



(THE FIRST TWO CHAPTERS)

**THE BEST THAT MONEY CAN'T BUY
BEYOND POLITICS, POVERTY, & WAR**

By Jacque Fresco

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INTRODUCTION

FEW TECHNOLOGICAL ACHIEVEMENTS are as impressive as the ability to see our own planet from outer space. The beautiful sphere suspended against the black void of space makes plain the bond that the billions of us on Earth have in common.

This global consciousness inspires space travelers who then provide emotional and spiritual observations. Their views from outer space awaken them to a grand realization that all who share our planet make up a single community. They think this viewpoint will help unite the nations of the world in order to build a peaceful future for the present generation and the ones that follow.

Many poets, philosophers, and writers have criticized the artificial borders that separate people preoccupied with the notion of nationhood. Despite the visions and hopes of astronauts, poets, writers, and visionaries, the reality is that nations are continuously at war with one another, and poverty and hunger prevail in many places throughout the world, including the United States.

So far, no astronaut arriving on Earth with this new social consciousness has proposed to transcend the world's limitations with a world where no national boundaries exist. Each remains loyal to his/her particular nation-state, and doesn't venture beyond patriotism – “my country, right or wrong” – because doing so may risk their positions.

Most problems we face in the world today are of our own making. We must accept that the future depends upon us. Interventions by mythical or divine characters in white robes descending from the clouds, or by visitors from other worlds, are illusions that cannot solve the problems of our modern world. The future of the world is our responsibility and depends upon decisions we make today. We are our own salvation or damnation. The shape and solutions of the future depend totally on the collective effort of all people working together.

Science and technology race into the future revealing new horizons in all areas. New discoveries and inventions appear at a rate never seen before in history and the rate of change will continue to increase in the years to come.

Unfortunately, books and articles attempting to describe the future have one foot rooted in the past, and interpret the future through today's concepts and technology. Most people are comfortable and less threatened with this perspective on change. But they often react negatively to proposals suggesting changes in the way they live.

For this reason, when speaking of the future, very few explore or discuss changes in our social structure, much less our values. People are used to the structures and values of earlier times when stresses and levels of understanding were different. An author who wants to publish steers clear of such emotional and controversial issues. But we feel it is time to step out of that box. In this book we will freely explore a new future—one that is realistically attainable and not the gloom and doom so often presented today.

Few can envision a social structure that enables a “Utopian” life style as compared to today's standards, or that this lifestyle could be made available without the sweat of one's brow.

Yet thanks to our labor-saving machines and other technological advances, the lifestyle of a middle class person today far exceeds anything that even kings of the past could have experienced.

Since the beginning of the machine age, humankind has had a love/hate relationship with its mechanical devices. We may like what the machines do for us, but

We don't like what they do to us. They take away our means of making a living, and sometimes our sense of purpose which derives from thousands of years in which hand labor was the primary means of meeting human needs.

Many fear that machines are becoming more and more complex and sophisticated. As dependence on them grows, we give up much of our independence and come to resemble them as passionless unfeeling automation's whose sole purpose is work, work, work. Some fear that these mechanical children may develop minds and wills of their own and enslave humanity.

Many worry about conformity and that our values and behaviors will change so that we lose the very qualities which make us human. The purpose of this book is to explore visions and possibilities for the future that will nurture human growth and achievements, and make that the primary goal of society.

We will discuss the many options and roles individuals will play in this cybernated age in which our world is rebuilt by prodigious machines and governed by computers.

Most writers of the twentieth century who presented a vision of the future were blinded by national ego or self centeredness, and didn't grasp the significance and meaning of the methods of science as they might be applied to the social system.

Although it may appear that the focus of this book is the technology of the future, our major concern is the effect a totally cybernated world would have on humanity and on the individual. Of course no one can predict the future with precision. There are simply too many variables. New inventions, natural and man-made disasters, and new uncontrollable diseases could radically alter the course of civilization. While we cannot predict the future, we will most surely live it. Every action and decision we take – or don't – ripples into the future.

For the first time we have the capability, the technology, and the knowledge to direct those ripples.

When applied in a humane matter, the coming cybernated age could see the merging of technology and cybernetics into a workable synergy for all people. It could achieve a world free of hunger, war, and poverty. A world humanity has failed to achieve throughout history. But if civilization continues on its present course, we will simply repeat the same mistakes all over again.

If we apply what we already know to enhance life on Earth, we can protect the environment and the symbiotic processes of living systems. It is now mandatory that we intelligently rearrange human affairs so as to live within the limits of available resources.

