

UC Berkeley

IURD Working Paper Series

Title

Europe 2000: Twelve Years On and Ten to Go

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/3z2085db>

Author

Hall, Peter

Publication Date

1991-05-01

Peer reviewed

Working Paper 537

This paper was originally presented to the Svenska Europaklubben, May 31, 1990.

**Europe 2000: Twelve
Years On and Ten to Go**

Peter Hall

May 1991

**University of California at Berkeley
Institute of Urban and Regional Development**

EUROPE 2000:
TWELVE YEARS ON AND TEN TO GO

Peter Hall

I want to thank the Svenska Europaklubben for this opportunity to come back to Stockholm, and moreover to do so at this particularly delightful period of the year. But I am very conscious that, in inviting me, you have set me a singularly difficult task. Thirteen years ago, now, we published a slim but I hope substantial volume with the title Europe 2000. And eleven years ago, in February 1979, I came to Stockholm to talk about it; I am certain that many of you were in the audience then, and it is even likely that you remember something of what I said about our work. Now I have to ask myself, for that is the question you are asking me: how well has our study stood the test of more than a decade? Is it still any kind of useful guide to the future of Europe, or is it already a curiosity like so many other similar attempts? Probably, as editor of the book, I am the worst possible person to try to be objective about that. But let me try.

I have used the word "we." Europe 2000 was the end result of work by literally hundreds of researchers, organized in four main thematic groups under the general aegis of the European Cultural Foundation. The final volume was an attempt to distil the main conclusions from those four parallel streams of work: one on the future of European agriculture and the European countryside, another on the future of European industrial society, a third on the prospects for Europe's cities, a fourth on the evolution of education in Europe. But

this was not just an executive summary: a committee of distinguished Europeans met regularly for two years to digest the findings, to discuss them, and to produce their own reflections on them. Two of those people, I should put on record, were Swedish: they were Bertil Jonsson of Volvo and my good friend Torsten Hägerstrand of the University of Lund, both of whom will be very well known to almost everyone in this audience.

It is difficult and perhaps unnecessary to present a kind of executive summary of our findings. It is difficult, because the argument of the book is quite complex and theoretical. It is hopefully unnecessary, because I believe that it is possible to extract some of the most important lines of argument and to develop them in a little detail. This I will now try to do. And, as I do so, I will try to provide a kind of running commentary, a form of self-criticism, on them.

Our first important argument was that there were several different major modes of forecasting the future. We borrowed from several of them. We started, in the early part of the book, with what we called an exploratory scenario: that is, we projected forward some heavy trends of the 1960s and early 1970s, to see where they might lead us. The result of that was what we called a problem landscape for the 1980s. But then we made a major jump: we asked ourselves, how in turn will Europeans react to those problems? That allowed us to develop what we called a normative, or even a contrasted, scenario: one in which we could imagine a desirable future located at the very margin of present possibilities, but perhaps possible and even probable by the year 2000 because it would be seen as desirable, even necessary. Throughout the middle and main section of our book, we sought to identify the main lines of such a contrast: a contrast in terms of what we called a different rationality. I shall need to come back to

that rather difficult term in a while; but first, let me look at the easier part of our work, which was the exploratory part.

In Chapter 2, we looked at several explanatory scenarios about the world, meaning international relations. We ranged widely, from a Europe that continued to lie under the shadow of the two superpowers, through a world in which Europe united itself in the face of global challenge, to a Europe of nations and a Europe of regions. We also, prophetically you might think, included the scenario "Explosive change in Eastern Europe." I have to say that, here, we got our predictions pretty thoroughly wrong, particularly about Eastern Europe. There we really offered hostages to fortune: "All in all," we concluded, "prospects for fundamental change in Eastern Europe appear almost non-existent." The reasons are interesting. First, we completely underestimated, indeed failed entirely to consider, the possibility of the economic decline of the Soviet Union. We were in good company there, and I should say -- though I do not wish to offer this as an excuse -- that we did consult the best expertise we could find at the time. The fact was that everyone at that time believed something like the Soviet official version of the facts, which proved to be a fantasy; not to mention that matters became much worse soon after we wrote. We entirely failed to predict the Iranian revolution or the general growth of militant Islam as a world political force, though we correctly predicted a continued threat from terrorism and we even postulated the notion that terrorist groups might acquire nuclear arms.

