

ICA 40th Conference
First Session

“WHOLE OF GOVERNMENT” Visions, Strategies and Challenges



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Defining “Whole of Government”.

This concept of governance means to view an entire government and the interaction or dependencies between its organizational components in order to make decisions for the good of the totality.

The “Whole of Government” approach has three phases:

In the first phase governments consolidate similar functions such as personnel management, budgeting, help desk servicing, telecommunications, identity cards, and many other back office functions performed in all agencies. After consolidation, these functions are provided by a single service (or a few services) to all agencies.

In the next phase the focus is on programmatic systems with a “government without boundaries” view. The Centrelink system in Australia which combined some 25,000 people from eight service delivery programs into one new agency is an example of this more advanced approach to “Whole of Government” approach to management.

In the third phase the idea is to consider all programs as integrated. Decisions are made for the good of the government as a whole. Canada and Switzerland are among the countries that think at this level because their constitutions focus on the good of the whole. It is different in the United States where the Constitution focuses on the individual. Canada and Switzerland may have an advantage in climbing up to a “Whole of Government” view.

In time, all developed governments will move at their own pace through these three phases. The speed at which they move will depend primarily on their culture and political systems.

Progressing through these phases will require a good sense of the macro trends in the world surrounding governments, positive conditions for managing in their government, and a wise, not cheerleader, use of the many emerging technologies.

"Whole of government" faces difficulties.

Whole of government is a goal which at present is proving hard to achieve, much less even talk about, in some countries including my own. Some current governments are like a worm cut in pieces with each part wriggling in every which way direction.

Many governments move slowly and once on a new direction, they will stay on that course for a long time. Governments change rarely. Normally change does not occur until there is a crisis like an economic depression. Change can occur when there is severe unrest among the population or when waste and corruption become so bad and so obvious that even the citizens cry out for change

David Walker, the Comptroller General of the Government Accountability Office (GAO), said recently that the US government does not have a strategic plan and never has. This makes it difficult to take a "whole of government" view.

The US Congress, at the same time, benefits from a "silo government" as does industry.

Far be it from me, Frank McDonough, to suggest that individual members of Congress care about anything other than an efficient well-run government. But, as the US Congress rejects the consolidation of services and programs, it is worth asking whether the members prefer to continue isolating government programs in silos to allow more chairmanships for its members?

From an industry standpoint, Mark Forman once said, why do we need 100 contracts with Company X to do essentially the same thing? It is obvious that one government-wide contract will be far cheaper in the long run than 100. A silo government with agency programs isolated from each other benefits industry in terms of revenue and it benefits Congress by allowing a wider distribution of power to more members.

In the meantime more enlightened officials in other governments such as Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and Singapore, to mention a few, are making important strides toward the government of the future. The US is left behind preserving its industrial age model of governance representing a rusted out 25-year-old taxi in an emerging country.

Culture is a special problem facing "whole of government" proponents.

The US Department of Homeland Security must work with complex cultures across its many different agencies.

This five year old organization has been attempting to consolidate 130,000 people from 28 agencies into a single operating department. In this extraordinary management challenge, a major problem is that the cultures in the 28 agencies are quite different. Three examples make this point.

The US Customs Service has over 200 years of history dating back to the first days of the United States as a nation. After President George Washington signed the Tariff Act of July 4, 1789, which authorized the collection of duties on imported goods, Congress in its 5th act followed up 27 days later and established Customs on July 31, 1789.

The United States Coast Guard traces its history back to August 4, 1790, when the first Congress authorized the construction of ten vessels to enforce tariff and trade laws, prevent smuggling, and protect the collection of the federal

revenue. Eight of these vessels were built for \$1,000 each. The two that had to face severe winters off the New England coast cost a little more.

The Secret Service protects the President and holds a special position of trust and access. The Secret Service originated on July 5, 1865 to suppress counterfeit currency. After the assassination of President McKinley in 1901 the Service was legislated by law to protect the President.

These agencies are unlikely to relinquish their proud heritage and cooperate easily with latecomers with spotted reputations. The Federal Emergency Management Administration, for example, is notorious for its poor response to the people during and after hurricane Katrina in New Orleans last year. The complex cultures in the Department of Homeland Security require orchestra leaders and there are few of these at high levels in this country.

Observations about technology from the World Future Society conference in Toronto, July 28-30, 2006.

By 2020 computer power will increase by a factor of one billion. Will the software be there to make a difference to 99% of government requirements?

Computers will match the power of the human brain by 2020.

Complete mapping of the brain should be completed by 2010 opening the door to new possibilities to repair problems in this centre of intelligence.

