake recipe without mention of cooks, measuring instruments, or oven works.

Or the likely price tag. With this background, let us begin.

The Technology Arena

The Second Superpower and The Trojan Mice

As good a starting point as any is Harvard Fellow James Moore and his exceptional article, Beautiful Head.¹ In it Dr. Moore argues that there already exists a credible counterweight to the First Superpower². It is a power that is already battle tested; and one which becomes more muscular every single day. He calls it the Second Superpower.

In part, the piece reminds us of underdog revolutionaries who beat the odds -- like those who beat the British in America and those who beat the Americans in Vietnam. The article also helps to remind us that the outcome of those two wars was surprising only to those who failed to closely examine the profile of the underdog; or the tactics of asymmetric weaponry.

In some ways the Second Superpower is the opposite side of the Osama Bin Laden coin. On one side of that coin, as President Bush would say, are the evil-doers. On the other side is what I call the Trojan Mice. One wants to return the planet to 4th Century barbarism; the other wants to ensure the 21st Century is a whole lot better in the business of wealth creation than the 20th Century was in the business of wholesale destruction.

On all sides, at the top, there is brilliant understanding of how technology will help goal achievement. On all sides, at the top, there is admission that without effective use of affordable technology, "victory" is impossible.

It therefore seems fitting that we begin our discussion in the Technology Arena³. More precisely, let us begin with the technologists who have already demonstrated mastery of their craft. Without people like them, we cannot bake this cake. Nor can we hang the bell on the cat.

Both functions are inextricably linked. And absolutely required.

The Second Superpower Rears its Beautiful Head"
<http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/people/jmoore/secondsuperpower.html>

²NOTE: I do **not** mean any particular disrespect for the concept – or the reality – of a First Superpower. I **do** mean to encourage a discourse about its rights, privileges, boundaries and responsibilities. Contributions from all sides of the political arena will be encouraged.

³I suggest three "arenas" --Technology. Education. Spiritual. However, from time to time I may alternate the use of the words "spiritual" and "religion". Others more certain than I can decide the label.

Introductions to Trojan Mice in the technology arena

Let's meet some Trojan Mice⁴ from the technology arena. They are living breathing examples of just how powerful are the tools already hard at work. At minimum, these Mice will be the architects and engineers for the platforms necessary for intelligent, affordable discourse. At maximum, they will lend their large intellect and their very big shoulders to wagons that must be carefully navigated – and pushed – up and over some awfully rough territory.

First, I'd like you to meet Wes Boyd⁵ and Joan Blades⁶, man and wife, founders of MoveOn dot Org⁷.

This couple brought their brains, hearts and hefty commercial success in software technology to the world of on-line political action....and promptly built a membership group that now exceeds two million. Time spent reading posts at www.moveon.org is nicely illuminating. But time spent for purposes of platform observation for possible use in our own discourse is absolutely crucial.

Accomplishments

No, MoveOn did not win its battle to halt the invasion of Iraq. But it did trigger the avalanche which turned Congressional double talk about campaign reform into legislation now signed into law. How did MoveOn accomplish something denied to some of the most powerful people in Washington? Here's how.

First, they enlisted large numbers of web connected individuals who had in common the belief that a good democracy demands heavy citizen participation in government. What Wes and Joan do best is build trust relationships that make for a collective belief that well organized citizens can indeed make a difference...in fact a big difference. Unlike most of the American electorate, MoveOn members believe their voice really and truly counts.

It is a point important to remember for our own discourse.

How did they gain the trust? They gained it by arming subscribers with easy-to-use tools. At MoveOn, with one click you can send a letter to your local congressman; or the president. With another to the entire Senate. Click, click and you can find names of like minded souls within your zip code. Click click and you are taken to publications friendly to the cause. Click click and you have the email address of the editor to your local newspaper. Click click and you can put questions you want asked of senior policy makers during frequent webcast

⁴The term Trojan Mouse or Trojan Mice may sometimes refer to human beings; at other times it may refer to particular delivery mechanisms which enable effective, affordable, global discourse. They are inextricably linked.

