



Yours Truly poses as The Swedish Chef to illustrate an eponymous magazine feature about my studio in Stockholm | 1987.

Appendix II

A Conglomeration of Miscellany

Including:

Epic Productions [Incredible Imagers] 1987 Address List

Nanuc | A screenplay by Douglas Mesney | 1982

File Under: Historical Footnotes

Continued from

An Incredible Epic

Appendix I | Volume Six



Appendix II

A Conglomeration of Miscellany

Supplement to

An Incredible Epic

Memoir of A Multi-Image Maestro

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An Incredible Epic is a confabulation¹ based on the circumstances of my life. No part of this book may be used or reproduced without written permission except in the case of brief quotations to be used in critical articles and reviews. The electronic form of this book can in no way, partially or entirely, be copied, reproduced, or forwarded. For exceptions, licenses, permissions, and other information, contact the author: douglas@mesney.com

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The author has researched the information contained in this book to check accuracy. The opinions expressed in this book are solely based upon the author's own experience.

The author assumes no responsibility for errors and inaccuracies.

Resemblances to persons living or dead may be coincidental.

Some names may not be real.

Unless otherwise credited, photographs and artwork are the work of the author.

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¹ In *The Trip to Echo Spring* by Olivia Laing, confabulation is described as "so-called 'honest lying' or false memories." I would add that, we remember (and edit) selectively what we like and repress what we don't. Wikipedia defines the term as: "... a memory error defined as the production of fabricated, distorted, or misinterpreted memories about oneself or the world, without the conscious intention to deceive."

Notes to Reader

- *An Incredible Epic* is a work in progress; being expanded and upgraded as new articles and pictures become available. New versions are periodically published. You can see your Edition Number on the title page (iii).
- Volumes Nine and is filled with pictures that relate to the first six volumes. Volume Eleven has even more, woven into a 1982 treatise; a precursor to *An Incredible Epic* about how to produce multi-image shows, called "Confessions of a Multi-Image Maniac."
- As the Epic has evolved materially, so too has the refinement of its style(s). Please excuse the small inconsistencies you will encounter. And please don't fret about any spelling errors; they are elusive little buggers; let me know about them, please.
- The Epic was split into seven parts when the size of the single-volume files overwhelmed Microsoft Word (I should have used Adobe InDesign). The index (Volume Eight) could not be split and ceased being updated. Thus, it is of limited usefulness, covering only the content in the original manuscript – about 80% of Volumes One through Seven.
- Although unable to contact every person or publisher about the reproduction of their likeness or work, this book is a non-profit treatise written for historical and educational purposes. I hope nobody is unduly offended for their contribution(s) to this confabulation.¹ Please notify me of discrepancies, inaccuracies, omissions.

¹ Confabulation has been variously described as so-called 'honest lying' or false memories fabricated, distorted, or misinterpreted about oneself or the world, without the conscious intention to deceive. I would add that, we remember (and edit) selectively what we like and repress what we don't.



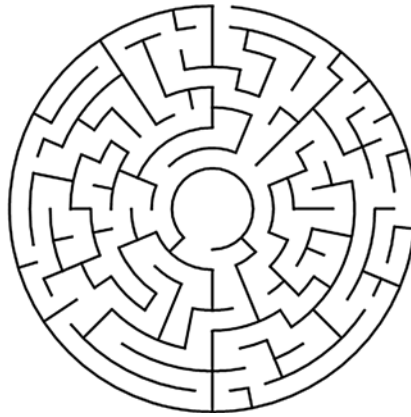
In memory of these mentors, colleagues, and friends, who departed during the production of *An Incredible Epic*:

Phillip Augustin	Thomas Leong
Carl Beckman	Tom Lorentzen
Kirk Beeler	Jimmy McCann
Max Bjurhem	Chris McDevitt
Gene Butera	Art Milanese
John Connolly	Don O'Neill
Wiley "Crash" Crockett	Geoff Nightingale
Jane Dauber	David Nolte
John Guild	Bob Peterson
Peter Grunert	Lindsay Rodda
Nils Gunnebro	John Sacrenty
Lars "Tummen" Haldenberg	Jim Sant'Andrea
Kurt Hjelte	Rick Sorgel
Burt Holmes	Larry Spasic
Brad Hood	Charlie Spataro
Doreen Jacklin	John Stapsy
Ed Just	Christine Ströman
Chuck Kappenman	Donald Sutherland
Bryan King	Randolf Taylor
Tony Korody	Glen Tracy
Alan Kozlowski	Duffie White
Stas Kudla	Randy Will
Craig "Buddha" Law	Constantine Zacharious

With appreciation for their contributions to my life and well-being.



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"You have to go where the story leads you."

Stephen King (PBS interview)

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Appendix II

A Conglomeration of Miscellany

PREFACE

There was a large cabinet in the dining room of the family house in Douglaston. The top half was a glass-doored display case with shelves. The bottom half had a row of three shelves above wood-doored cabinetry. The left drawer was called the 'Catch-All' because it contained a conglomeration miscellaneous stuff that didn't belong anywhere else or was waiting to be put away.

Twenty years later, when I started making slide shows, I had an 'Everything Book' containing a diverse collection of miscellaneous slides culled from out-takes that didn't belong in any particular section of the picture archives. Ten years after that, there was an entire shelf of Everything Books. If you were in a pinch, there was always *something* to be found in those books that would save the day – especially for mindblowers.

And forty years after that, here I am in the same situation: stuck with a min-mountain of material that is tangential to the Epic; that doesn't 'fit' in the original eight volumes or the subsequent four; but is too good to toss; to not include *somewhere*.

Ostensibly, the stuff in this volume belongs in the Appendix (Volume Six). However, that volume is already huge cannot be expanded without creating page-number problems for all subsequent volumes – Seven through Thirteen.

