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Expanding partnerships around the globe, Northern Iowa Today, Winter 2000

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What will *tomorrow* bring?

Gazing in a crystal ball is one way to try to read the future. Extrapolating from the past is another. And just guessing is a third. We've asked a number of people connected with UNI for their visions of the future on topics that interest them. Their answers provide a sometimes surprising, sometimes contradictory, but always intriguing look at possibilities for our lives in the next century.

Taking Care of Business

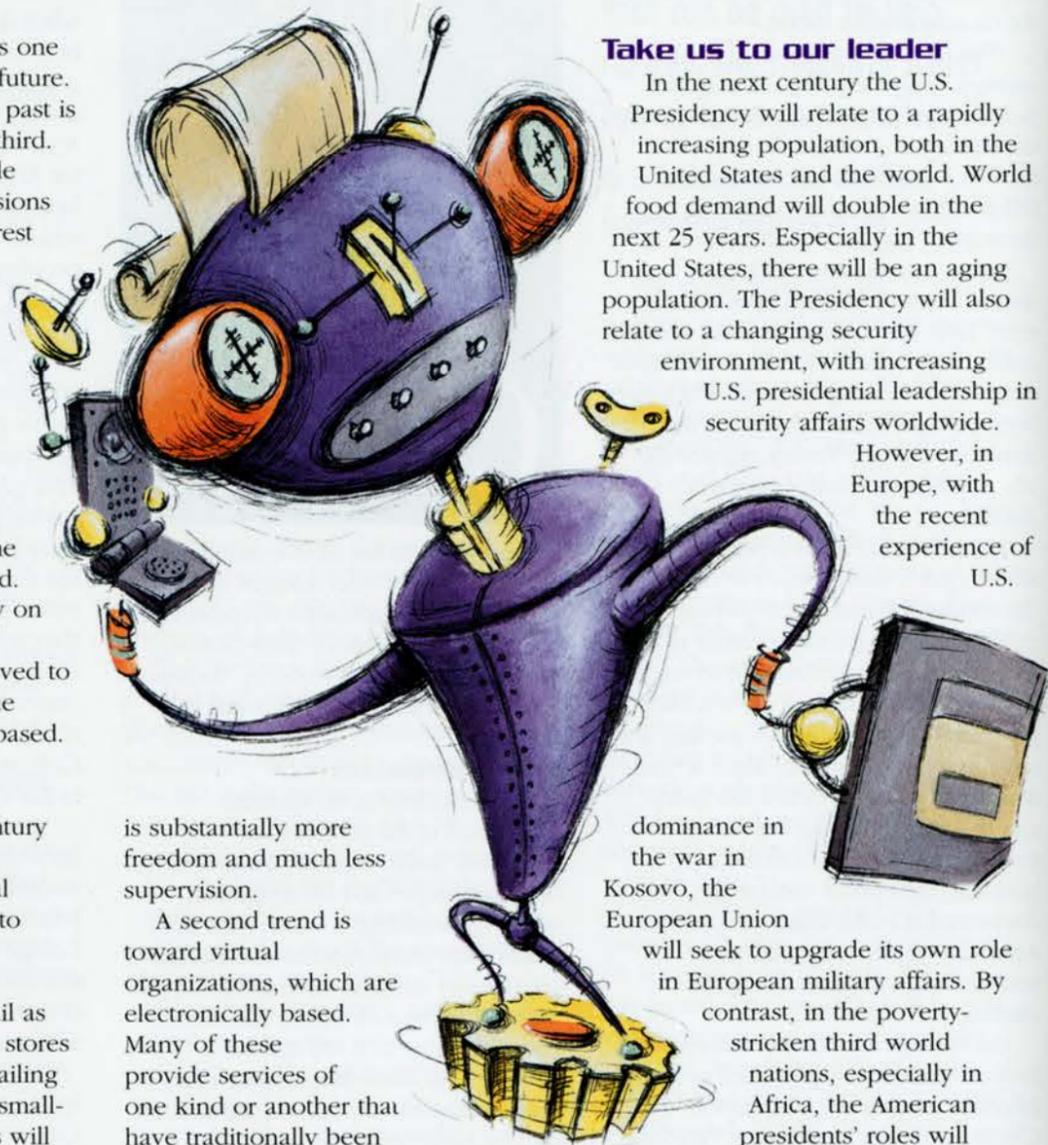
The United States will become the service provider to the world. Our economy will rely primarily on knowledge workers and more assembly operations will be moved to underdeveloped countries. Value creation will be all knowledge based. Middle management jobs will disappear. In fact, most of the jobs/professions of the next century do not exist today. A college education (or at least a technical degree) will become necessary to survive and thrive in the new economy.

E-commerce will change retail as we know it. For example, retail stores will serve as distribution and mailing centers for Internet sales. Also, small- and medium-sized communities will struggle with maintaining a retail presence.

*Randal R. Pilkington, Director
Institute for Decision Making
University of Northern Iowa
With contributions from LaDene
Bowen, Don Chaplain, Bill
Wood and James Hoelscher*

The way we work

The trends that have already begun will accelerate. One of them is a decrease in the importance of where one sits while working. More and more people work by computer at home or almost anywhere. The result



Take us to our leader

In the next century the U.S. Presidency will relate to a rapidly increasing population, both in the United States and the world. World food demand will double in the next 25 years. Especially in the United States, there will be an aging population. The Presidency will also relate to a changing security environment, with increasing U.S. presidential leadership in security affairs worldwide.