Grid computing is growing at the rate of 80% per year. Grid computing, makes use of the unused resources (CPU cycles and/or disk storage) of large numbers of disparate computers, often desktop computers. It offers information technology as a utility with clients paying only for what they use, as with electricity or water.

Grids offer a way to solve Grand Challenge problems like protein folding, financial modeling, earthquake simulation, and climate/weather modeling while retaining the flexibility to work concurrently on multiple smaller problems.

All IT resources are deflating in cost by 50% each year, but the savings are rarely passed on to the public in any significant way.

Futurist studies by George Washington University do not see significant innovation in computer technology beyond 2020. It may be that the computer industry will pass into deep maturity after a 60 year period of impressive progress.

Hackers reportedly are extorting more money from companies than the dollars that result from the illegal drug trade.

What will come next after the computer age which may end around 2020? The material age is one possibility led by nanotechnology. Beginning in 2050, deep space travel will be as important as was computer technology in the 1960's.

Knowledge management is good but it has no soul without vision, values, and beliefs. These comprise the dimension beyond pure KM.

One trillion devices with chips will be connected in 10 years. Computers as we know them in 2006 will disappear because computing power will be in everything including clothes we wear.

Other directions from my research.

The transition to population management using technology.

Great Britain and the United States are shifting the use of their executive powers from humanitarian-type governments, in existence for 50 years, to population control. Wiretapping, Internet monitoring, use of commercial data bases and data mining are all being used to identify and track the activities of individuals. Also, surveillance video cameras are proving popular additions to the tool kit of enforcement agencies.

Great Britain has an extensive surveillance network: London alone has 200,000 cameras, and many sources report that more than 4 million surveillance cameras are deployed throughout the country. It is estimated that there is one camera for every 14 people and the average Briton is seen by 300 cameras per day. The number of cameras is growing daily.

In the next few years many more video cameras could be installed in buses, trains, taxi cabs, police cars, bus stations, train stations, airports, stores, banks, office building and other public and commercial sites. Each site could have hundreds or thousands of cameras. Heathrow airport for example, could have surveillance cameras installed in stairwells, hallways, elevators, lobbies, garages, entrances, and on light posts outside the three terminals.

The US will not be outdone by its partner Great Britain. Millions of surveillance cameras in the US are being funded by the ample grant money available in the Department of Homeland Security

Agricultural Technology.

Genetically engineered crops are controversial; but, will be needed as global warming advances and water shortages occur in the world. Organic farming is popular in a niche in the US. Such products account for only 2% of the farm products sold to the public in the US. Wal-Mart has fallen in love with organic farming. With their distribution channels they can change the face of organic farming in the US. Wal-Mart as a "green company" is hard to imagine and it will be interesting although it will drive many small organic sellers out of business as it has done in most retail sectors.

Enhancing the performance of the human body

In the US a big unease in the media and in some religious communities is about the performance enhancing drugs used by the record setting Barry Bonds, the professional baseball player. Internationally, the disqualification of the 2006 winner of the Tour de France, Floyd Landis, is another example of the use of performance enhancing drugs. Greg Norman, the professional golfer, suggests

that golf needs a drug policy because of all of the discussions he hears on the circuit. The Commissioner says he doesn't see the need. The question now being asked is whether these suddenly big and powerful bodies emerging from formerly average or skinny bodies are due to chemicals rather than the "hard work in the gym?"

This is just the beginning. Genetics, robotics, and nanotechnology will be inserted into our bodies in the very near future to enhance the performance of each individual who cares about performance; or, to cure defects in one's body.

One example is cochlear implants which trigger auditory nerves to recreate the sensation of hearing. The success of these advanced hearing aids has researchers working on similar technologies to restore vision, reduce pain, and help people who have lost arms or legs.

Four companies are currently working on memory pills. Applicants to the prestige universities will certainly take the pills to score higher on the entrance examinations.

By 2020 nanotechnology at the atom level will be inserted into the body to search, find, and destroy cancer cells or any particular cell that it is targeted toward.

Robotics.

Technologically, the field of robotics is being led by Honda, Toyota and Sony. They already have robots with 60,000 word vocabularies, speech recognition, and 30 motor joints. They can run, climb stairs, and turn to face a voice.

Robots named Elderbots and nursebots are becoming available for and are very well accepted by senior citizens. Robots are being developed with interactive socializing skills. Elders in Japan love the baby seal robot named Paro. Sony has Aibo, a robotic dog. Senior citizens love robots and give them the same affection as they do with dogs and cats. Seniors feed their robot (even though they cannot eat). They cover them with a blanket at night and demonstrate affection during the waking hours. All homes are expected to have at least one robot to help out or to socialize with by 2020.