We did rather better on pan-European matters. Even there, we saw Europe uniting from weakness rather than from strength, though we could claim that we were right when we predicted that "Europe becomes an economic world power through exploitation of its latent financial and technological capacities." We did not do that badly when we wrote that "The superpowers will not retain the monolithic

strength of the early postwar years; they will be diverted elsewhere, and for different reasons both are likely to have urgent problems of internal economic development." We seem to have overestimated the strength of local nationalist or regionalist movements, partly because they loomed so large at the time we were writing. And -- again related to the eastern European overturn -- we were wildly off the mark in predicting the possibility of communist victories by democratic means in Italy, Spain, and perhaps France. In other words, we were guilty of heeding our own advice that one should seek the counter-current underneath the apparently strong tidal flow.

We could claim in defence that we were not really experts in these fields. And I think that we did better when we came in Chapter 3 to matters with which we felt more comfortable, such as the international economy. We were somewhat obsessed with stagflation, that distinctive combination of the late 1970s which seems to be on its way back in the early 1990s; and by threats to raw material supplies. But we correctly analyzed the threat to the European industrial economies presented by the drive to take processes and entire production traditions to offshore, less-developed regions and nations. We thought that the main reaction to these challenges would take the form of a social-democratic managed capitalism, though we did prophetically discuss an alternative in the form of neo-capitalism. And we did specifically allow for what we called the unknown hazards. Here I must quote: "Isolated cases, both proven (thalidomide) and non-proven (cyclamates, aerosols)," we wrote, "suggest that chemical advances may have long-run side effects which are extremely difficult to identify until it is too late." We might have been writing about the greenhouse effect, though we cannot claim to have identified it.

I want to come back, though, to that dominant Social-Democrat reaction. Why did we entirely under-predict, or (better) non-predict, the Thatcherite-

Reaganite revolution of the late 1970s and early 1980s? After all, it should have been almost under our noses when we were cogitating. I think that it is partly a matter of our entire ideological approach to our work. There is a very strong theme in the entire study, which is already hinted at in Chapter 2 and really begins to unwind from Chapter 4 onwards. This can best be summed up in a couple of code words that constantly recur throughout the text: alienation, a new rationality, response to human needs. We argued that this was not a narrow political-ideological point, but a very broad-ranging one: it applied to so-called socialist societies as well as to capitalist ones, we said. Nevertheless, the general slant of the argument is that production should become more socially responsive: producing organizations generally -- socialist as well as capitalist ones -- should be regarded as conspirators against the people. I still think that this was a good argument: the trouble about it was that it ignored political realities. People might be willing to subscribe to our arguments, if put to them in an academic discussion; it is not nearly so clear that they would be willing to vote for them, or act on them. For instance, we pointed to "the extraordinary failure, in almost every country in both western and eastern Europe, to create a human built environment for the millions of new arrivals in the cities." We are no nearer achieving the objective now, and we know that the reasons are not just ones of ignorance or incompetence; they arise because people en masse are not willing to make the necessary sacrifices, including the supreme sacrifice of inviting their low-income neighbours to live in the same fortunate communities as themselves.

At bottom, as we began to suggest in Chapter 4 -- our account of the problem landscape of the future Europe -- and then argued more insistently in later chapters, the problem was one of values. Post-World War Two Europe had been characterized, we said, by very general shared values which could broadly

be described as sensate: that is, materialistic, liberal with regard to personal behaviour, and tolerant of large-scale organizations so long as these could guarantee the supply of material goods. Yet these values, evidently, had produced a whole set of side effects that no one particularly liked: a lack of a feeling of community in the local neighbourhood or at work; a resulting sense of alienation; a feeling that information was out of control, and yet the ordinary person could not discover what he or she wanted to know; an unease brought about by petty crime, apparent chaos in the schools, and increasing civic disorder on the streets. These, we argued, would finally cause the ordinary person in the streets to question whether, after all, we were going in the right direction. We were realistic enough to say that such a change would not come overnight; the question must be whether there are any signs at all that it may come about in any reasonable time.