Thus, Volume Thirteen is Appendix II.

Putting together this book has been no unlike an archeologist sifting through layers; the deeper the older. My files are like those layers, and I have been working my way backwards through collections of pictures and memorabilia sorted and ranked by their 'importance'. With the story told, now I embellish it with more stuff, as I dig deeper into the files.

INTRODUCTION

Volume Thirteen is a work in progress and will likely be the last of the Epic series. Look for periodic updates (check the Volume Date on the masthead page. I'm skipping the Backstory in this volume; you can find it in Volume Nine, along with updates for 2022 as of summer. Picking-up from there... Where the update left off, I had moved back to Lancaster Gate from Sechelt. Having readjusted and gotten all systems up and running, I resumed work on the Epic.

2022-2023 Update

Later that autumn, in November, I had a scheduled check-up with my hematologist, Jorge Denegri. Two days before that, I had my blood worked up at Lifelabs; the results were less than stellar—way worse than the tests taken in Sechelt, just before I left, about two months earlier, in August. That came as a complete surprise because since the summer I had been eating apricot kernels, which contain vitamin B-17—amygdalin—(aka Laetrile)—which many use as a natural way to kill or control cancer. The way it does that is by poisoning cancer cells. When the kernels are broken-down by digestion, cyanide is released. Cancer cells are less cyanide resistant than healthy cells—that is, if you don't overdo a good thing. That I can tell you from experience. I am the kind of guy who reckons that if one is good, two is better. Instead of limiting my intake to the two-or-three kernels per day most recommend, I was taking about a dozen a day. After nearly a month of that, my vitality was fading. Bi-monthly blood work showed that my oxygen and iron were way low and my lymphocytes way high. Not good. Plus, my lymph glands were swollen. I had poisoned myself; overdosed on cyanide.

Then, in October, I began 'urotherapy'. Pam started first, in September, after reading a dozen books about it; and reported that her back pains had gone away. Turns out that drinking one's urine has a long history of medicinal use; I won't bore you with details that you can look-up on your own (I recommend you do). Urine is your own personalized 'medicine' containing the excess output of everything your body makes to function; more than 3,000 substances, including stem cells. Contents vary throughout the day and night, as your body deals with normal functions and disfunctions. Anyway, I started urotherapy and was on it for three weeks before another blood test, two days before my appointment with the doctor. Guess what? My blood looked significant better. Oxygen had dropped to 80 but was now back to 120, which is the new normal for me. But Denegri didn't want to hear anything about any of that. He claimed to have never heard about urotherapy (say what?) and wanted me to get chemo therapy for my leukemia, starting four months later, in February (2022). He said it was better to do chemo now; that chemo was more problematic after age 80. Long story short, I got talked into it. There would be six rounds of two chemicals, once every month, from February through August. During the intervening months—November through January—I continued urotherapy, but discontinued the apricot kernels; my body needed to heal from the cyanide poisoning.

I felt lousy after the first chemo session—my skin even started peeling away—and came to the realization that chemo was a.) destroying my immune system, and b.) tough on my one remaining kidney. I reckoned that a weak immune system was not a good idea in light of the Covid situation and decided to quit the program. Denegri was pissed-off. He said: "...you don't need me anymore," and dropped me from his practice. (!) But, that was OK; he was right. Chemicals were his only tools and I wanted to go 'Natural'.

I came to believe that a proper diet supplies the body with everything it needs to fight infection and defeat or disable disease. Nature provides antidotes for everything; it's the yin-yang of life. Good nutrition is not all that's needed for good health; but, what do they say, "You are what you eat"?

It's been nearly two years since the chemo. I continue with the urotherapy and resumed the amygdalin, taking one teaspoon of ground apricot kernels per day, every other month. In addition, once a month a take 12 mg of Ivermectin; that's to blow out any parasites.

And, so far, so good. My conditions have stabilized; so, 'on with the show.'

The whole episode was a not-so-subtle reminder of my mortality. It provided an impetus to get on with the Epic and start getting rid of things that could make Pam's life more difficult 'when the time comes.' By now, most of the things I have—and there's a lot of them—are the precious stuff; e.g., negatives, slides, and my artwork, or what's left of it. It's the stuff that's survived all previous culls; the stuff I find almost impossible to part with; the stuff I am 'made of.' I have said to myself over and over, and proven to myself that nobody wants any of it. In a previous edition I explained how I couldn't even give pictures away; and the most recent episode borderlines on the absurd: Not wanting to simply throw away more than one hundred rolled prints and canvases of my illustrations, I donated them to a local gallery and frame shop called, Lost Lagoon. The gallery is run by a super-hip young Japanese gal; loads of tattoos and piercings; piercing eyes; self confident; easy on the eyes; I would be her grandfather's age.

I made an appointment by phone and dressed-up to make the pitch: she could have it all, even my classic black-and-white work. She was suspicious at first, but agreed to take my work; I was over the moon and spent the next week organizing the rolled prints, labeling them and making a visual index. When I arrived at the gallery with everything, Mico told me to stack the three banana boxes in the corner. Hmm. There they sat for a month, during which time I added black-and-white silver prints to the donation; those got taken into the 'back room.' After two months, none of my stuff was being displayed. Hmm. Then, Mico went to Japan for a few weeks; which I discovered when I stopped by gallery to see what was happening and couldn't help noticing that the boxes were gone; but the temp behind the counter had no idea about any of that; he was obviously just baby-sitting the shop while Mico was away. When she got back, I sensed a distance in her. And, when I asked, she told me that she had taken them to the nearby thrift shop, adding that they had trouble selling them. Say what?! Obviously, they were trashed because there were none to be seen in the thrift shop; and nobody knew anything because they have a rotating staff of volunteers, all silver-haired septo- and octogenarians; e.g., 'old ditties.' So, that was that. I could have saved myself a lot of unnecessary work and aggravation had I simply trashed them myself to begin with. Geez, I was outraged by the betrayal; she just 'brushed it off' with a cold stare; feigning bewilderment of my anger. It's been a couple of months and I have gone through the various stages of grief. What do they say, "Sadder but wiser"?