The proposals of this book show limitless untapped potentials in the future application of new technologies where our health, intellect, and well-being are involved. These are potentials not only in a material sense but they also involve a deep concern for one another. Only in this way can science and technology support a meaningful and humane civilization.

Many of us who think seriously about the future of human civilization are familiar with stark scenarios of this new millennium – a world of growing chaos and disorder, soaring populations, and dwindling natural resources. Emaciated children cry out from decayed cities and areas urban sprawl, air and water pollution, and escalating crime take a toll on the quality of life even for those who consider themselves removed from these conditions. Even the very wealthy are at a tremendous disadvantage because they fail to grasp the damage from technology applied without social concern.

Given the advances in science and technology over the last two hundred years, one may well ask: “does it have to be this way?” There is no question that the application of science and technology can carry us with confidence and assurance into the future. What is needed is a change in our direction and purpose.

Our main problem is a lack of understanding of what it means to be human and that we are not separate from nature. Our values, beliefs, and behavior are as much a part of natural law as any other process. We are all an integral part of the chain of life.

In this book we present an alternative vision of a sustainable new world civilization unlike any social system that has gone before. Although this vision is highly compressed, it is based upon years of study and experimental research. We call for a straightforward redesign of our culture in which the age-old problems of war, poverty, hunger, debt, and unnecessary suffering are viewed not only as avoidable, but also as totally unacceptable. Anything less results in a continuation of the same catalog of problems inherent in the present system.

1. A DESIGN FOR THE FUTURE

THE FUTURE IS FLUID. Each act, each decision, and each development creates new possibilities and eliminates others. But the future is ours to direct. In the past, change came so slowly that generations saw minimal difference in the daily business of surviving. Social structures and cultural norms remained static for centuries.

In the last fifty to a hundred years, technology and social change accelerated to such an extent that governments and corporations now consider change management a core process.

Hundreds of books address technological change, business process management, human productivity, and environmental issues. Universities offer advanced degrees in public and environmental affairs. Almost all overlook the major element in these systems – human beings and their social structures and culture. Technology, policy, and automation count for nothing until human accept them and apply them to their daily lives. This book offers a blueprint to consciously fuse these elements into a sustainable future for all as well as for fundamental changes in the way we regard ourselves, one another, and our world.

This can be accomplished with technology and cybernetics being applied with human and environmental concern to secure, protect, and encourage a more humane world for all.

How can such a prodigious task be accomplished? First, we must survey and inventory all of our available planetary resources. Discussion about what is scarce and what is plentiful is just so much talk until we actually measure our resources. We must first baseline what there is around the world. This information must be compiled so we know the parameters for humanizing social and technological development.

This can be accomplished using computers to assist in defining the most humans and appropriate ways to manage environmental and human affairs. This is basically the function of government. With computers processing trillions of bits of information per second, existing technologies far exceed the human capacity for arriving at equitable and sustainable decisions concerning the development and distribution of physical resources. With this potential, we can eventually surpass the practice of political decisions being made on the basis of power and advantage.

Eventually, with artificial intelligence, money may become irrelevant, particularly in a high-energy civilization in which material abundance eliminates the mindset of scarcity.

We have arrived at a time when the methods of science and technology can provide abundance for all. It is no longer necessary to consciously withhold efficiency through planned obsolescence, or to utilize an old and outworn monetary system.

Although many of us consider ourselves forward-thinkers, we still cling tenaciously to the old values of the monetary system. We accept without sufficient consideration a system that breeds inefficiencies and actually encourages the creation of shortages.

For example, while many concerns about environmental destruction and the misuse of technology are justified, many environmentalists draw bleak scenarios about the future based on present-day methods and shortages. They view environmental destruction from the point of view that existing technologies are wasteful and used irresponsibly. They are accustomed to outmoded concepts and the economic imperatives of sales turnover and customer appeal. Although we recognize that technological development has been misdirected, the benefits far outweigh the negatives. Only the most diehard environmental activist would turn his back on the man elevating advances made in areas like medicine, communications, power generation, and food production.

If human civilization is to endure, it must outgrow our conspicuous waste of time, effort, and natural resources. One area in which we see this is architecture. Resource conservation must be incorporated into our structures.

While many urban centers grapple with retrofitting new, more efficient technologies into their existing infrastructures, these efforts fall far short of the potential of technology. Not only must we rebuild our thought patterns, but much of our physical infrastructure, including industrial plants, buildings, waterways, power systems, production and distribution process, and transportation systems must be reconstructed from the ground up. Only then can our technology overcome resource deficiencies and provide universal abundance.