However, in Europe, with the recent experience of U.S.

is substantially more freedom and much less supervision.

A second trend is toward virtual organizations, which are electronically based. Many of these provide services of one kind or another that have traditionally been offered only face-to-face, such as legal services or home security services. Such services obviously change the nature of people's work and the organizations within which the work is performed.

A third trend is toward larger and more loosely organized companies. The number of mergers and acquisitions will continue to increase and this will result in those larger and looser organizations.

*David Whitsett
Professor of Psychology
University of Northern Iowa*

dominance in the war in Kosovo, the European Union will seek to upgrade its own role in European military affairs. By contrast, in the poverty-stricken third world nations, especially in Africa, the American presidents' roles will increase. In the Americas,

however, the presidents' leadership roles will be reduced, acknowledging the "Yankee go-home" environment. This was signaled at the end of 1999 by the United States giving up control of the Panama Canal.

Here at home, the president will be faced with problems relating to an increasingly aging population, health care programs, welfare reform, crime, violence in schools and the need to assess affirmative action.

Presidential confrontation with the Congress and the Courts will continue in keeping with the genius of the

American Constitution. As a result, the increasingly dominant roles of presidents will slow down, as will presidents "flying by the seat of their pants." Some presidents will continue in the Kennedy-Johnson model, acting as their own chiefs of staff and prefer ad hoc to formalized administrations. However, the Eisenhower model with a chief of staff and defined positions will increasingly grow in an exacting, computerized nation and world.

*R. Gordon Hoxie, '40
Founder, Chairman Emeritus
Center for the Study of the
Presidency*

Entertainment Tomorrow

In the next century, I believe we will see a dramatic change in the way we receive information. Appointment television will be replaced by a type of on-command viewing allowing viewers to elect programming when it best suits their schedule. Broadcast television will be replaced by a wireless Internet service providing a plethora of websites, thus eliminating traditional channels of televisions. Any program, no matter how recent or archived, will be possible to retrieve by using point-and-click technology.

I also believe the two-dimensional television screen will become obsolete. A more sophisticated 3-D image will heighten our viewing experience without the assistance of awkward eyewear. A type of hologram will replace the flat screen providing us with a more comprehensive image to be watched from all angles.

*Mark Steines, '86
Weekend Anchor
"Entertainment Tonight"*

Expanding partnerships around the globe

My current responsibilities focus my thoughts for the new millennium on Africa and how to further America's partnership with this complex continent. The hope of its people for peace, freedom and prosperity, which was kindled by the end of the cold war and a wave of economic and political reform, continues unabated.

This hope is fueled by remarkable successes taking place in the midst of grave problems, including endemic poverty, ongoing wars and the scourge of the AIDS epidemic. Half of Africa's nations now embrace a form of democratic government, including Nigeria, Africa's most populous country. Continent-wide economic growth continues to register close to 4 percent, but that is not enough to create the markets and jobs necessary to propel Africans out of systemic poverty.

As Americans, it is important that we both strengthen and expand our partnership with the region. More and more Americans and Africans alike recognize that our mutual interests, whether in the areas of security, economics or diplomacy, are best served by closer cooperation as partners.

*Nancy Powell, '70
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary
of State for African Affairs
U.S. Department of State*

Reaching a Global Economy?

I feel the best way to consider the probability of achieving a Global Economy is to analyze whether it makes sense! An even cursory view of world history proves that societies, economies and even politics rush to fill the demand of efficiency and changing public opinion. One of the best and recent examples of this phenomenon is the collapse of communism and reunification of Germany. It simply made more sense for the people and the governments to allow the rapid evolution to a capitalist economy and to a unified Germany.

The evolution to a Global Economy will occur when it makes sense to a vast majority of the participants. Certainly the momentum of change is in the direction of economic globalization. The main benefactor will be the biggest player and that, undoubtedly, is the United States.

*Russell Wasendorf, Sr.
Chairman & Chief Executive Officer
Peregrine Financial Group, Inc.*

School Daze

A hundred years from now elementary students will clip on a headset, and, as my 11-year-old 'Net generation friends tell me, the "computer will get into their heads and pick up thought transmissions." This will assist in teaching key 21st-century skills, such as content knowledge, problem solving and information analysis. Also, virtual reality simulations and real-time communications that are seamless, universal and perhaps even wordless will change learning activities in the future.

*Joan M. Vandervelde, Instructor
College of Education
University of Northern Iowa*

And the virtual school house

An innovation that may prove to significantly change our way of teaching is virtual reality. Already, students in archeology explore computerized "virtual digs," and the technology that will allow us to have in our homes and schools some form of "holo-decks," such as we see in the science fiction program "Star Trek," or other virtual reality technology, may not be that far away.

Economics may move away from the historical campus model of teaching and learning, to a more self-directed model. Students might gather at a specific common site, but are more likely to remain at home to take classes. They would participate, at their own pace, in self-directed learning activities delivered through interactive computer-based virtual environment programs.

This model is the most revolutionary and the most threatening to education as we think of it historically. It proposes that students can learn on their own and breaks the mold of historical, conventional student-teacher interaction. It is far removed from the "school house" concept that we are used to.

*Paul J. Siddens III, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of
Communication Studies
University of Northern Iowa*