Things like that knock the wind out of my sails. I have to guard against depression; the ennui; the irrelevance of everything, existentially speaking. I think about Christ McDevitt, the painter; what happened to his work—dozens of canvasses—when he died last year. I think about my mom; everything she had was lost, even before she died.

I wonder: will this Epic end up in the proverbial bin? Or, what about all of Pam's work—volumes of poems and illustrations, dozens of paintings and *objets d'art*—what will happen to it all?

My mojo is on a bit of a slow-motion roller-coaster ride these days. The cyclicity of my ups and downs explains the sporadic nature of my current life and work on the Epic. The last year hasn't been all gloom and doom. Life is pleasant enough in a kind of homeostatic state. I work when the spirit moves me and spend the rest of the time 'learning'. I've disconnected from WIFI and connect to the Internet using a Category eight—Cat 8—Ethernet cable; the speed is way fast; and the Internet provides access to information about almost anything.

Richard Allison became a new colleague. He is writing a book about the history of multi-image, as noted in a previous edition. His help retyping my first book—*Confessions of A Multi-Image Maniac*—from its hand-written manuscript made Volume Eleven possible. I am deeply indebted to him; it was no easy chore. That book was begun while Sandra and I were at Sonargraphics, in Melbourne, Australia in 1982 and completed at Image Stream, in Los Angeles, in 1983. Its subtitle is *How to Make a Multi-Image Show*; so, it was the perfect book for Richard Allison to read; a real primer—although the techniques described in the book are 'advanced'; he jumped into the deep end of the pool. Or not. Sometimes, when retyping stuff, attention shifts from the story to the mechanics of the task. Plus, he told me that he did it in two-hour stints in the middle of the night, when he couldn't sleep; that is most every night, he explained; he sleeps in shifts. Maybe he doesn't remember much? I wouldn't doubt it. *Confessions of A Multi-Image Maniac* was written for the experienced multi-image-show creator; what you might call 'graduate-school' stuff. Anyway, we continue to be in communication, as he continues interviewing still-living producers and suppliers. (As of last summer, the dedication page of the Epic—a kind of obituary—now requires a two-column format.) The more he learns, the more questions he has about how things were done.

Fortunately for Richard, there is now a multi-image group of a few hundred former multi-image-slide-show makers [Multi-Image slideshow creators | Facebook]; but he says that most of them were late-comers, like himself. And he is more interested in how it all began and evolved. (I am not on Facebook, or any other 'social media'). Allison bought himself a couple of projectors and some old Spindler-Saupé programming gear to play with; and he's just gotten a Maron-Carrell 1400 rostrum camera. No matter there is no film or processing available anymore; he just wants to see one running. (!)

During the last eighteen months, Steve Michelsen's project has mushroomed into a major production. Readers may recall that Steve likes to restore multi-image shows and videotape them. Folks can see examples of multi-image shows on his website: <https://www.stevenmichelsen.com/AVL/>

From Steve website: "In recent years I have been constructing a multi-image projection rig in my garage. My intention was to find a producer that had (A) kept his multi-image shows intact all these years, and (B) was prepared to let me have them, to restore and get back on the screen. In true "if you build it, they will come" fashion, this has come to pass!

“Richard Shipps, who ran DD&B Studios in Detroit and worked as programmer, designer and producer, entrusted me with his collection of multi-image modules that he had kept tucked away in storage for decades.

“I have spent this past winter getting them running again. I have created a YouTube channel specifically for these shows (and a few others that I had captured to VHS video in the '80s). Please take a look! [Editor: https://www.youtube.com/@AV_archaeology/videos] As they say, be sure to subscribe!

“There will be more multi-image slide modules added to my YouTube channel as time goes on - I have just been given a very large cache of shows from Paul Vershbow, who once upon a time was associated with Wilden Enterprises in New York City, and will be spending some quality time restoring and capturing them over the next several months. Not only that, I now am in possession of a cache of shows produced by Spotlight Presents, another NYC-based producer. Much to do! Stay tuned.”

Among the dozens of shows on his YouTube channel, Steve has one of mine: *You Can't Stop s Dove!* (Aka “The Dove Show”) He got that show from Richard Shipps, to whom I sent that show as well as the master *Bumbles* show. Steve never transferred that one; it goes too fast for his projectors. [Editor: Steve is using late-model Kodak Ektagraphic projectors that are slower to advance slides by up to ~1/10th second, compared to the Carousel B2 model I used for those two animated shows; both programmed for maximum speed. The Dove show was also too fast; but the animations came in bursts; so, Steve cleverly removed just enough slides and reprogrammed the offending sequences. And, you know what? You'd never know the difference, from the original show. As for *Bumbles*, I already had a video of that show, transferred to VHS format from a ¾-inch tape by Bob Peterson. Something went wrong somewhere along the line, or he did; but there are a couple of glitches in *Bumbles* (and also in his transfer of *Xanadu*) What do they say, “It is what it is; and something is better than nothing”? [Editor: Those shows and many other Incredible productions can be seen at my website; click on Incredible Images and choose from the menu. You can also go directly to Incredible Images.com or Vimeo.]