If we are genuinely concerned about the environment and the fellow human beings, and want to end territorial disputes, war, crime, poverty, hunger, and the other problems that confront us today, the intelligent use of science and technology are the tools with which to achieve a new direction – one that will serve all people, and not just a select few.

The purpose of this technology is to free people from repetitive and boring jobs and allow them to experience the fullness of human relationships, denied to so many for so long. This will call for a basic adjustment in the way we think about what makes us human. Our times demand the declaration of the world's resources as the common heritage of all people.

In a hundred years, historians may look back on our present civilization as a transition period from the dark ages of ignorance, superstition, and social insufficiency just as we view the world of a few hundred years ago. If we arrive at a saner world in which the maximum human potential is cultivated in every person, our descendants will not understand why our world produced only one Louis Pasteur, one Edison, one Tesla, or one Salk, and why great achievements in our age were the products of a relative few.

In looking forward to this new millennium, and back at the dimmest memories of human civilization, we see that the thoughts, dreams, and visions of humanity are limited by a perception of scarcity. We are products of a culture of deficiency which expects each confrontation and most activities to end with a winner and a loser. Funding restricts even technological development, which has the best potential to liberate humanity from its past inefficiencies.

We can no longer afford the luxury of such primitive thinking. There are other ways of looking at our lives and the world. Either we learn to live together in full cooperation or we will cause our own extinction.

To fully understand and appreciate this coming age, we must understand the relationship between creation and creator: the machine and, as of this writing, that most marvelous of mechanisms – the human being.

2. CHANGING VALUES IN AN EMERGING CULTURE

ANY ATTEMPT TO DEPICT THE FUTURE DIRECTION of civilization must include a description of the probable evolution of our culture without embellishment, propaganda, or national interest. We must re-examine our traditional habits of thought if we wish to avoid the consequences that will occur if we do not prepare for the future. It is unfortunate that most of us envision this future within our present social framework, using values and traditions that come from the past. Superficial changes perpetuate the problems of today. The challenges we face now cannot be addressed with antiquated notions and values that are no longer relevant.

Imagine a new planet with the same carrying capacity as Earth, and that you are free to design a new direction for the society on this planet. You can choose any shape or form. The only limitation imposed upon you is that your social design must correspond to the carrying capacity of that planet. This new planet has more than adequate arable land, clean air and water, and an abundance of untapped resources.

This is your planet. You can rearrange the entire social order to correspond to whatever you consider the best of all possible worlds. Not only does this include environmental modification, but also human factors, interpersonal relationships, and the structuring of education.

This need not be complicated. It can be an uncluttered approach, not burdened by any past or traditional considerations, religious or otherwise. This is a prodigious project calling for many disciplines, determining the way inhabitants of your planet conduct their lives – keeping in mind for whom and for what ends this social order is being designed. Feel free to transcend present realities and reach for new and inventive ideas to shape your world of the future. An exciting exercise isn't it? What we propose is nothing more, nothing less, than applying that exercise to our planet.

To prepare for the future we must be willing to test new concepts. This means we must acquire enough information to evaluate these concepts, and not be like travelers in a foreign land who compare everything with their own hometown.

To understand people of another place we must set aside our usual expectations of behavior, and not judge by the values to which we are accustomed.

If you believe today's values and virtues are absolute and ultimate for all times and all civilizations, then you may find our projection of the future shocking and unacceptable. We must feel and think as freshly as possible about the limitless possibilities of life patterns humankind may explore for attaining even higher levels of intelligence and fulfillment in the future.

Although individuals like Plato, Edward Bellamy, H.G. Wells, Karl Marx, and Howard Scott have all made attempts to plan a new civilization, the established social order considered the impractical dreamers with Utopian designs that ran contrary to the human nature. Against these social pioneers was a status quo of vested interests comfortable with the way things were. The populace at large, because of years of indoctrination, went along unthinkingly for the ride.

Vested interests were un-appointed guardians of the status quo. The outlook and philosophy of the leaders were consistent with their positions of advantage.

Despite advances achieved through objective scientific investigation, and the breaking down of long-standing fears and superstitions, the world is still not a reasonable place. Many attempts to make it so have failed because of selfish individual and national interests. Deeply rooted cultural norms that assume someone must lose for someone else to gain (scarcity at its most basic) still dictate most of our decisions. For example, we still cling to the concept of competition and accept inadequate compensation for people's efforts, (i.e., the minimum wage), when such concepts no longer apply to our capabilities and resources, never mind their effect on human dignity and any possible elevation of the human condition.