The answer to that is mixed but not encouraging. In two major western economies, the United States and Great Britain, the people have given decisive majorities in favour of market capitalism. They have also embraced similar solutions, sometimes under unusual political labels, in France and in Spain. They have done so very decisively in East Germany, while in Poland -- just as in Spain -- an apparently Social Democratic government has embraced an extreme free market solution. What do we conclude from this? I would argue that it demonstrates simply that, in democracies, people deal with their top priorities. Great Britain went Thatcherite because there truly was a national debate, almost a national obsession, in favour of reversing what appeared to be a long-term national decline. There has been a quite profound shift in the political spectrum in that country, as is evident from the Labour Party's new manifesto which throws overboard almost all the ideological baggage of the last one hundred years. Similarly, in eastern Europe people saw the need to discard a similar

amount of lumber. In both cases, for quite specific historic reasons, there was a vote in favour of undiluted laissez-faire capitalism. Of course, in practice the British solution did not emerge in quite such a pure form, and doubtless the same will be true in eastern Europe. The point is the general tendency. It is not a movement in the direction of a revolution in value systems, or even more deeply in favour of a new rationality.

Some of you might want to argue the contrary. Has not Mrs Thatcher tried to embrace the green ticket, however unconvincingly? Is there not a similar concern, throughout eastern Europe, with the quality of the environment? Is it not true that some European countries -- Sweden, West Germany, the Netherlands -- which earliest trod this environmentalist road are now leading the rest of us? Does not this constitute the sign of a long-term ground swell?

Perhaps. A sceptic might argue that we have been here before, in the 1970s. Indeed, Europe 2000 reflects the fact. At the end of a long period of economic upswing, such as the 1980s were, questions of environmental impact tend to come to the surface. At times of economic recession, they tend to fade into the depths again. Nevertheless -- and here I find I am arguing with myself -- there is a long-term shift: as societies become more affluent, they are bound to become concerned with a new range of political issues, including both environmental and what could be called personal-ethical questions, which were not nearly so prominent in earlier times. You can call these, broadly, quality-of-life issues. John Maynard Keynes predicted all this sixty years ago, in a remarkable essay called Economic Possibilities for our Grandchildren. Science and compound interest, he wrote there -- meaning the power of technological innovation and the power of capital accumulation -- would eventually make us all rich, solving at last the basic economic problem that had plagued humankind since its origins. So, he wrote:

Thus for the first time since his creation man will be faced with his real, his permanent problem -- how to use his freedom from pressing economic cares, how to occupy the leisure, which science and compound interest have won for him, to live wisely and agreeably and well.

The irony was that humankind would be quite unprepared for this momentous transition. Drastic cuts in the working day or the working week -- three-hour shifts, a fifteen-hour week -- might put off the problem for a while. But, beyond that, we would have to learn how to

take least thought for the morrow. We shall once more value ends above means and prefer the good to the useful. We shall honour those who can teach us to pluck the hour and the day virtuously and well, the delightful people who are capable of taking direct enjoyment in things, the lilies of the field who toil not, neither do they spin.

He ended with a celebrated, much-quoted warning:

But beware! The time for all this is not yet. For at least another hundred years we must pretend to ourselves and to every-one that fair is foul and foul is fair; for foul is useful and fair is not. Avarice and usury and precaution must be our gods for a little longer still. For only they can lead us out of the tunnel of economic necessity into daylight.

Perhaps, then, what we have just seen is that last ride through the tunnel, with the Thatcherite economic engine at the head. Perhaps the people of eastern Europe, conscious of a lost half-century, are just equipping themselves to follow down that same railway track. Perhaps, then, we have at last arrived at a critical point of historic transition. Or perhaps, more likely, there is no one single point: the transition is a long one, rather like the turning of a tide on the seashore, so that one can never spot the precise moment in the ebb and flow of the waves. We are moving into a new political world, into a new set of concerns; but progress is slow, measured in decades rather than years, and with many confusing counter-currents.