⁵<http://users.voice-alert.com/gld7/7009.html>

⁶<http://users.voice-alert.com/gld7/7008.html>

⁷<http://www.moveon.org>

discussions. Click click and out come poll results which guide the organizers to ask the “right” questions of their real time heavyweight guests. Click click and you can make an on line contribution as small as one dollar.

The good news is that while MoveOn is exceptional, it is not alone. There are thousands of membership groups organized to do stuff which makes for a safer, saner world.

I say that one of the agenda items for our discourse is an outcome that would help membership groups be as effective in their undertakings as MoveOn is with theirs.

Blogging

An Introduction to another Trojan Mouse

Another Trojan Mouse that’s just beginning to roar is called blogging -- helped along by a technology guru named David Winer⁸. Early on, Dave recognized that blogging would be to interactive communications what the browser was to the Web. Or perhaps more correctly, what Marconi was to radio. It’s no accident that Dave’s software is called “Radio”; or that he’s on loan to Harvard. It’s also no accident that Dr. Moore’s ‘Beautiful Head’ might not have been widely noticed without the broadcast magic that comes with sophisticated blogging.

What’s interesting is that while there are millions of blogging web pages, for a very long time not many took much notice of them. The general perception is that blogging isn’t all that much different than those plain wrapper electronic bulletin boards in use before the advent of Netscape’s browser. Or, for that matter, even much different than very friendly, very modern bulletin boards like www.nicenet.org⁹.

Aren’t blogs just one more place for frustrated venting? Why do we need more words piled on more words piled on a world already on information overload? Who gives a darn about one more place to sign your John Henry? Besides, who ever heard of him? More likely --who cares?

The answer to all this is a wee bit elusive, partly because blogging involves a complex web architecture that only guys like Dave Winer truly understand. And partly because this writer has been slow to become a blogger.¹⁰ That’s the bad news.

⁸<http://www.scripting.com>

⁹In this discourse we expect to get wonderful help from forward thinking educators at the University of Hawaii.

¹⁰Brand new -- Please visit <http://www.bfranklin.edu/blog>

The good news is even techno-dummies like me have come to realize that blogging creates the capacity for both wide broadcast and selective intelligence gathering (also known as “harvesting”).

To clarify this somewhat, let’s take the subject of baseball, always fun for me.

Because it’s likely my blogging text about this lovely game will have words like pitcher, catcher, batting average, RBI and stolen base, those “key words” will, automatically, be “picked up” by other baseball bloggers. In return, their blogs, at least in headline form, will be, automatically, “picked up” by me. Blogging, as I understand it, is sort of like having Google work for you all the time. The difference is that instead of Google helping you find the (damn)Yankees web site, web blogging architecture brings you just-published articles as fresh as the sunrise. And sends yours out into cyberspace where who knows what can result.

The good news is your reading choices will increase. More good news is that the task of reading and writing usually leads to a richer learning experience. The bad news it’s addictive; and that can be very bad news indeed.

So, if you are a membership group and want to add more Lilliputians, or more awareness, blogging is a tool for you. If you are seeking a cure to cancer of the left thumb, blogging helps to find other left thumb experts. For non profits, blogging is an effective way to seek small donors. And for a discourse as the one one envisioned here, it’s megaphone, bait and net.

Except this. We aren’t looking for fish. What we are out to “catch” are large numbers of intelligent people who know something about the territory. We need them for wise navigation as well as for handling routine sailing chores.

What’s important is this. Blogging is not just another arrow in an ordinary communications quiver. It’s more like the Gatling gun, a new way to put our talks on steroids.

Therefore, we should reserve a front row seat for Dave Winer. Sitting right next to Dave will be a guy named Gary Murphy¹¹, another Trojan Mouse. They will bring a gang full of like minded souls (but we won’t let them talk too much geek!)