At this turning point in our civilization, we find problems complicated by the fact that many of us still wait for someone, a messiah perhaps, the elusive "they", or an extraterrestrial to save us. The irony of this is that, as we wait for someone to do it for us, we give up our freedom of choice and movement. We react rather than act toward events and issues.

The future is our responsibility, but change will not take place until the majority lose confidence in their dictator's and elected officials' ability to solve problems. It will likely take an economic catastrophe resulting in enormous human suffering to bring about true social change.

Unfortunately, this does not guarantee that the change will be beneficial.

In times of conflicts between nations, we still default to answering perceived threats with threats, developing weapons of mass destruction, and training people to use them against others whom we regard as enemies. Many social reformers tried to solve problems of crime within the framework of the monetary system by building more prisons and enacting new laws. There was gun legislation and a "three times and you're out" provision in an attempt to govern crime and violence. This has accomplished little, yet requests for funding to build more prisons and hire more policemen fare far better in legislatures and voting referendums than do pleas for education or aid to the poor.

Somehow in an area of plenty, we have meanly approved punishment as an answer to all problems. One symptom of insanity is repeating the same mistake over and over again and expecting a different outcome. Our society is, in this sense, truly insane.

The Manhattan Project developed the first atomic device to be used against human populations, and launched the most intensive and dangerous weapons build-up in history. The Manhattan Project was also one of the largest and best-financed projects ever undertaken. If we are willing to spend that amount of money, resources, and human lives in time of war, why don't we commit equal resources to improving lives and anticipating the humane needs of the future? The same energies that went into the Manhattan Project could be used to improve and update our way of life, and to achieve and maintain the optimal symbiotic relationship between nature and humankind.

If our system continues without modification involving environmental and social concern, we will face an economic and social breakdown of our monetary and political system. When this occurs, the established government will likely enact a state of emergency or martial law to prevent total chaos. I do not advocate this, but without the suffering of millions it may be nearly impossible to shake our complacency about the current ways of life.

OUT OF THE DARK AGES

Scientists in the space program face different challenges. For example, space scientists must develop new ways of eating in outer space. Astronauts' clothing must withstand the vacuum of outer space, enormous temperature differentials, and radiation yet remains light in weight and highly flexible. This new clothing design even calls for the development of self-repairing systems. Their challenge is to conceive of common items in completely new ways.

In space, for example, clothing no longer functions as just body covering and adornment. It becomes a mini-habitat. The space age is a good example of the search for newer and better ways of doing things. As scientists probe the limits of our universe, they must generate newer techniques and technologies for unexplored frontiers and never-before-encountered environments.

If they cling to the concepts of their earlier training, their explorations will fail. Had our ancestors refused to accept new ideas, the physical sciences would have progressed little beyond the covered wagon.

Many young engineers, scientists, and architects face this dilemma. Bold and creative, they exit institutions of higher learning and step out into the world eager for change. They set out with great enthusiasm but are often beaten back and slowed by the established institutions and self-appointed guardians of tradition. Occasionally, some break away from traditional concepts and become innovations that their daring concepts are soon reduced to mediocrity.

Many of the dominant values shaping our present society are medieval. The idea that we live in an enlightened age, or an age of reason, has little basis in fact. We are overwhelmed with valid information concerning ourselves and our planet, but have no inkling of how to apply it. Most of our customs and modes of behavior have been handed down to us from the Dark Ages.

It was difficult for early forms of life to crawl out of the primordial slime without dragging some of it with them. So it is with entrenched value systems. The most appropriate place for traditional concepts is a museum or in books about the history of civilization.

The twenty-first century will reveal what most people never suspected, which is that the majority of us have the potential of people like Leonardo da Vinci, Alexandre Graham Bell and Madam Curie, if we are raised in an environment that encourages genuine individuality and creativity. This includes all the other characteristics thought of as the special and privileged heredity of great men and women.

Even in today's so-called democratic society, fewer than 4% of the world's people have supplied us with the scientific and artistic advances that sustain social systems.

SHAPING HUMAN VALUES

Humans of the future, though similar in appearance, will differ considerably in their outlook, values, and mindset. Social orders of the past that have continued into the twenty-first century consistently seek to generate loyalty and conformity to established institutions as the only means to sustain a workable society. Countless laws, often passed after a misdeed has occurred, have been enacted in an attempt to govern the conduct of people. Those who do not conform are ostracized or imprisoned.