What would be some of the critical signs of this transition? We could follow the order of the chapters in the middle part of our study, which summarized and commented on our main lines of research. In agriculture, there has been a sharp increase in consciousness of the need for ecologically responsible farming practices. In the cities, equally, there has been an increasing concern for the quality of urban life and in particular for the quality of the urban environment. These environmental concerns, I would argue, are not just some temporary political fashion; they represent the latest manifestation of a long-term trend. Further, the development of technology has gone a considerable way, perhaps even further than we supposed, in allowing some of these changes to come about. Our chapter on information proves to have been remarkably correct in anticipating the revolution that would come through the silicon chip, the broadband communications network, and the personal computer: in particular, the ability to disperse activities into smaller, discrete units, which would be free to locate well outside the cities. In fact, one of the main obsessions of urban economists and geographers during the 1980s -- the replacement of so-called Fordist methods of production by systems of flexible specialization -- can all be found in the pages of Europe 2000. But we are still a long way from the kind of self-sustaining, ecologically self-regulating urban complexes that were forecast in the urban chapter of Europe 2000.

Similarly with our predictions for European industry: there is a great deal of interest in many European countries in the notion that industry should pay for economic externalities -- the so-called polluter-pays principle; there has also been an extensive movement within industry towards so-called systems of flexible specialization, whereby a substantial part of production comes from small semi-autonomous units. This system has in part taken care of the dilemma we pointed out in our industry chapter, whereby large organizations alone have

the access to information and to marketing skills. But this has been done for reasons wholly dictated by the profitability of the firm itself, in the firm's own interest; it is still a long way indeed from what was suggested in Europe 2000, which was a movement from economic rationality toward some wider rationality. The methods discussed there -- for instance, a planning system set by the state, in which private industries competed to fulfil social investment plans -- appear quite remarkably outdated in view of the developments of the 1980s. It was fine to call, as Europe 2000 did, for "A more socially-oriented and better-controlled planning process for industry" which "must go along with an improvement in the possibilities of active participation on the part of all groups concerned," and in which "a new kind of entrepreneur would be needed: one who was socially-oriented and socially-conscious, whose task would not be limited to providing goods and services, but would be concerned with total social responsibilities," functioning within "a new management and auditing system, corresponding to these additional tasks." But I do not think that in most of Europe we are any nearer that outcome in 1990 than we were in 1977; rather the reverse, in fact.

The same seems to be true of the fourth area we studied: information and education. We called for a new information policy, whereby access to information would be brought under some kind of public accountability. But the tendency in the 1980s has been to create more and more a free market in information, whereby economic rationality dictates what is produced and for whom. Consider, for instance, the drastic effects of technological change on broadcasting, whereby the old regulated European systems have been supplemented and even partially displaced by a welter of competing commercial services. The result has been an explosion in the quantity of information available, but whether it has given

the average person any real increase in the control over information is doubtful. The dilemma remains, and has even deepened.

There are other areas, on which we can take greater satisfaction in retrospect. One is our chapter on age, sex, and gender, where we successfully identified a whole set of gender issues which have become steadily more significant in virtually every country. To be precise, though they have become more prominent, I am not certain that they are any nearer solution. We pointed out, for instance, that women tended to be locked into in two different sets of roles, the outside job and traditional housekeeping and childrearing, which presented her with a set of difficult logistics. Our treatment of those complications, which derived largely from Torsten Hägerstrand, has stood the test of time and indeed has become the basis of significant research in a number of countries. We suggested the development of a kind of "campus" workplace near the home, where work and life could be intermingled, thus removing most mobility problems; but we recognized that this was utopian, and we saw clearly that conventional public transport could not meet the complex demands imposed by shuttling between work and child-rearing. We further suggested that the answer to these problems lay in a rediscovery and a reinterpretation of the extended family, based on voluntary recognition of the need for mutual support and mutual aid. We said, honestly enough, that "It is not at all clear how this could operate, and in particular how it could become reasonably universal." It could not presumably operate on the old basis of blood relationship; it would need to be based on some other kind of affinity, perhaps local, perhaps professional. Again, we said that the idea appeared fairly utopian; but we thought that there were signs of a change, particularly in the appearance of communal groups that had begun to proliferate on a great number of issues, often on a very local basis, across Europe. I cannot claim that the last decade has made much difference, but the dilemma

remains and is perhaps -- generally recognized, if only because the number of women in the workforce has continued to rise.