**In the news- publicity arena,
another Trojan Mouse.**

This Trojan Mouse is named Mat Drudge. All alone, Mat has turned his slingshot into a fire hose reaching millions with servers that cost less than a new fridge and software that costs less than four tickets to the opera. The odd thing is that “all” Mat does is electronically “harvest” content from around the globe. He then

¹¹Gary set up the Franklin blogging site and the one who has been helping me to attain kindergarten level knowledge of blogging. Please visit <http://www.teledyn.com>

organizes his findings into friendly links for readers (who trust him because he takes as much from the left as the right). From time to time, Mat adds spice with his own creations; at other times he just counts on finding gems that the big media guys have overlooked (or blinded themselves to?).

Mat Drudge is the poor man's answer to Rush Limbaugh, but without need of corporate sponsorship, FCC approval, expensive studio, or a pot-load of supporting staff. (Or even friends in high places.)

The point is that anyone acting alone with the ability to spend very small dollars creating an organism that reaches millions -- and because of that strikes fear into the hearts of conventional media - well, this a Mouse worth watching. And including in the discourse. Getting out the news is partly how we can turn talk into action.

Webcasting and News Casting **Trojan Mice: Downes, Easton, Saba and Wortley**

It would be tempting to defer introduction to these Mice for later commentary in the Education Arena. But each is such a fine example of the broadcast power of email newscasting and real time webcasting that I think they serve as a good, wrap up to this introduction to the Technology Arena.

I will be brief.

Fred Saba is a guru in distance learning.¹² Stephen Downes is a guru in futuristic technologies for purposes of increasing the pace of learning and decreasing it's costs.¹³ Daily, each one circulates an incredibly valuable, niche oriented, newsletter. David Wortley¹⁴ and Denise Easton¹⁵ hold regular webcasts where they feature gurus in the business of education, community development, wealth creation.

What do these Mice have in common? They are small guys with big brains operating on tiny budgets with big impact. The people they reach influence decisions that affect millions. They too will have front seats in the discourse.

¹²<http://www.distance-educator.com/saba>

¹³<http://www.downes.ca>

¹⁴<http://www.harborough.org.uk/August2000Conference.htm>

¹⁵<http://www.uliveandlearn.com/Uteam.cfm>

Concluding thoughts in the Technology Arena -- one voice vs. many

Where the First Super Power works to speak with one voice, the Second Superpower gives voice to millions. Where most of the world fears the First Superpower, the fact is neither time nor strategy is on the side of the monolithic. The Trojan Mice are the Lilliputians of the 21st century. And if you still doubt that, please keep in mind it was the Trojan Mice who pitted the (far fetched) idea that people would rather get their ready cash at the ATM than stand in line at the bank.

If the Trojan Mice can shake up the stogy world of banking, can they not influence the boundaries of the First Superpower?

It is time to talk about the Education Arena.

The Education Arena Distance Education and Empowered Classrooms

There is lots of talk, talk, talk these days about Middle East classrooms which teach the harshest forms of fundamental Islam. There is also lots of talk, talk, talk about millions of kids in Asia, Africa and Latin America who don't get much of any kind of adequate classroom. And there is plenty of talk, talk, talk in America about classrooms where learning takes a back seat to bureaucracy.

A good share of all of this talk, talk, talk, rightly, leads to common agreement that from these classrooms are likely to come seeds where tyranny, misery and hate take root. They are also the places where the cycles of poverty, illiteracy and brutal living conditions are hardest to break. To say it another way, these environments are dangerous to those who want the 21st century to be one of wealth creation, not wholesale destruction.

What is bothersome is there does not seem to be many people connecting the dots between education, defense spending and security. Neither is there much mention about the commercial and intellectual opportunities that distance education worldwide presents¹⁶.

Whether on the right or left, whether by the First Superpower or the Second, most "education talk", gets relegated to the "good rhetoric, who cares?" circular file. There it languishes in beautiful prose, very little real world action ever taken.

