

Why War?, Non-Governmental Organizations Conference, United Nations Headquarters, New York, New York, September 22, 1994.

Tunnel Vision, Third International Bering Strait & Tunnel Conference, London, England, September 25, 1995

**Why War?
NGO Conference
United Nations Headquarters
New York City, New York
September 22, 1994**

Today, I call on the United Nations to turn its attention to the Far North --- to use our energy and our resources to harness Big Projects in the fight against poverty.

I represent the voice of the Arctic...

... a voice rarely heard in the halls of the United Nations.
Cold and remote, the Arctic is as mysterious as the moon.
It is beautiful --- romantic. To some, it is frightening.
Its reality is lost beneath layers of myth.
I represent the leaders of 21 Arctic and Northern regions...
... a unique NGO made up of 21 governors.
Unlike the Antarctic, people live in the Far North. People of rich culture and history.
Many in the temperate and tropical zones look up.

But we who live in the Arctic don't look up. We don't look down. We look *around*.

To us, the Arctic is home. The Arctic is heritage. The Arctic is our here-and now and our hereafter.

We love it --- summer and winter.

On May 11 of this year, eighty-eight Arctic adventurers lifted off in a Boeing 727-100 jet from Anchorage, Alaska, headed for Kotzebue on the Bering Se. and then on around the world.

In seven days they visited all eight Arctic nations --- touching down in 14 Arctic cities. This first-ever Circumpolar Expedition was a symbol...that the Arctic---is beginning to unite.

Our people can communicate now without being blocked by curtains of iron or ice.

I would like to propose to the United Nations today that the next decade, the first of the next millennium, might be dedicated to the Arctic --- the Decade of the Arctic.

We, the Arctic people, have much in common, notably our climate, our natural resource wealth --- and our constant conflict with our mother countries.

Washington, D.C. doesn't understand the Arctic, nor does Moscow, Oslo or Ottawa.

But, The Northern Forum is bringing a change.

I submit that our region-to-region approach, among areas with like problems, is the wave of the future.

Our greatest challenge is to cope with decisions made in the South that don't work in the North.

For instance, in the great Prudhoe Bay oil fields on the North Slope of Alaska, we re-designed the construction techniques used in warm climates. We had to!

In Arctic construction, heat is the enemy, cold is the friend.

Heavy rigs move across the ice-covered tundra without leaving a trace. They operate from a frozen drilling pad, that later melts and disappears.

The basic lesson is that the Arctic is not as *difficult* as it is *different*.

The Arctic does not compete with the world for people. But the Arctic is rich with the resources people need.

We who live at the top of the world
...live above an ocean of oil and gas

a continent of coal...

mountain ranges of minerals...

and a world of natural beauty.

If, as this conference suggests, "development is another name for peace," then the Arctic will be one of the world's great peacemakers.

There are vast, untouched lands above the Arctic Circle.

And government, not the private sector, controls nearly all of this remote real estate.

In Alaska, private individuals own less than 1 percent of our land.

That's one reason the Arctic, in the past, has been exploited. When no one owns it, no one cares.

The obligation rests with government both to care for the land and to make it productive.

Yes, government must *regulate*, to ensure that our lands and people are not exploited. But government must also *advocate*.

Without government saying "yes," there will be no sustainable economic foundation.

I call Alaska an "Owner State."

What we own in common must be managed not in the interest of a few, but for the needs of all.

But this is not only true in Alaska.

As we look at the globe --- seven-eighths of which is covered with water --- we can see that it is truly a COLLECTIVE WORLD.

No one will ever homestead the oceans.

No one country owns the air --- or the water that runs from the world's rivers into a common sea.

The United Nations calls it the "global commons."

And it extends beyond this earth.

No one nation can lay claim to the moon, the planets and the stars.

So we must learn to work together.

Some of the former communist nations and the peoples of the Third World are magnetized now by a market economy.

"Enlightened self-interest" is the slogan.

As an Alaskan businessman, I am a product of that system.

But just as Communism failed --- we of the industrial world must admit that unbridled Capitalism is not the total answer either.

As the indigenous peoples of the North learned long ago, in a cold, harsh environment, you HAVE to care about others.

You share to survive. You waste nothing. You care for the total.

Every hunter's prize is a gift, not just to that hunter, but to his family and village.

He shares his whale, walrus or caribou with others --- especially the very old--and the very young.

So Capitalism, too, must be enlightened.

It sounds like a contradiction in terms, but the future demands "unselfish Capitalism."

All of us --- North, South, East and West --- must be ready for change.

We, the Arctic people, do not fear change. Because nature does not fear change.

In the far North, we observe that nothing changes the environment as much as nature.