When it came to class division and class relationships, we emphasized a phenomenon which we saw rapidly growing: a marginal population, lacking the protection of either professional status or traditional unionization, and existing on the fringe of the regularly employed workforce. "Even in the case of expansion," we concluded, "structural marginality is here to stay." Nothing that has happened since 1977 could cause us to alter that definition. Indeed, the most conspicuous feature in labour relations in the 1980s -- the reduction in trades union membership and the weakening of traditional industrial trades union organization -- has if anything reinforced it. (In all honesty, I should add that we failed to predict it; we assumed that the unions would resist very strongly any attempt to reduce their membership.) When we look at the obsessive interest in the United States in the phenomenon of an urban underclass, and when we notice the discussions here in Europe about the development of a similar manifestation, we are compelled to the conclusion that this is a further expression of the phenomenon we sought to describe.

But the history does underline also our conclusion: that the marginal groups -- middle-class people whose savings have been eroded by inflation, semi-skilled workers who feel they have been displaced by immigrants, these same immigrants who have been laid off, one-parent families, school dropouts, deviants, and personality failures -- "make up an oddly disparate army, hardly the stuff of revolution." "Thus," we went on, "any disruption will take the form of spontaneous uprisings, individual incidents, isolated occupations and sit-ins, posing no immediate threat to the structure of society." Looking at the history of the decade, including a number of unpleasant incidents in Europe this year, I am nevertheless still inclined to argue that this view has proved right. Organiz-

ing this strange army would be simply too difficult, unless one imagines some kind of intellectual neo-fascist catalyst. And that would take a greater measure of distress in mainstream society than we have yet seen, even at the nadir of the early 1980s recession.

That brings me to what we called, in the penultimate chapter of the book, the heart of the matter. It still is, if only because we made it so. Europe 2000 still stands or falls, surely, on the core of its argument: that, as we put it at the start of Chapter 11, "a large part of the European population is alienated from the world it lives in," but that it might be surmountable "through the gradual, perhaps painfully gradual replacement of the existing rationality by a new rationality more in accord with the basic human needs of our society, both present and immediately future." We defined this condition, alienation, as "the process by which an individual becomes to such a degree divorced from a true assessment of a given situation (e.g. his relationship with other people and with things) that he either acts self-destructively or is incapable of free action." People become mere means to your ends, and conversely you become the means to someone else's ends.

Now, this concept, which derives from a whole literature in psychology and sociology, is very difficult to establish in any absolute sense; it cannot be proven, it cannot be demonstrated, objectively. It can be identified only when the individual recognizes it as such; when the scales drop from his or her eyes. This gives a basic difficulty in using it as the centre of a predictive exercise. Europe 2000 essentially argues that at some point, people will become conscious of their true situation; they will acquire real insight. But when, and why? Is it because at some point the contradictions become intolerable; that people sense that their lives constitute a lie? Such a transition is quite possible, even plausible; notice how, in the past few months, so many

people in eastern Europe have used this kind of language, that they were living a lie and now they have the truth. But we were making a much more sweeping generalization than that: a generalization that was equally condemnatory of twentieth-century capitalism and twentieth-century state socialism. We were arguing that both failed to recognize the true character of the human being and of human society.

We were specific, in 1977, that this was still a very inchoate sense. It was shared by people on the left and on the right of the political spectrum, but there was no agreement on causes or on remedies: both traditional social democratic solutions, and an attempt to return to the unbridled free market, would return us very quickly to our starting-point; or so we argued. We thought that sooner or later, there would be a reaction against the true villain, which was unaccountable corporatism. It might take a Poujadist form; it might force some real devolution of power. Perhaps prophetically, we said that "Which direction it takes depends . . . on how fast the left gets away from its nationalisation-solves-all approach and evolves a more worthwhile anti-corporate, anti-bureaucratic, anti-centralisation programme."

