

AT & T / NIKKEI
MULTIMEDIA CONFERENCE

GOOD MORNING. I AM GLAD TO BE HERE WITH A GROUP OF PEOPLE WHO WILL HAVE A GREAT DEAL OF INFLUENCE OVER HOW TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND MULTIMEDIA TECHNOLOGIES ARE USED IN THE FUTURE -- INDEED, YOU ARE KEY DECISION MAKERS.

I COMMEND THE ORGANIZERS, NIHON KEIZAI SHINBUN AND AT&T, FOR ENGAGING IN A BROAD DISCUSSION OF THE FUTURE RAMIFICATIONS OF THESE TECHNOLOGIES. I PARTICULARLY WISH TO THANK TOSHIHARU SAKUMA (EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF NIHON KEIZAI SHINBUN) AND LOUIS C. GOLM (PRESIDENT AND CEO, AT&T JAPAN) FOR HAVING ME HERE TODAY.

IN THE U.S., WE USED TO TALK OF "THE SLOW BOAT TO CHINA." THAT WAS ABOUT THE ONLY WAY TO COMMUNICATE WITH THE ORIENT A CENTURY AGO, BUT THINGS HAVE BEEN PICKING UP SPEED. NOW MANY OF OUR FRIENDS IN TOKYO SEEM TO MAKE WEEKEND TRIPS TO THE U.S. -- TRAVEL HAS BECOME SO QUICK AND EFFICIENT. INFORMATION, OF COURSE, TRAVELS EVEN FASTER.

LIKE THE SPEED OF COMMUNICATION, THE PACE OF CHANGE IS ALSO AMAZINGLY QUICK.

VICE PRESIDENT AL GORE'S INTEREST IN THE INFORMATION SUPER-HIGHWAY IS NO SECRET. (*hot line, black ships, and the 747) I USED TO WORK OUT OF THAT OFFICE WHEN THE TELEX WAS GIVING WAY TO THE FACSIMILE, BUT MR. GORE IS PROMOTING A WHOLE NEW CONCEPT THAT WE HAD NOT EVEN DREAMED OF.

TERMED THE "GLOBAL INFORMATION INFRASTRUCTURE," OR "GII," THIS INITIATIVE, AS YOU KNOW, OFFERS VISIONS OF INTERCONNECTED LOCAL, NATIONAL, AND REGIONAL NETWORKS AROUND THE GLOBE, IN THE FIRM BELIEF THAT IMPROVED ACCESS TO INFORMATION CAN AND WILL FACILITATE IMPROVEMENTS IN THE HUMAN CONDITION. THIS ACCESS NEED NOT BE BASED ON GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION, INCOME, OR LEVEL OF EDUCATION. THE GOALS IS TO MEET THE NEEDS OF ALL PEOPLE, BRINGING TO THEM THE INFORMATION THAT WILL SUPPORT AN IMPROVED QUALITY OF LIFE -- BE IT IN KAGOSHIMA, CALIFORNIA, OR KENYA.

YOU ARE ALREADY ON THE FOREFRONT OF THIS EFFORT.

YOU ARE FINDING WAYS TO BRING THE WORLD TOGETHER. YOU ARE WORKING TO BRIDGE THE COMMUNICATION GAP BETWEEN DIVERSE BUSINESSES, PEOPLE, AND NATIONS. PARTICULARLY, YOU ARE EXPANDING INTERACTION BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND JAPAN, WHICH IS VITAL TO OUR PARTNERSHIP. AS THESE COMMUNICATIONS ARE UPGRADED, AND OFFERED MORE CHEAPLY AND EFFICIENTLY TO OUR CITIZENS, THE OVERALL BOOST TO THE RELATIONSHIP WILL BE TREMENDOUS. OUR PEOPLE WILL UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER BETTER. OUR BUSINESSES WILL FIND MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL ECONOMIC VENTURES. OUR STUDENTS WILL LEARN EACH OTHER'S LANGUAGE MORE EASILY. OUR CONSUMERS WILL ENJOY GREATER CHOICES. AND OUR FRIENDS ACROSS THE SEA WILL BE OUR CLOSE NEIGHBORS.

