

EXHIBIT 7

Foreword

His Holiness the Dalai Lama

The Internet 1996 World Exposition was intended to acquaint the international community with the wonders of the information age. With five million visitors and a huge infrastructure, this fair was an assembly of many things. Principally it showed that cyberspace has become part of the real world. However, building a global village through these new communications networks is not a reason for neglecting our local communities. The technology that lets us span the world, to communicate instantly across oceans, is a tool that we can use to preserve diversity, to enrich our understanding of each other, and enhance our sense of community.

At the Internet 1996 World Exposition the Tibetan people and our culture were represented by our musicians and craftsmen, who told the world something about our heritage. The Tibetan Institute for Performing Arts played its music as part of a year-long concert in Central Park. Tibetan metalworkers and woodworkers told the world about their crafts, steeped in traditions that are centuries old. Tibet is otherwise inaccessible to most people in the world today and yet information about it can be found almost instantly on the Internet.

The combination of computer, telephone, and television has recently created a communications revolution. In this context, the Internet's contribution to the diffusion and dissemination of knowledge and information is truly remarkable. Moreover, the Internet has the potential to be truly democratic because no one owns it, no single organization controls it. It crosses international boundaries and answers to no sovereign. Thus, it gives disenfranchised and marginalised groups a powerful voice to express their grievances and aspirations.

Perhaps as a consequence, some authoritarian governments view the Internet with great alarm. They see it as a tool by which oppressed people can make themselves known, gather support and work to throw off their oppression. Certainly, the Internet provides a nonviolent means for people who have no other voice to give expression to their aspirations for freedom.

One of the goals of the Internet 1996 World Exposition was to build Central Park, a public park for the global village. As they develop, global networks will be an invaluable tool for commerce and trade. However, leisure is as important as business and the Internet is a means for ordinary people to communicate and express themselves. Our communities are diverse and rich in creativity. Like an ordinary public park, Central Park was intended to provide a site in cyberspace for people to share and enjoy these riches together.

*For as long as space
endures,
And for as long as living
beings remain,
Until then may I, too,
abide
To dispel the misery of the
world.*

—Shantideva
Eighth-century Buddhist saint

*May I be a wishing jewel,
a magic vase,
Powerful mantras,
and great medicine;
May I become a wish-
fulfilling tree
And a cow of plenty
for the world.*

—Shantideva
Bodhisattva Vow

In this book, Carl Malamud gives an account of the Internet 1996 World Exposition. He shows how it provided opportunities for people to begin to think about the Internet and how this technology should fit into our lives. It is important that we do not lose sight of the fact that one of the prime goals of technological progress is to improve the quality of life. Such developments are to help and serve human beings, rather than make human beings serve them. Besides this, we need to consider how to protect the very openness of the Internet from abuse. For example, the potential for exposing children to pornography is alarming. Preserving freedom does not mean we can overlook responsibility. We need to understand that while the Internet cannot feed the poor, defend the oppressed, or protect those subject to natural disasters, by keeping us informed it can allow those of us who have the opportunity to do so to give whatever help we can.

TENZIN GYATSO
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