That, some of you may now argue, was muddled. Perhaps, at that time, we were too obsessed by what some of us saw as a coming crisis in mainline European social democratic thought; I could claim that we were right there, but in consequence, you might say, we entirely failed to predict the continued strength and attraction of free market ideologies, whether alienating or not. I am inclined to admit that there was this slightly ingrown or inbred quality in our thinking, understandable perhaps when one considers the composition of the committee. But that is not all of it.

The real criticism of our approach, I think, would be that it ignored political processes. Or, perhaps more fairly, that it failed to give them the

prominence that they deserved. That stems from the fact that our main intellectual input came from academic sociology rather than from academic political science. Our defence would be that we were writing about very long-run tendencies, the direction of which the political process would modify, in the form of a kind of noise on the graph, but would not fundamentally alter. Thus we could still argue that our long-run scenario would come true, even though there might be many apparent counter-currents; the same argument that I earlier used.

The fact is that strength of our central argument was also, paradoxically, its weakness: it was that we were writing about very deep tendencies under those surface currents. We argued that the present economic rationality would be replaced by what we called cultural rationality: a rationality which gave full weight to the importance of individual self-fulfillment and human self-esteem. We stressed that this change was not inevitable; nor did its realization require some kind of social breakdown; it needed, we said, "a will and an historic effort." That was the essence of our predictive style: in isolating the change as desirable, in arguing that powerful forces would help it happen, we were nevertheless conscious that our own work might help serve in some way as catalyst.

That was well expressed, I think, in the opening words of our final chapter. "The central aim of all forecasting and all planning," we wrote, "was pinpointed by Karl Mannheim in the 1930s: it is to bridge the gap between ideological and utopian thinking." Ideological thinking, in this Mannheimian sense, argues that we are heavily constrained by the burden of the past; utopian thinking, in contrast, sees the world in terms of a preferred future. Thus, "Utopians will accuse ideologists of being justifiers of the status quo; ideologists will accuse utopians of being historically unrealistic." Neither could by itself explain how historical change happened: the first because it assumed the future

would be fundamentally like the past, the second because it could not demonstrate how fundamental change could ever arise out of the existing situation. And, equally, neither could illuminate the central dilemma of planning as a human activity, which was how to get purposively from here to there.

I still think, as I re-read this passage, that we were making an important statement there. It is a statement of a dilemma that is fundamental to our activities both as scholars and as practical people. We went back to Mannheim's argument, which we argued was not too different from that of Marx: it was to find the principia media, the guiding levers or strategic system parameters, which can help guide both the direction and above all the speed of social change. Here we went back to the notion of contradiction, which has obsessed philosophers since ancient times: we said, "If one really wishes to move the levers of social change, as Mannheim advocated, one should look first at the developing counter-eddy under the apparently smooth wave of history: the disaffected group, the radical ideology (whether of right or left), the rival product or firm or nation."

We went on, in that final chapter, to isolate six key trends which, we argued, would pose acute problems for Europe in the 1980s and 1990s. The first was deepening international economic crisis, arising from the steadily weakening position of the advanced industrial nations vis-à-vis the newly-industrializing countries. The second was world conflict over resource use. The third was the collapse of the older agrarian society of Europe based on mutual extended-family or neighbourhood relationships. The fourth, you might say its concomitant, was the increasing alienation of many sections of society, especially the young people, from the mainstream. The fifth, stemming from it, was the threat of polarization of the entire society. And, associated with this, was a final problem: access to information, including the generation of a new style of

education suitable for lifelong learning in a rapidly-changing world. This list, we argued, was strikingly unoriginal: what was striking about all such exercises in forecasting was their similarity.