¹⁶There are now more than one million courses offered on line from fine universities in every corner of the planet. While higher education is the most visible arena for distance education, the phenomena is changing education delivery, worldwide, from kindergarten up.

Meantime three classrooms out of five do not have as their underpinnings pluralism, rule of law and human rights. What dangers arise out of classrooms of that kind? In light of those dangers, what defense spending policies make sense? What rationales will result from a discourse that asks these kinds of questions? What happens if it well promotes the findings?

Where do we start?

Sir John Daniel

Arguably, The Most Muscular of all the Trojan Mice

I say we start by recruiting the obvious leader of the distance education parade, Sir John Daniel. Arguably, Sir John's the most muscled of all the Trojan Mice, not just because of his extraordinary background, or what he has to say, (which is a lot) but also because he's the Assistant Director-General for Education at UNESCO. From that perch, he has a world class view. And one heck-of-a megaphone.

Before moving on to UNESCO, Sir John was Vice Chancellor at UK Open University¹⁷. In the words of the Queen herself, "this man changed the landscape of higher education in the United Kingdom". And for that she rewarded him with a knighthood.

One way to find out more about Sir John is to take about a week off and follow all the Google links. Heavy duty reading material, all of it first class.

Another, shorter, way is to listen to the audio¹⁸ of his keynote speech at Global Learn Day III¹⁹ held almost four years ago.

The third way is to allow me to give you this quick recap.

Sir John began his keynote by saying -- not quite tongue in cheek -- that Global Learn Day reminded him of the Holy Roman Empire. Not very "holy" {Translation: Not really global}. Not very "Roman". (Translation: Not much learning.). Not much of an "Empire". (Translation: Who are we kidding?)

After he got our attention by sticking us with a sharp stick, buttocks aimed, this mighty guru of distance learning, the chief of all chiefs, master of all things geek, owner of the mountain top, then talks about.....radio! Radio?

What's **radio** got to do with the price of eggs? Oh, not much says Sir John. Except this. There are 80,000 community radio stations operating worldwide and

¹⁷http://www.ulaval.ca/BI/Globalisation-Universities/pages/bio_cv/daniel.htm

¹⁸(audio file) <http://users.voice-alert.com:8080/ramgen/4047.ra>

¹⁹<http://www.bfranklin.edu/gld99/plgld3/index.html>

there are few people on the planet who don't have one. Then he talked about the opportunities of mixing the power of the Internet, digital technology with affordable delivery mechanisms to include radio, human touch and 365/7 practices. With such practices, communities could help themselves. Grass roots stuff of invaluable worth.

What this kind and gentle man was telling organizers of Global Learn Day is that when (and if) we did stuff in that direction, we could **then** claim legitimate use of the words "Global" "Learn" Day". (Thank you Sir John!²⁰)

Some other Trojan Mice in the field of education

There is a very long list of luminaries in this field. And I will get in trouble for either mentioning too many or too few. On both sides of that stick, please forgive; here's a few of those I expect to join the discourse.

First comes *Dr. Tak Utsumi*²¹, who stands at the mountain top right next to Sir John. Dr. Utsumi has been shoulder to shoulder with every one who has ever walked up this mountain. Or tried to. He is a man who commands enormous respect world wide His network is huge and truly global. He and his network will be very important contributors.

*Dr. Arun Mehta*²², in New Dehli. Arun shared the keynote stage with Sir John and, with the possible exception of *Bruce Girard*,²³ might just be the foremost person on the planet when it comes to the discussion of third world needs, distance education, radio and public policy. Together, these two know more about linking radio, job training, distance education and new wealth creation in developing countries than any other ten persons on earth.

*Caleb Schutz*²⁴, CEO of Marco Polo. His organization has trained over 100,000 American teachers in ways that significantly improve learning by using affordable new tools. We need him for lots of reasons, but one of them is to help recruit leaders from the 3,000,000 American teachers that he knows how to reach.