Signs of the vitality of the planet, signs of its youth, are seen in our volcanoes, our earthquakes, and our rivers, most of which don't run blue.

They run rich with the colors of a changing earth.

Not unlike the other regions at this podium this morning, there is conflict in the Arctic.

But our conflict is not violent --- not yet.

There is conflict between those from Outside who fear for the Arctic and those Inside who have faith in it.

The Arctic is a battlefield in a world war of priorities over the preservation or use of our resources.

As the population in the temperate and tropical regions grows, the need for resources will grow.

Most people don't want development in their own backyard; so those resources will come mostly from the Arctic, the oceans and space.

And yet, every year there seems to be a new "Arctic preservation strategy."

And in most cases, these plans threaten both the Arctic's potential and its people.

These policies are not born of malice, but of *ignorance*.
And ignorance is a killer in the Arctic.

One misstep, one wrong turn, and we are faced with the brutal truth that Mother Nature in the North has no compassion.

But today, some people from afar want to put our lifestyles and livelihoods at risk.

A recent initiative from Washington, D.C. and Ottawa would place 20 million acres of the most resource rich part of Alaska and the Yukon in World Heritage status.

This idea, to place the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (which we call ANWR) in park status, is so unnecessary.

The heart of ANWR --- a nine million acre preserve that includes the Brooks Range---is ALREADY established in law as a wilderness where no development will ever take place.

The Eskimo people who live on the coastal plain have watched oil development there for 20 years.

At first suspicious, they are now strong advocates.

And the wildlife has not been harmed. It has been enhanced.

Those who live in the North are dumbfounded that neither Washington, D.C. nor Ottawa bothered to consult the people of Alaska or their Governor before advancing this lock-up concept.

At the same time, our national leaders encouraged the start-up of the \$16 billion Sakhalin 11 mega-project in the Russian Far East.

While the ANWR oil field would be safely located on land, using proven technology, the Sakhalin project will place oil rigs in the middle of a fabulous fishery that produces 1.1 million tons of fish each year. That's over 2 billion pounds.

There is a double standard here --- a standard that suggests it is okay to risk fouling the seas of nations in desperate economic straits.

... so long as you don't drill in the lands of those of Western European descent.

That's not right.

This type of high-handed land grab is a new form of COLONIALISM...
... born of an anti-people philosophy.

We must not let this ideology POISON world policy.

People are the most precious things on earth. If we abandon that basic truth, we will tolerate untold human suffering.

On the eve of the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, at the Global Forum, I called on the world community to adopt a universal environmental equation...

... an equation that addresses the TOTAL environment.

Simply stated, it's this: The total environment includes people, people's needs and nature.

What does it cost to protect the total environment?

The cost is to care.

Because when we decide to care, we will pay the true cost. Let me give you an example from our part of the world.

Today a pound of fresh pollock from the North Pacific may wholesale for one dollar.

But hundreds of millions of pounds of other types of fish are caught in that same net. This so called by-catch is dumped overboard --- wasted every year.

This waste must be brought to an end! The rule should be, "if you catch it, you keep it." When that becomes law, that fish may cost a little more --- perhaps a dollar five a pound. It's time we paid that extra five cents.

What I am saying is that we must all look to a new definition of success... ..that includes caring for the earth and all of its living things and natural wonders.

The throw-away society didn't work. The give-away society doesn't work.

And, let's face it, the lock-away society won't work either.

There is no hope if there is no growth.

And there is no wealth without production.

Someone has to dig a hole, cut a tree, catch a fish --- just for the basics of life.

No matter what you call your system --- when the economy fails, the government fails.

And if the world economy fails, the United Nations will fail.

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Today I bring to you a proposal for the next century.

I commend it to all nations and NGOs for their best thinking and creativity.

Philosophers have talked for centuries about BUILDING a new world.

Today we are meeting to discuss BUILDING PEACE.

My conclusion is that to build a new world --- to build peace --- we must literally BUILD it.

Historically, cynical leaders have used war as an economic strategy.

War puts people to work and gives them a purpose.

But why war? Why not *big projects*? War is just a big project.

The price of freedom doesn't have to be blood. It can be sweat.

My idea is not new. It's as old as the pyramids and the aqueducts of Rome.

The late inventor Buckminster Fuller conceived of a global energy network.

Two billion people live without electricity today.

And there is a direct tie-in between energy and poverty, energy and war, energy and peace.

Electrical grids between regions --- and even continents --- can and must be built now.

This can be a vast and visionary undertaking --- worthy of our generation.

Some people may ask, "Where will the money come from?" I say money is not the problem. There's always enough money to go to war.