AS WE CONTINUE TO LAY THE FOUNDATIONS OF THIS GLOBAL SUPER-HIGHWAY, WE MUST REMEMBER THAT INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY ARE WHAT IS DRIVING MULTIMEDIA. THESE ARE NOT CONCEPTS THAT ARE CONDUCIVE TO EXCESSIVE REGULATION. IN FACT, THE PACE OF TECHNOLOGY IS FAR TOO QUICK FOR THE REGULATORS TO KEEP UP WITH ANYWAY. WE HAVE TO GET AHEAD OF THE CURVE WITH FLEXIBLE, PRO-COMPETITIVE REGULATIONS, WHICH RESPOND TO MARKET AND TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGES. WE ARE NOW TRYING TO DO THIS WITH LANDMARK LEGISLATION IN THE U.S. AND A MULTILATERAL AGREEMENT AT THE WTO (WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION).

THE MOST EXPLOSIVE FORCE IN TELECOMMUNICATIONS OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS HAS BEEN THE INTERNET -- THE PROTOTYPE OF THE INFORMATION SUPER-HIGHWAY. WE ARE ALREADY SEEING HOW WE CAN SHARE TEXT, SOUND, IMAGES AND EVEN VIDEO AROUND THE WORLD ON THIS REMARKABLE, LOW-COST NETWORK. THE KEY TO ITS GROWTH IS THAT IT IS USER-DRIVEN, AND THIS IS WHAT IS CHANGING THE CHARACTER OF THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS MARKET.

USERS WERE ONCE CONTENT WITH THE LIMITED SERVICES THAT TELECOM PROVIDERS OFFERED, BUT THE NEW GENERATION OF USERS ARE NOT SIMPLY USING THE NETWORK PASSIVELY -- THEY ARE CREATING NETWORKS OF THEIR OWN. THE BALANCE OF INFLUENCE IS SHIFTING FROM THE PLANS OF THE PROVIDERS TOWARDS THE NEEDS AND REQUIREMENTS OF ACTIVE, CREATIVE USERS, BOTH INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS.

THESE GROUPS ARE SHAPING THE NETWORK TO THEIR NEEDS -- THROUGH WORLD WIDE WEB PAGES, DISCUSSION GROUPS, AND MULTIMEDIA LINKS.

AT THE HEART OF THE EXPLOSION OF DEMAND FOR NEW TELECOMMUNICATION SERVICES IN THE U.S. HAS BEEN LOW COSTS TO CONSUMERS, WHICH RESULTS FROM A MARKET OPEN TO COMPETITION, CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION. JAPAN, LIKE MANY COUNTRIES, STILL SUFFERS FROM HIGH PRICES, AND THIS WILL DAMPEN THE DEMAND FOR A WHOLE GENERATION OF NEW SERVICES, AND INDUSTRIES SUPPORTING THOSE SERVICES.

BEYOND OPEN MARKETS, MULTIMEDIA COMMUNICATION THROUGHOUT THE WORLD WILL REQUIRE COUNTRIES AND COMPANIES TO HAVE EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES THAT CAN CONNECT. IT WILL BE TO EVERYONE'S BENEFIT TO ENCOURAGE INTER-OPERABILITY. AT THE SAME TIME, MARKETS SHOULD BE THE ONES TO SET STANDARDS, AND GOVERNMENTS SHOULD NOT TRY TO IMPOSE STANDARDS THAT MAY SOON BE OUTDATED.

WE SHOULD DO ALL THAT WE CAN TO ENCOURAGE THE CROSS-BORDER TRANSFER OF INFORMATION, RATHER THAN WORKING TO IMPEDE THE SAME.

THANK YOU FOR LETTING ME STOP BY BRIEFLY. I HOPE YOU WILL SHARE A SYNOPSIS OF YOUR DISCUSSIONS TODAY WITH THE EMBASSY.



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