And similarly with the answers. We found again a striking agreement in the literature of the time about the key ideas, which in turn would provide answers to these dilemmas. The first was the need for society to become much more resource-conserving, particularly with reference to energy. The second was a movement away from using machines in mass production, to using tools under the direct control of the worker, allowing what Ivan Illich called convivial work. The third would be an emphasis on the quality of both work, and of the product that resulted. The fourth was the reorganization of social and economic life in small-scale units: units small enough for people to relate to each other as individuals, but big enough to perform essential functions such as education, housing, welfare, and employment: say, small towns of between 30,000 and 50,000 people. And, stemming from this, was the idea that such communal units would be participative in their decision-making.

We dealt, head-on, with the obvious objection: that these ideas were utopian in the pejorative sense, that is to say unrealistic. Against that, we could argue that on the contrary they represented the only logical way out of our present dilemmas. We ended, then, with a sketch of life in the year 2000. We said that this life would be transitional between the life of the 1970s, and the new kind of society which would gradually emerge. We spelt out six key features of this transitional society.

The first was that many of the basic necessities of life would be more expensive and hard to obtain. That would particularly apply to energy and other non-renewable resources. The second was that people would tend to work in rather small units -- small workshops, small offices -- within local communities close

to people's homes. The third was that these units would use technologies in a different way, as ancillary to work rather than substitutes for labour; and that many people would do more than one job, thus breaking down barriers of class and sex. We argued that the nature of the economy would be different: that far fewer people would be found working in mass industrial production, far more in craft production, arts and entertainment, and education. The fourth was that there would be a new stress on ecologically responsible agriculture, with ex-urbanites combining small-scale farming with craft or service activities. The fifth was that European industry would concentrate far more on high-tech production, R&D, craft industry, and service industry, all of which could be decentralized into small units with a good deal of autonomy over decisions. "These units," we said, "may or not remain members of larger productive organisations; whatever the case, such large organisations will almost certainly tend to be reorganised on a federal basis by the year 2000." Finally, we argued, "This will be rather a serious, concerned society. It will be very concerned with its own survival in the face of unprecedented challenges." It would thus be a rather puritanical society, "intensely concerned with the pursuit of individual quality in man's relations with his work, his environment and his fellows."

How realistic was all this? How likely will it be, in a brief ten years' time? I am inclined to say, as I come to the end of this talk, that I leave the verdict to you, the jury. I would merely say this in our defence. First, to repeat: this is not a fixed scenario for the year 2000. It might well appear to be overlain by other contrary tendencies in that year, perhaps indeed by the general euphoria over the coming of the millennium. Secondly, insofar as one can trace the deep trends, I think that they are going exactly in the direction we forecast, and perhaps at the right speed. To take some obvious examples, we shall surely see a revolution in our attitude to resources, above all energy

resources, because of the greenhouse effect. We are going to have to adopt global policies that will make these resources much more expensive, perhaps more so than we expected. Secondly, we everywhere see a new stress on small-scale units, on so-called flexible specialization, in production. And this has become the dominant theme in industrial organization, and in all discussion of it, during the 1980s. Thirdly, what we could call accessible tools have spread at a speed which even we failed to predict. The incredible sophistication of electronic technology, available at modest and constantly decreasing cost to the modern small office, would have seemed incredible to us; I look away from my personal computer and see the text of my original talk to you, painfully typed out on a portable manual typewriter, which looks like something from a technological stone age. And I turn to look at the OECD statistics, where indeed I find a constant movement of all advanced economies toward the service sector. I look at the debates on farming, including the recurrent panics over current farming practices and their impact on the quality of our food, one of which is currently obsessing the British public; and I conclude that here, too, our prediction was on target. As to whether this would be a serious, concerned, puritanical society, I can only say that this would follow almost inevitably from the concerns that would occupy us if these other trends came true.

So I rest my case there. We certainly got some of the details wrong, including some big details. But details, after all, were not our concern. The question you must ask yourselves, as I have asked myself, is whether that failure compromises the quality of our longer-distance vision. Perhaps this is the time for me to stop talking to you, and for you to start putting your own reactions to what I have said. Again, thank you for your invitation and for your attention.