Last spring, Claire Evans, a freelance writer, interviewed me for an article she was writing about multi-image slide shows. She found me through my website, where she perused the Epic as well as my shows. Claire followed it with a more in-depth piece for the prestigious and widely-read *MIT Technology Review*—published by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology—which, like the first, featured Incredible's 80-projector Saab 9000CD launch show. Even before I saw the article, Peter Togg, my colleague from Purchase Point, who now lives in Northern Australia, emailed to tell me how surprised he was to see an article about my work in *Technology Review*. His kudos were followed by a few other colleagues' regards. A few weeks later, I got an email from one Peter Buck; I almost shat when I saw that name; Pete Buck was Anna's lead lawyer during our divorce in 2002—and he won a huge award for her. However, the email was not from the dreaded attorney; it was the moderator of an online forum called: *Office Hours Global*.” That lead to the essay that follows; an essay which begins with a mea culpa based on my new reality; a Proustian life as a technological Luddite. If one gazes at one's navel long enough; things get philosophical.

2023 | ESSAY | HOW TO CREATE CAPTIVATING CONTENT

A recent story by Claire Evans featuring my work recently appeared in *MIT Technology* magazine. (Article follows this essay.) I received two fan mails. One of them was a request by the moderator of an online forum called: *Office Hours Global*; he described the program as, "A global conversation where no one's left out." He asked if I would participate in a program about, "How to Create Captivating Content." I thought about it for a couple of days and concluded that I was not qualified; because I do not know much about ultra-sophisticated contemporary production tools and techniques; nor do I 'get' or participate in any 'social media;' today's zeitgeist.

I haven't decided whether to accept the invitation. Although flattered, I am dubious as to the relevance of my potential contribution to the audience; they are technically oriented people active in the production of content; and I've been retired nearly two decades. Plus, the question itself is unanswerable. An anecdote will help explain why.

A century ago, my maternal grandfather, a Judge of the Supreme Court of New York, fell for a scam: a newspaper advertisement offering a sure cure for baldness. He mailed a dollar to the specified address and a few weeks later received a reply. It read: "Sure cure for baldness: Grow hair." The judge was furious but could do nothing because the reply was absolutely true.

The answer to the question at hand is: "Be creative." That may be glib; it is also true. But what does that mean? I'll come to that, after some introductory observations about how the world has changed.

Back in the day, a short TV commercial was one minute; now, they are just 10 brief seconds. On the internet, some are even shorter. In the sixty-plus years since my career began – starting in the CBS mail room and then several advertising agencies – that was when Marshall McCullen theorized that, "the medium is the message" – the trend in all media (except for Hollywood) has been to foreshortened productions.

School and university teachers were among the first to complain; their students' attention spans had shrunk. My sister and her husband, both college professors, lamented that her students lacked the ability for 'deep thinking.' That was forty years ago. Now people walk around with heads bent over hand-held computers that continually distract with new messages and alerts; they have no time to think; the pace of life is too fast; and the treadmill continues its acceleration. But which came first? Short media or short attention spans?

Neither. The deterioration of thought and the foreshortening of media/messages have occurred simultaneously; each reinforcing the other; a kind of symbiosis; warp and weft of the same cloth.

In the decade since the demise of my career as a content creator for business communicators, the world has moved forward while I have gone backwards; writing an autobiographical history of the multi-image-show-making business. I do not have a smart phone and participate in no social media. Much of my work (digitizing slides and film negatives, and producing my books) is done using twenty-year-old computers and camera gear; my studio is a working museum.

A huge recent technological step forward for me was condensing files stored on 67 hard drives (250 to 750 gigabyte) during the first decade of this century onto just two little four-terabyte drives that fit in the palm of my hand. How is that possible? Even more incredible is that a little Go-Pro camera can store more than an hour of video on a tiny memory card that is half the size of a postage stamp and about as thin. My devolution into Luddite-hood has not gone unnoticed.



Jason Cole's portrait by Alexandra Service.

Recently, I met Vancouver's pre-eminent drone photographer – Jason Cole. His operation is called, Take Off Photography, employs about a dozen photographers and media specialists.

The meeting happened when I was walking past one of the new skyscrapers going up in town, called The Butterfly; its design is straight out of the old *Jetsons* cartoons (see pictures, next page). I had been watching it go up from my ninth-floor apartment about fifteen blocks away, through binoculars; and it looked to me like one of the two construction cranes was *inside* the nearly complete 72-story, poured-concrete, condominium. I took a walk over to the site and, lo and behold, it was! That begged the question: How would they get it out?

There were two cranes. The second crane was being taken down that day, using the first to lower its component parts to the ground. Curious, I circled the site in search of a worker who could answer my questions about that. Jason Cole was parked right in front of the #1 crane, the one being dismantled; his truck displayed his name and neat logo – a flying Canadian goose with a camera slung around its long neck. He was packing up his drones; but didn't mind being interrupted and answered my queries with a detailed explanation of how crane #2 would be removed from the center of the new building without crane #1 – by having #2 hoist a smaller crane up to the roof deck. He showed me some of the footage he had just shot; I was blown away. When he heard I had been a lensman and content producer, he invited me to attend his class on drone photography. What a blast that was; I got to fly one. In appreciation, I took Jason out to dinner at our favorite Greek place (the Olympia, on Denman Street) together with his wing-gal, Alexis Service (granddaughter of the famous Canadian poet, Robert Service; she also shoots, edits the footage, and does all post production), and my wife, Pamela.

We talked about content production then and now. Take Off's business model would not have been possible, or even conceivable, until just a few years ago. One of his specialties is time-lapse photography shot with miniature Go-Pro cameras that he can control remotely with phone apps. He has them all over the city, covering a half dozen sites for as many clients. Every week or so, he cruises around town harvesting the images they capture. The numbers are equally impressive: an outfitted Go-Pro camera sets him back ~\$900 Canadian dollarettes; he rents the gear and charges servicing fees for data retrieval and post work. Sweet, eh?

Jason opined that the migration of technology has shifted the tectonic plates of content production. "In your day," he said, "it was hard to produce great images; but easy to stand out if you did. Today, that's reversed: it's easy to make great images; but hard to stand out, even if you do."