²⁰The last thing to say about Sir John? He reminds me of Jack Kennedy at a White House gala celebrating all living American Nobel winners. The President quipped: "Not since Jefferson dined alone has there been so much intellect gathered in this House." In my book, Sir John is to distance education what Jefferson is to democracy.

²¹<http://www.iaed.org/glosas>

²²<http://users.voice-alert.com/gld6/6066.html>

²³<http://www.academyweb.com/moreradio.htm>
<http://www.xs4all.nl/~jo/mixingmedia.htm>

²⁴<http://www.marcopolo-education.org/about/management.aspx>

Dr. James Moore, from Harvard, for a whole lot of reasons, all of which will be quickly evident once you link to his blogging site²⁵.

Eric Baber²⁶, in London, because nobody comes close to knowing more about English language training, the international arena and technology. English is, quite obviously, the lingua franca of the planet. The Movers and Shakers of the non-English world are now sitting inside ESL classrooms learning English; or are the ones who have trust relationships with such leadership. This is a complicated issue with very large potential. It should be an interesting part of the discourse.

Some personal favorites

Bonnie Bracey²⁷ because she knows every one that counts in the whole dot edu world. And is inexhaustible to boot. Bernard Percy because he's a big, big thinker and is brilliant at getting people together. Midi Cox because she's got an I.Q. of about 190 -- and nobody, anywhere, can organize things better than this amazing woman. Terry Redding²⁸ because his theory of First Moment of Lasting Excitement, and his ideas about self directed learning, if implemented widely, could double the pace of learning -- and cut the price in half. Colette Mazzucelli²⁹ because she's already knee deep (or neck deep?) in trans-Atlantic education processes about education and conflict resolution.

And of course Joyce Neu³⁰, the Director of the Joan Kroc Peace and Justice Institute. {Joyce is very nearly capable of running this whole thing all by herself!}

I would also include the British author, Niall Ferguson, of a fine new book *Empire: The Rise and Demise of the British World Order and the Lessons for Global Power* Empire³¹. Niall's now on loan to New York University and offers unique historical reference points. His presence will encourage other authors, especially through the mechanism of blogging. This is tasty cheese for Trojan Mice --- many of whom will want to hang the bell on the cat.

Who have I left out?

²⁵<http://users.voice-alert.com/gld7/7025.html>

²⁶<http://www.websolutions.uk.com/>

²⁷<http://www.edtechnot.com/notbracey.html>

²⁸<http://users.voice-alert.com/gld6/6032.html>

²⁹<http://users.voice-alert.com/gld5/5005.html>

³⁰<http://www.sandiego.edu/~jneu/>

³¹<http://www.booktv.org/history/index.asp?segid=3487&schedID=191>

Oh, two or three or four dozen all stars that have participated in Global Learn Day. Neil Hynd in Abu Dhabi, John Dada in Nigeria, Martha Davies in Peru, Karen Eini in Israel, Boris Sedunov in Russia, Earl Mardle in Australia, Keith Moala in Fiji, John Southworth in Hawaii, Michel Menou in France, Jose Brenes in Costa Rica, Frederico Baggio and Cristiana Assumpcao in Brazil, Joris Komen in Namibia, Adam Odwar in Uganda, Lukas Ritzal and Dr. Passi in Thailand, Rik Hall in Canada.

That list goes on and on and on.

All could contribute to the discourse. Each one would bring others. All would add life to it.

What would be the theme of this element of the discourse? Well, that is for others to decide. But I would propose this

**“The path to a safer, saner world runs
through the classroom, not the carrier.”**

In this arena, particularly, I would hope that some hard questions would be asked. One might be “Why can \$80 billion dollars for munitions be appropriated in a heartbeat -- but an appropriation of even a fraction of that amount for purposes of increasing access to Empowered Classrooms³² is unlikely to even get to committee?”