Ray Kurzweil, the inventor and premier futurist sees the convergence of robotics, genetics, and nanotechnology as a great step forward by humanity.

Gene technology.

Pandemics, which are hyped in the media, are viruses and therefore are genes. Once discovered, the pandemic virus can be turned off. The only question is how to manufacture 300 million doses of the antidote in the US alone when there are only three flu production plants in the western world (one in the US). After the elected officials in the national, state, and local governments, doctors, nurses, police officials, National Guard members, military officials and other "essential" officials receive their "shot" will Joe in South Dakota be dead and buried before antidote shots arrive on a Federal Express truck?

Medical scientists are studying the estimated 35,000 to 40,000 genes in our bodies, one at a time. Each one can be viewed as a single computer in our bodies.

Scientists are trying to learn what each of these genes does and particularly in combination with other genes. Born with a defective gene, genetic engineering will turn it off or replace it. The good news is that if you can hang on for the advances in the next few years you have a great chance to hang on until 2020 when the great medical advances will be available. Designer babies on a limited scale are already being produced where embryos still in the test tube are checked for Downs Syndrome, cystic fibrosis, or sickle-cell disease.

In 2004, 75% of the research in genetic engineering was conducted in the United States. However political and religious interests will allow other countries to stride ahead in certain areas. China, Korea, Singapore, and the U.K. among others are active in this area. In the long future, it is possible to predict the engineering of people to have superior stamina or strength, or to withstand the effects of gravity in space, or to be docile in relationship to the government. Genetic engineering of people will be a new area for competition between countries. And there will be unintended consequences as always. Stephen Hawking, commenting on Yahoo Answers on August 3, 2006, said: "Perhaps genetic engineering will make us wiser and less aggressive."

Nanotechnology

This is the manipulation of objects less than one billionth of one meter in size. Nanotechnology will slowly find its way into the products of many existing industries. By 2015, the market for such products will be about 41 trillion. The major industry users will be in the manufacturing and materials sector and in electronics, and health care.

The LiftPort Company located in Washington State is building a space elevator that will be three meters wide and 60,000 miles high. Astronauts and equipments will ride the elevator into space rather than being launched on top of a rocket. Delivering people and equipment into space is scheduled for 2018 at the earliest. At present, the product is one mile high tethered to a dirigible in the southeast part of the US.

A revolutionary way to send cargo into space, the space elevator (as proposed by LiftPort) will consist of a carbon nanotube composite ribbon stretching some 62,000 miles from earth to space. The elevator will be anchored to an offshore sea platform near the equator in the Pacific Ocean, and to a small counterweight in space. Mechanical lifters will move up and down the ribbon, carrying such items as satellites and solar power systems into space. More information can be obtained at the company's web site at <http://www.liftport.com/>

Nanotechnology, produced at the atom level, can copy it self and produce a billion identical copies in a year giving rise to concern about robots reproducing themselves and taking control of the humans.

In a related space project, Virgin Galactic is building a site in New Mexico to carry tourists into space. The company claims that 100,000 customers have paid the \$100,000 deposit. Launch will begin in 2010.

Looking Ahead.

As technologies such as robotics, genetic engineering, nanotechnology, and computer technology merge into one, can we see a model for future government? If sciences can merge without government intervention, why is that government programs, so similar, and serving the same client, the citizen, cannot merge?

The change continues. No government, no religion, no army can stop it. Change brings intended and unintended consequences. The intended consequences may not occur. But, you can be sure that the unintended consequences will.

There will be winners and losers as we proceed into the future. Luck and timing may play a role. But, anticipation of the future will help some to have a better chance at being a winner as a person or as a nation.

What would it be like if all the walls came down in government? What if we all had a "whole of government" view? What could be done to make better use of the resources of each nation? What are the possibilities for the government of the future? I have identified some of the cultural and management issues in this discussion. Emerging conditions in the world and in technology suggest many intriguing possibilities for the next 15 or so years. Important insights and answers will come from the discussions at this ICA conference here in Guadalajara this week.

As we view these developments, we ask ourselves will governments that are resisting a whole of government approach to date to be able to sustain their opposition to "whole of government" management as these changes across all technologies enter society.

At the same time, some governments are making progress with the "whole of government". Australia and Singapore are two of these countries and this morning we are happy to have two senior executives from these countries with us and ready to speak about how they and their countries are making headway already with "whole of government"