The ease of image making is making professionals redundant. Why am I not surprised? The same thing happened to me. First, Apple Computer made graphic design easy for anyone to do; professional designers and photo-mechanical production became unnecessary and thus obsolete. Then, video wiped out slide shows before being subsumed within Microsoft Powerpoint. Then came Adobe; photographers and illustrators became an endangered species. And now there's "AI" (artificial intelligence (what an oxymoron!)). Just tell the computer what you want and, like Alladin's Lamp, your wish is its command; whatever you want; it is manifest. Last Christmas, my Swedish colleague, Lasse Helquist, sent me a 'card' with a beautiful picture of a moonlit river meandering through evergreen forests and snow-capped mountains. I asked where he took the shot. "My desk," he replied. He had simply asked to have such a picture and ChatGPT produced the image. Does Jason need to worry? I doubt it; computers cannot see what his drones and time-lapse cameras can. But AI 'crawlers' will likely scour his images from the Internet, along with everything else online. That is the thing about AI; *everything* known by humankind is instantly accessible. How much can you remember?

When the conversation turned to the Butterfly project, I told Jason and Alex that the ninety-second piece they made left me wanting more; and while that may be a good thing, why didn't they make a longer film – a documentary about cranes? 'Because nobody would watch it,' Jason was quick to answer. In fact, he continued, they were originally aiming for a 60-second film, and only reluctantly expanded it to a minute and a half; "that's an eternity," he explained.



But what about folks like me, who want to know more, I protested. "How many cranes did you hire recently?" he replied. Me and my ilk are not prospective customers; we have no 'value' to the crane company. Jason went on to explain that he and Alex would love to make a fuller presentation and they certainly had enough assets to do it; but there were more pressing (and profitable) programs to make.



"Just goes to show how out of touch I am," said I. "I'm surprised you let me attend your class." Jason was quick to say he thought my perspectives added a lot to that class; about how things were done in the old days; that I could never have made the kind of content he was creating; the technology and equipment were less advanced. I was doing the same kind of shots, albeit less sophisticated.

Renderings courtesy Revery Architects

Some say that old folks are to be valued for their wisdom. Wisdom is a form of insight that's experiential. We learn from our mistakes; those who do are 'wise.' Younger people cannot fathom the wisdom of the aged because they have not had enough experience living. When I was a (arrogant) young man, I recall thinking that I had nothing to learn from old folks; what did they know about my world? I still feel that way; although the roles are reversed, the question now is, what do I know about their world?

That is why I am inclined to decline Peter Buck's offer, to participate in a podcast conversation about creating captivating content. If I did, all I could talk about is how I approach any communications project, particularly presentation content (shows). The most important thing is appropriateness; what is the 'right' show? How well does the content relate to the audience, and vice versa? The challenge is relating the message(s) to the spectators; in the context of production parameters and constraints. To that end, I endeavor to get answers to these questions:

- What is the message; the problem; the desired result?
- How do people feel about that situation/problem?
- Are there pre- or misconceptions about the issue(s)?
- What 'rules' must be obeyed; e.g., logo-usage and corporate style guides.
- Where/when/how will the content be seen?
- What is the production/staging budget for the content?
- Who is answering these questions; what are their POVs/biases?
- What is your POV/bias?

You may have to do a little of your own sleuthing to research the answers to some of the questions; particularly the ones about audience pre- or misconceptions; about their predispositions. Marketing people generally give more 'honest' opinions than sales people. Very often, execs who hang out in the C-suite live in a bubble; an echo chamber. They, after all, drank the most company Kool Aid. The more sources you tap, the better your perspective will be; and, thus, your ability to conceptualize the 'right' show.

Of all the shows I produced in my 40-year career, two provide good examples that illustrate the appropriateness of the message and relating with the audience: "You Can't Stop a Dove!", produced for Audio Visual Laboratories; and the IKEA show, "Building It Is Half the Fun!" (See them at www.incredibleimages.com).

"You Can't Stop a Dove!", aka the Dove show, was made in 1978 to promote Audio Visual Laboratories' Dove dissolve unit – a device connected to two or three slide projectors that facilitated the blending of images by 'dissolving' from one to another; what the French call "melting slides." Dissolve units were controlled by a so-called 'programmer' – those were devices that encoded the projector-control instructions executed by the dissolves. That technology migrated from punch tape to digital in the mid-to-late 70s. The Dove was a 'second generation' digital dissolve. The first generation were AVL's 'QD-2' and 'QD-3' dissolves.

The unreliability of the QDs proved to be a disaster for AVL. Producers everywhere complained of shows 'going wild;' the QDs had minds of their own and did not follow instructions. AVL's reputation for reliability was trashed. Those problems were fixed in the second generation and it was decided to rename the product and create a new identity. I was charged with coming up with a concept to convince a skeptical, antagonistic audience that the new dissolve was totally reliable.

I decided to satirize the situation; to have a (fictitious) producer try to stop a Dove demo show being presented by an (equally fictitious) AVL dealer. Humor is always a risky way to promote anything; if the joke falls flat, you are done.

To minimize that risk, I used well-known radio comics, Bob Goulding and Ray Elliott from the *Bob and Ray* show, to play the voice parts; Bob played the AVL dealer and Ray was the producer. The two were never seen. Instead, you watch the dealer's sales presentation – a totally cornball show – interspersed with animations of the producer's efforts to foil the Dove – close-ups of 'his' hands disconnecting wires; changing settings; jumbling-up and stretching the audio tape; etcetera.



Ray Goulding (left) and Bob Elliott | Photo: Getty Images



In the finale scene (below) – a farce, wherein the prospect gets so frustrated that he smashes the Dove with a fire ax – I used the AVL sales team together with prominent dealers and some well-known producers as 'extras' – talk about relating to an angry audience, eh? The ax-wielding prospect is Charlie Spataro, AVL's top dealer. Sales manager Mike Reuther is the flabbergasted producer. Founder and CEO Chuck Kappenman (obscured by smoke) stands behind them with Alan Kozlowski.