It all depends on our priorities.

In some quarters, big projects today are not "politically correct."

But we in the Far North understand the power of a big project to change society.

Russia did it one hundred years ago with the 6,500 mile trans-Siberia Railway.

Alaska did it when we built the largest project in the history of free enterprise, the trans-Alaska oil pipeline.

I have talked with my fellow governors in The Northern Forum about LONGLINE ENERGY GRIDS...

... sharing our FRESH WATER resources in the North with the arid nations of the South...

... using our vast NATURAL GAS resources to help clean up the smog-choked cities of the industrial world.

And we have dreamed about a RAIL TUNNEL beneath the Bering Sea.

Imagine, a rail trip from New York through Alaska, connecting with the trans-Siberia railway, and on to Paris, circling more than halfway around the world, and carrying with it a wealth of ideas, of commerce, and of wonder.

The regions of The Northern Forum are already working to make Russia's Northern Sea Route --- over the top of the world --- a common carrier for the world's goods.

The solution to our social problems is not money. It is productive work.

And the best jobs are those with a *sense of mission*.

The builders of the great monuments of the world proved that centuries ago--from the cathedrals of Europe to the Statue of Liberty to the Mayan temples in America.

Today, where do the tourists of the world want to go?

They visit those shrines.

And the great engineering achievements as well --- the Great Wall of China, the Suez Canal, the "bullet" train in Japan.

Man's handiwork fascinates and inspires every generation.

So, as we approach the end of this century, let's agree on some big projects and build them.

Let's link up the world's excess electrical generating capacity with those most in need.

Let's take water from North to South.

Let's construct the Bering Tunnel and link the world's continents.

And let's harvest the wealth of northern resources....

... especially our storehouse of energy.

As we tackle these projects, we will learn that the days of pioneering are not over.

Alaska has been called the last frontier, but in reality there will be frontiers as long as there are humans.

Every child born is given new frontiers to explore.

God's way to test us is to give us our own frontiers, and the greatest frontier is within ourselves.

Our "new frontier" is to fight both to preserve our values of old and welcome the new.

To build a way of life that is truly sustainable.

Then the Arctic---no longer ignored --- can participate in a world-wide effort to build peace for all people.

Thank you.

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**Tunnel Vision
Third International Bering Strait & Tunnel Conference
London, England
September 25, 1995**

Good afternoon. It is a pleasure to be here.

Optimism and vision is what has kept the idea of the Bering Tunnel alive.

Two decades ago, I proposed to Anatoli Dobrynin--the Soviet Ambassador to the United States at that time--a project for joint construction of a tunnel underneath the Bering Strait.

The idea wasn't taken up at the time, but the Ambassador saw incredible potential in the project.

Today, thanks to many hard-working individuals, this project is capturing the minds and imagination of people around the world.

This conference is proof-positive that the concept for the Bering Strait tunnel is gaining momentum.

But, those of us in this room have work to do.

Today our cultures are teaching our young to only be concerned with the bottom line...stifling their creativity...their thoughts...their vision.

We all know the bottom line is important, but it cannot be the only line.

In 1961, John F. Kennedy said we were going to the moon. He had no fear of the unknown--only hope for a national dream. There was vision. We went to the moon.

But, going to the moon didn't make sense at the bottom line.

We need to challenge the world to open their minds, and dare to dream.

Vision is a state of mind, a willingness to look beyond computer printouts, to look beyond what is known today.

Here, we are discussing one such vision.

Currently, I am the Secretary General of the Northern Forum, an organization made up of 21 Arctic and northern regions.

It is a unique organization that has been accredited by the United Nations as a non-governmental organization.

The Forum is made up of 21 governors from many lands, which include Lapland, northern China, Japan and Norway, Sweden, from the Komi Republic in western Russia, and many from eastern and northern Siberia--Alaska's next door neighbor.

We formed the Northern Forum not only because we were misunderstood, but because generally the Arctic is collective.

As an Alaskan businessman, I am a product of the free enterprise system. But just as Communism failed--we of the industrialized world must admit that unbridled Capitalism is not the total answer either.

Pure capitalism does not have a social conscience.

Without concern for other people, for their needs and wants, activities for strictly private gain become destructive--not only to others but eventually to oneself.

It may sound like a contradiction in terms, but the future demands "unselfish capitalism."

In September of last year I delivered a speech to the United Nations NGO conference on building peace. My speech was entitled, "Why War? Why not Big Projects?" [Compilers' Note: Speech Text follows]

Philosophers have talked for centuries about building a new world. My conclusion is that to build a new world--to build peace--we must literally build it.