Another second question: “What studies exist to confirm that dollars spent for aircraft, subs, and carriers are more likely to bring peace than the same amount spent on education, training, Internet connectivity -- particularly if spent in the most volatile parts of the world?”

The Spiritual Arena

Completing the circle – leadership from the Cloth

Allow me to extend here Tom Friedman’s remarks mentioned at the very start of this piece.

“.....religious totalitarianism has to be fought in schools, mosques, churches, and synagogues and can be defeated only with the help of imams, rabbis, and priests. The generals we need to fight this war are people like Rabbi David Hartman³³ from the Shalom Hartman Institute in Jerusalem... Can Islam, Christianity, and Judaism know that God speaks Arabic on Friday, Hebrew on Saturday and Latin on Sunday?”

³²Those with the underpinnings of pluralism, rule of law and human rights

³³<http://www.hartmaninstitute.com/davidhartman/>

Rabbi Hartman's leadership, and those like him, will be invaluable to our discourse. But it may well be the problem is even more difficult than "just" religious tolerance.

The problem is governance as well.

Most of this is way beyond my ken therefore I shall try to follow the wisdom of the owl who sits silently listens very hard³⁴. Please accept that what I say next comes very softly; from the last pew in this Arena. The village chimney sweeper should not tell the Pope how to run the Mass.

With that caveat, here's the thought.

Treading softly, I say we are where we are in the Middle East -- and much of the trouble spots in the rest of the world -- because of the dangerous error of mixing church and state. Or the equally dangerous error of governments that try to remove religion entirely. This issue is easily the thorniest of our discourse. But, I say, it must be faced head on.

My contention is that Madison had it right when he maintained government and religion are **both** badly served when there is confusion about religious and political allegiance. The Founders had it exactly right by their fierce protection of religious freedom and their humble acknowledgment of the enormous importance of spiritual Guidance.

Sure. That sounds very American; but so far we have not seen democracy flourish under any other kind of model except one which has established some pretty bright lines between the role of religion and the role of governance. Neither have we seen alternative models to increase middle class living conditions without the institutions which make democracy possible (Turkey comes closest --- with a long history of secularism. Iraq, Jordan, Afghanistan and Palestine are just barely in the "democracy" incubators.

Facts are stubborn things

Now let us face some hard facts, those stubborn things John Adams warned us not to ignore.

The hard fact is our discussion must begin by accepting that about four billion people are seriously uncomfortable with what Mr. Madison has to say. The hard fact is we must be deeply, deeply respectful of cultural patterns practiced over centuries. The hard fact is that resolution of these issues are made even more difficult because of the collective shame of surrender and occupation by a superior military force. Plus all the bloodshed that preceded such occupations.

³⁴<http://www.bfranklin.edu/candlepower/owl.htm>

This applies in Afghanistan, Chechnya, Iraq, Kosovo, Bosnia, Palestine, Timor, Sierra Leone, and most certainly Zimbabwe.

The Clock of the Long Now

Here we might pause and review Stuart Brand's lessons found in his brilliant book *Clock of the Long Now*. What Stuart says is we could learn a lot from North American Indians who are trained to think inter-generationally. That's why their elders take youngsters to the mountain top. There, and in other such methods stretching back almost to when man first walked upright, the tribal elders cement the idea 'we are all part of the mountain'; that change comes slowly. And only when the whole community is comfortable with change will we allow it."

Quick fix in Iraq? Palestine? Rwanda? Bosnia? Kosovo? Timor? Chechnya? Are you kidding!

The bad news is this is not a five year "fix" or a ten year "fix". At best, it's a fifty year fix. More likely its a two hundred year "fix".

Take note of this as well. I say we can't start the "fix count" until the bulk of the our first crop -K, 1, 2 and 3 - all come out of classrooms where the under-pinnings are religious tolerance, pluralism, rule of law and human rights. At best, I suspect we will not see this first "crop" for another five years; and even then, only in a handful of places. This a painfully slow and expensive process. Make no mistake about that!