To digress for a moment, about scripts with dialogue: The best scripts have confrontational interchanges. No matter if it is angry, friendly, loving, or just a straightforward conversation; the dialogue is argumentative. Particularly good examples of that style are the movies made in the 1930s and 40s. The confrontational style has an edge to it that moves the story forward in a more riveting way; *ibidem* character and plot development.

A satirical approach was also taken for "Building It Is *Half* the Fun...," produced for IKEA at Audio Visual Centrum (AVC), Stockholm, in 1985. By then, IKEA had become the world's biggest furniture company. Along the way, the company's reputation had risen and fallen like a roller coaster, dealing with customer perceptions related to real quality-control issues that required innovative thinking to resolve. Improved quality meant higher production costs.

The challenge of keeping retail prices low inspired IKEA to shift paradigms and sell ready-to-assemble furniture kits; those fit right into the emerging "DIY" (do it yourself) trends. Although immensely popular, a new perception challenge – that the furniture was hard to assemble. Assembly instructions were simplified by using illustrations, instead of words. And a public relations department was organized to deal with the Press; to change perceptions.

It was against that backdrop that IKEA came to AVC, to make a presentation to entertain members of the Fourth Estate flown to Sweden to attend press three-day junkets that included tours of Stockholm and boat rides through the archipelago; a trip to IKEA's flagship Stockholm store at Kingens Kurve; the IKEA Museum; and sales presentations about new products and innovations.

Small groups of a dozen editors stayed at the Grand Hotel and were lavishly wined and dined. On the evening of their arrival, guests assembled at a "meet & greet" cocktail party; where the new show would be presented, following a welcome address. Oh, and the production budget was like their furniture prices – the lowest in the land.

I was assigned the show; to keep me busy between Saab shows for which I was brought to Sweden by Saab's marketing manager, Lars Einar, to direct production at AVC. At a pre-production meeting, IKEA's PR team outlined their idea for the show – a documentary about IKEA's quest for quality, detailing the new, improved instructions... b-o-r-i-n-g; plus, there was no way to make such a show on the ridiculously low budget.

Probing, I discovered that the root of the problem was that most complaints about assembly difficulty came from men – who didn't follow the instructions; they typically threw them away. Women, in the other hand, followed the instructions and had fewer complaints. Aha! That became the concept for the show: to satirize that situation; to change the editors' (and public) opinion; that the problem wasn't the instructions, it was male chauvinism.



Taking everything into consideration, I came up with a concept, for a story about two newlyweds setting-up house in an apartment; building their IKEA furniture. The bride reads the instructions and has her kitchen set up in no time. Meanwhile, the groom has thrown out the instructions and struggles to piece together the couple's wedding bed. By nightfall he's still at it and she 'accidentally' (on purpose) breaks their only electric light.



The show closes with the couple sitting on the mattress, ringed by candles, and surrounded by bed parts. They raise their glasses for a champagne toast, followed by a title-over: Building It Is *Half* the Fun.... That, of course, is a play on words; "half" being a double entendre.

Much to my surprise (the show was too sexist to have been made in today's Woke world) IKEA signed off on the idea and production began.

The beauty of the concept, besides being an appealing story, was that it fit the meager budget, which I recall was something like \$20,000; peanuts. All that was required was one (long) day's shoot; one all-nighter to program; one Kodalith title slide; and, because there were no words (any dialogue would have required translation into many other languages) a dead-simple soundtrack consisting of two stock-music selections.

As mentioned earlier, the best scripts have confrontational dialogue. In the IKEA show, there are no spoken words; the pictures do the talking. Nonetheless, the competitive situation –husband vs wife – is, in itself, confrontational.

The full stories of both the Dove and IDEA shows are in Volumes Three and Four of my memoir, *An Incredible Epic*; download pdfs at www.mesney.com. Watch videos of the shows at www.incredibleimages.com.

Besides satirical shows, I was also known for “mindblowers” – shows that are so fast-paced you can't keep up with them. Audiences *love* mindblowers. I discovered that quite inadvertently. My client, Burson-Marsteller account man, Don O'Neill, and his client, the ad manager of Cincom Systems, Neil Ferguson, had just watched a documentary made for the company's sales meeting about Cincom's latest enterprise mainframe software. An enormous effort had been made, at enormous costs, including location interviews all over the country and elaborate graphics by designer Robert Cooney, enhanced by rostrum-camera special effects done by the Fred Cannizaro and John Leicmon in the Forox department.

The sheer size of the show, in terms of the number of slides, required eighteen projectors configured for a panoramic screen (the so called 'two-plus-one' overlapping format with a 1:3 aspect ratio). It was an impressive production and was approved without changes. (!)

In a celebratory mood, Don opened another round of expensive imported beers; the kind Neil preferred. Then Neil asked to see the meeting-closer module. Don turned white and I could tell he had forgotten about that show; we were so focused on the documentary. Quickly recovering, Don explained that it wasn't quite ready; that Neil could see it tomorrow. Yikes! A show needed to be made in 24-hours. What do they say, “Necessity is the mother of invention”? There was no time to make anything new; so, the new show had to be made of out-takes from the documentary.

Logo/effects sequences were gathered. Then, all the rest of the outtakes were put in a big box, which was thoroughly shaken; and eighteen slide trays filled with random slides. Those were programmed at a fast pace (two slides per second) to energetic music. Whenever there was a music riff or sting, the random slides were replaced with logo effects. It was a humdinger.