Historically, the world's most cynical leaders have used war or preparing for war as an economic strategy.

War puts a lot of people to work and gives them a purpose. War concentrates the thoughts of a nation, making it think and act as one.

So why War? Why not big projects? After all, war is just a big project.

Military skill alone does not win wars. It is the productive capacity of the nation behind the military that decides the victor.

In the middle of a world depression, before the U.S. entered World War II, we were told we were poor. After Pearl Harbor, we could afford anything.

All during the depression--until December six--this thought prevailed.

On December seven, we had money for anything. How come?

We put our productive machine to work.

I think the challenge before us today is to turn the military machine we have now into a quality of life machine.

My idea is not new. It's as old as the pyramids and the aqueducts of Rome.

Some people may ask, "Where will the money come from?" I say money is not the problem. There's always enough money to go to war. It all depends on our priorities.

In some quarters, big projects today are not "politically correct." Many sincere people believe "small is beautiful" and "wilderness is the world."

But we in the Far North understand the power of a big project to change society.

Russia did it with the 6,500 mile trans-Siberian Railway. Alaska did it when we built the largest project in the history of free enterprise, the trans-Alaska oil pipeline.

It mobilized our people, gave them a challenge, and a goal.

True peace takes more than just laying down arms.

It requires the reaching out of hands.

The Bering Tunnel would be a cooperative project that would join nations....and connect the world.

Imagine a rail trip from New York through Alaska, connecting with the trans-Siberia railway, and on to Paris, circling more than halfway around the world, and carrying with it a wealth of ideas, of commerce and wonder.

This project will unite and inspire like never before.

By connecting North America with Asia via a tunnel, we can--at the same time--link our continents together with an energy grid across the Bering Strait.

This concept is a vital section of the late inventor, Buckminster Fuller's dream of a global energy network.

We must find a way to get electricity to the developing nations, if we truly want to eradicate poverty in the twenty-first century.

Additionally, a rail trip through Alaska into the Russian Far East, connecting with the Trans-Siberia Railroad, would be one of the great wonders of the world...
...and a tremendous magnet for the travel industry, which is now the number one travel industry in the world.

Imagine..

From an Alaskan perspective, we understand the transition that is happening in Russia. Our ties with the Russian people are strong. The first humans in America were courageous pioneers who crossed the Bering land bridge from Russia to Alaska.

Thousands of years later, it was Russian explorers who became the first in modern times to rediscover Alaska. Many Alaskans have Russian blood. Many of us have Russian names. Some of our Eskimo people and Russia's speak the same language. Their traditions are our traditions. Their faith is our faith. All our saints are Russian.

In short, we are a family of one.

Americans and Russians have often thought of our two countries as being on opposite sides of almost everything--including opposite sides of the world.

For what became too many long, cold years, we overlooked the fact that we share an important border--that we are in fact, next-door neighbors across the Bering Sea.

What better way to unite neighbors, share knowledge, and foster better understanding for one another than to build a link beneath the sea.

The solution to our social problems is not money. It is productive work.

And the best jobs are those with a sense of mission.

The builders of the great monuments of the world demonstrated that truth centuries ago--the craftsmen who constructed the cathedrals of Europe...the Africans who designed and built the pyramids...and the Mayans who created ancient temples in America.

For some, putting those stones in place was a religious experience of its own.

Today, where do the tourists of the world want to go? They visit the shrines. They want to see the Statue of Liberty and Washington, D.C., with its marvelous monuments and architecture. The Eiffel Tower. The Taj Mahal. St. Petersburg. The Sistine Chapel.

And it's not just the monuments that attract. Great engineering achievements do, too--the Great Wall of China, the Suez Canal, and the Sydney Opera House.

And even in Alaska many of our visitors want to see and touch the 789-mile Alaska pipeline.

Mankind's handiwork fascinates and inspires every generation.

Cultures are not made by nature--they are built by man.

If we tackle big projects, like the Bering Tunnel, we will learn the days of pioneering are not over.

To enhance the environment, we must build. And because the problems and opportunities are so large, we must build together.

In America, my part of the country--Alaska--has been known as the last frontier.

I've never believed it.

There is no end to frontiers, no end to pioneering.

Frontiers start in the mind, and there are billions of them--scientific, geographic, cultural--that remain to be crossed.

Let's cross them.

In today's world, we have reached a threshold of cooperation to do great things.

Our inventiveness so far has only brought us but one step from the savage. Let's embrace the visionaries and take the next step.

The world does not need war. What the world needs is optimism and big projects.

This kind of cooperation between nations can replace war and enhance security, take us from making money to creating new wealth, from a world of hunger to a world of hope.

Thank you.

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