But, as John Kennedy said, even a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. It's a hard sell to the American public; but it should be part of the political rhetoric, especially in the run up to the 2004 elections.

The good news is that those who are called rabbi or reverend, imam or priest, cleric, bishop or monk have the rigor of intellectual training and the experience of difficult problem solution. There are lots of these kinds of people, most of them are Net connected. I expect that many will come to our discourse.

In the Spiritual Arena, who are the Trojan Mice?

With certainty, I know of only one. But that man's kinda like Sir John. I know for sure his Roladex is filled with those spiritually directed; ones who will join us in the discourse.

That man's name is Reverend Bob Edgar³⁵, General Secretary for the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA. He's also a former United States congressman, and, as he says, a second place finisher in a contest to become a

³⁵ <http://users.voice-alert.com/gld7/7028.html>

U.S. Senator. I particularly encourage you to read the text of the speech³⁶ he gave here in San Diego a few weeks ago. It was a powerful call to Moslems, Jews and Christians for discourse of a kind as proposed here. If Reverend Edgar will join the discourse, he will bring plenty of Trojan Mice.

Who else would fit comfortably in this arena?

Three exceptional persons come to mind: Eduard Shevardnadze, Vaclev Havel and Nelson Mandela. All have suffered greatly from the torture of totalitarian regimes; all have learned that in matters of peace, forgiveness works better than revenge. And yes, I am aware that age, health and enormous obligations may prevent a face-to-face presence by any one of those three.

But since the Second Superpower is comfortable meeting on the Net, there should not be much of a problem for participation from Tblisi or Prague or Johannesburg.

Or for that matter, anywhere else on the planet.

Final Observations

I would like to think that there is a role in this discourse for some of the programs we have blueprinted at our Institute.³⁷

Please forgive a little self promotion.

One of our programs is called Champions.³⁸ It recruits ambitious college graduates to work abroad, mostly teaching English but also in ways that improve access to Empowered Classrooms. This program is supplemented by a program we call Friend.³⁹ We believe those recruited as Champions enjoy a transcendent experience with the greatest benefits coming after they return home with new perspectives of what life is like outside of American turf⁴⁰.

At Franklin we also think there is a need for a prize for significant achievement in increasing access to education. Since that is, I say, the single most important

³⁶<http://www.nccusa.org/news/03news47.html>

³⁷<http://www.bfranklin.edu>

³⁸<http://www.bfranklin.edu/champions>

³⁹<http://www.bfranklin.edu/friend>

⁴⁰This is not unimportant to the discourse. Part of the matrix must come the conviction that if America is to have a responsible role in helping build civil societies overseas, it must develop something like that which filled the ranks of the British Civil Service one century ago. Don't take my word on that. Just talk to Niall Ferguson, author of Empire.

undertaking on the planet, this prize should, one day, become as respected as the Nobel and as widely applauded as those who win the Oscars. We call such prize The Socrates⁴¹. I am not ashamed to promote the concept everywhere.

Of course we also hold Global Learn Day, now in its seventh year. We think Global Learn Day is the other side of the Earth Day coin; and maybe more important. We begin in the South Pacific, where the planet begins the new day, then travel west with stops in all 24 time zones. We deliver presentations by everything but two tin cans tied to a string. You can attend from your desktop or from any of a dozen cities where physical celebrations take place. October 12, 2003 is Global Learn Day VII.

The question we ask is a simple one — Why shouldn't millions set aside one day each year for purpose of celebrating learning?

Finally, we think the idea of CandlePower⁴² and our CandleScholar⁴³ symbol has merit. But, that can wait. We will put CandlePower on the table next month.

We have to eat this elephant one bite at a time.

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⁴² <http://bfranklin.edu/candlepower>

⁴³ <http://www.bfranklin.edu/candlepower/owl.htm>