Do I need to tell you what happened? The documentary got polite applause. The mindblower got a standing ovation. That lesson radically changed my perspectives. Fast and furious shows captivated audiences. Unfortunately, there is no video of the Cincom shows; nor are there any duplicate slides.

My best-known mind blower, "Bumbles," was a 15-projector, single screen show made to promote Incredible Slidemakers. That much fire power aimed at a single screen facilitated hyper animation; a kind of 'staccato' movies. The show opens with long, animated sequences satirizing errors made during the making and staging of multi-image shows.

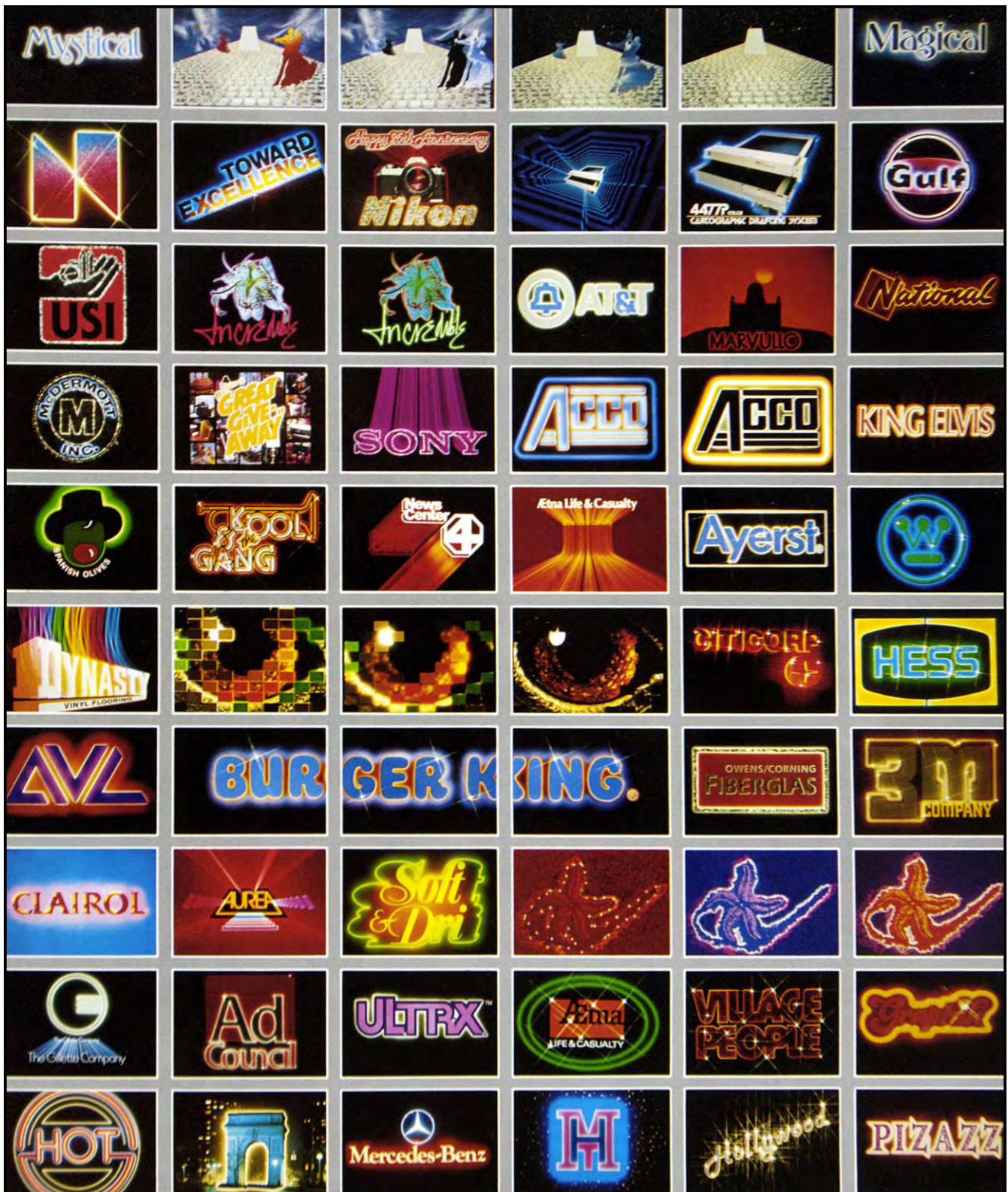
Jan Irish (left) Yours Truly, John O'Connell & John Leicmon at informal production meeting around the light table.



Fred Cannizaro snoozes while Yours Truly programs (lower right, behind the grid). When the full grid lights-up, overloaded power strips explode (next page). The sequence was shot in the 73rd Street studio, by Jim Casey.



Bumbles gags included (L/R from top – not in show order): backwards diskette; Eagle-computer restart; spilled ink; dropped microphone; warped record; sound blast; Forox mis-load; rogue Forox; sneeze; falling lens; exploding strobe; smoking power strip; wavy Eagle monitor; balancing slide trays.



The bulk of the three-minute mindblower presented special-effects graphics by the Forox department – a *potpourri* of effects we had done for a wide range of clients... all animated with flashing stars, pulsating glows, etcetera.

“Bumbles” brought down the house when the show premiered at an AMI (Association for Multi-Image festival). The audience – other producers – had never seen anything like it.

“Xanadu” was another matter altogether. Within a year after the Bumbles premiere at AMI, my hyper-animation style was widely imitated. As animation needs a lot of projectors, the average projection grid grew from nine to fifteen or more projectors. Ironically, as grid sizes expanded – driving up production and staging costs dramatically – the nation’s economy contracted as inflation raged and interest rates were jacked as high as 20%, effectively shutting off credit. As their sales dwindled and profits sank, businesses tightened their belts. As with the recession caused by the Arab oil embargo seven years earlier, advertising budgets were slashed to bare bones; no more expensive shows. I sent out a dozen proposals in the Spring of 1981; and we didn’t get a single job. It didn’t take long for Incredible Slidemakers to go broke.