In the past, many social reformers and those called agitators by their detractors were not generally angry maladjusted individuals. They were often people with a sensitivity and concern for the needs of others who envisioned a better life for all.

Among these were abolitionists, advocates for woman's suffrage and child labor laws, those who practiced non-violent resistance to oppression, and so-called "freedom fighters".

Today we accept without question the achievements of these reformers who faced violent opposition, imprisonment, ridicule, and even death from vested interest and the established order.

Unfortunately most people are unaware of the identities of those individuals who helped pave the way toward social enlightenment.

Many of our parks have statues of warriors and statesman, but few have any monuments to the really great social innovators. Perhaps when the history of the human race is finally written, it will be from the viewpoint of individuals in an alien and primitive culture who sought change in a world that had great tenacity to maintain things as they were.

Conformity in a population makes control of society much easier for its leaders. Our leaders pay lip service to the freedoms that democracy provides, while actually supporting an economic structure that imprisons its citizens under more and more debt. They claim that all have the opportunity to rise to the top through individual initiative and incentive. To appease those who work hard but do not achieve the good life, religion is there to assure them that if not in this life, they will obtain it in the next.

Our habits of thought and conduct show the effectiveness of constant and unrelenting propaganda on radio, television, in publications, and in most other media. They are so effective that the average citizen is not insulted when categorized as a consumer – as if a citizen's sole worth to society was a user of goods. These patterns are gradually being modified and challenged by the Internet and the World Wide Web.

Most people expect that our televisions, computers, communication systems, methods of production and delivery of services, and even our concept of work and reward, will continue to improve without any disruption or distress within our present value systems. But this is not necessarily so. Our dominant values that emphasize competition and scarcity limit continued progress.

The most disruptive period in a transition from an established social order to an emergent system comes when people are not prepared emotionally or intellectually to adjust to change. People cannot simply erase all the beliefs and habits acquired in the past, which constitute their self-identity. Sudden changes in values without some preparation will cause many to lose their sense of identity and purpose, isolating them from a society they feel has passed them by. Another factor limiting the evaluation of alternative social proposals is a lack of understanding of basic scientific principles and the factors shaping culture and behavior.

The conflict today between human beings is about opposing values. If we manage to arrive at a saner future, conflicts will be about problems common to all humans. In a vibrant and emergent culture instead of conflicts between nations, the challenges will be overcoming scarcity, reclaiming damaged environments, creating innovative technologies, increasing agricultural yield, improving communications, building communications between nations, sharing technologies, and living a meaningful life.

WORK AND THE NEW LEISURE

From early civilization to the present most humans had to work to earn a living. Most of our attitudes about work are a carry-over from these earlier times.

In the past (and still in many low-energy cultures), it was necessary to fetch water and carry it to one's dwelling place. People gathered wood to make fires for heating and cooking, and fuel to burn in their lamps. It would have been very difficult – and still is for some – to imagine a time when water would rush forth in your own dwelling at the turn of a handle; to press a button for instant light would have seemed to be magic.

People of ancient times probably wondered what they would do with their time if they did not have to engage in these burdensome tasks that were so necessary to sustain their lives. In most developed countries, tasks that were once so vital to people's very survival are no longer necessary, thanks to modern technology.

Today people attend schools to acquire marketable skills that enable them to earn a living in the “work-a-day” world. Recently, the belief that one must work to earn a living has been challenged. Working for a living to supply the necessities of life may soon be irrelevant as modern technology can provide most of these needs. As a result, many jobs have gone the way of the iceman and the elevator operator. Perhaps we have a semantic problem with the word “work”.

The idea of “freedom from work” should include the elimination of repetitive and boring tasks that hold back our intellectual growth. Most jobs, from blue-collar assembly worker to professional, entail repetitious and uninteresting tasks. Human beings possess an untapped potential that they will finally be able to explore once they are free of the burden of having to work to earn a living.

At present there are no plans in government or industry to make economic adjustments to deal with the displacement of people by automated technology.

It is no longer the repetitious work of laborers that cybernation is able to phase out, but also many other vocations and professions. Engineers, technicians, scientists, doctors, architects, artists, and actors will have their roles altered, sometimes drastically. Therefore, it is imperative that we explore alternatives so as to improve our social constructs, beliefs, and quality of life to secure and sustain a future for all.

Thank you for reading the sample chapters! Visit all the Important Links Below! This document was created by: Nathan of the Family Scott Who is the P.H.E. Founder. Nathan's Organization has a Plan & Goal to move towards a Resource Based Economy.

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