The autumn before, I was sent to Hawaii on assignment from Purchase Point, a London-based production company, to shoot ‘travelog’ stuff for a sales-incentive module (used to entice sales people to sell more and win a trip to the Islands). The story of that legendary shoot is in Volume Four. Fate provided me with a native Hawaiian beauty who guided me around Oahu and Kawai while also modelling. Monique Kaeo became a visual Muse; a red tread that tied the shoot together.



Monique Kaeo at Sunset Beach, 1980.

Thinking Hawaii was a single island, I originally booked flights and accommodations for a two-day shoot. Ha! Ten days and 900 rolls of film later.... Thinking ahead, I shot nine frames for every scene – three each of three bracketed exposures – two sets for the client and one for me; so, equivalently speaking, it was a 100-roll shoot (which is still a lot of pictures).

Almost a year later, I found myself in the dire straights described above. Instead of downsizing and relocating to a cheaper part of town, I decided to throw in the towel and move to Hawaii. "Hawaii - Xanadu" was made to be my Hawaiian portfolio show piece – and to reestablish my record for the fastest show on Earth, with thirty projectors aimed at a single screen. Can you imagine?! If only for the size and audacity of the show, Xanadu was an instant hit at the multi-image competitions where it was screened; winning top honors at all of them.

The moral of the story is to be exceptional; and there are so many ways to do that. Being exceptional is the key to creating captivating content; presenting the audience with the unexpected. And, of course, excellence; spelling counts and high production values are a sure audience pleaser.



Key frame from the Saan show "Putting the Future in Motion." [<http://www.incredibleimages.com/#SaabFuture>]
Superior, innovative graphics and effects were a trademark of Incredible.



To celebrate the launch of the 1987 Saab 9000 CD sedan, an audience of 2,500 was treated to an hourlong operetta involving 26-foot-tall projection screens, a massive chorus, the entire Stockholm Philharmonic, and some 50 performers.
Photo: Douglas Mesney, Incredible Slidemakers

Next Slide, please: A brief history of the corporate presentation

From million-dollar slide shows to Steve Jobs’s introduction of the iPhone, a bit of show business never hurt plain old business.

By Claire Evans | August 11, 2023

It’s 1948, and it isn’t a great year for alcohol. Prohibition has come and gone, and booze is a buyer’s market again. That much is obvious from Seagram’s annual sales meeting, an 11-city traveling extravaganza designed to drum up nationwide sales. No expense has been spared: there’s the two-hour, professionally acted stage play about the life of a whiskey salesman. The beautiful anteroom displays. The free drinks. But the real highlight is a slideshow.

To call the Seagram-Vitarama a slideshow is an understatement. It’s an *experience*: hundreds of images of the distilling process, set to music, projected across five 40-by-15-foot screens. “It is composed of pictures, yet it is not static,” comments one awed witness. “The overall effect is one of magnificence.” Inspired by an Eastman Kodak exhibit at the 1939 World’s Fair, the Seagram-Vitarama is the first A/V presentation ever given at a sales meeting. It will not be the last.

In the late '40s, multimedia was a novelty. But by the early 1960s, nearly all companies with national advertising budgets were using multimedia gear—16-millimeter projectors, slide projectors, filmstrip projectors, and overheads—in their sales training and promotions, for public relations, and as part of their internal communications. Many employed in-house A/V directors, who were as much showmen as technicians. Because although presentations have a reputation for being tedious, when they're done right, they're theater. The business world knows it. Ever since the days of the Vitarama, companies have leveraged the dramatic power of images to sell their ideas to the world.

Next slide, please

The sound of slides clacking is deafening. But it doesn't matter, because the champagne is flowing and the sound system is loud. The 2,500 dignitaries and VIPs in the audience are being treated to an hourlong operetta about luxury travel. Onstage, a massive chorus, the entire Stockholm Philharmonic, and some 50 dancers and performers are fluttering around a pair of Saab 9000CD sedans. Stunning images of chrome details, leather seats, and open roads dance across a 26-foot-tall screen behind them. The images here are all analog: nearly 7,000 film slides, carefully arranged in a grid of 80 Kodak projectors. It's 1987, and slideshows will never get any bigger than this.

Before PowerPoint, and long before digital projectors, 35-millimeter film slides were king. Bigger, clearer, and less expensive to produce than 16-millimeter film, and more colorful and higher-resolution than video, slides were the only medium for the kinds of high-impact presentations given by CEOs and top brass at annual meetings for stockholders, employees, and salespeople. Known in the business as “multi-image” shows, these presentations required a small army of producers, photographers, and live production staff to pull off. First the entire show had to be written, storyboarded, and scored. Images were selected from a library, photo shoots arranged, animations and special effects produced. A white-gloved technician developed, mounted, and dusted each slide before dropping it into the carousel. Thousands of cues were programmed into the show control computers—then tested, and tested again. Because computers crash. Projector bulbs burn out. Slide carousels get jammed.

“When you think of all the machines, all the connections, all the different bits and pieces, it's a miracle these things even played at all,” says Douglas Mesney, a commercial photographer turned slide producer whose company Incredible Slidemakers produced the 80-projector Saab launch. Now 77 years old, he's made a retirement project of archiving the now-forgotten slide business. Mesney pivoted to producing multi-image shows in the early 1970s after an encounter with an impressive six-screen setup at the 1972 New York Boat Show. He'd been shooting spreads for Penthouse and car magazines, occasionally lugging a Kodak projector or two to pitch meetings for advertising clients. “All of a sudden you look at six projectors and what they can do, and you go, *Holy mackerel*,” he remembers.

“All of a sudden you look at six projectors and what they can do, and you go, *Holy mackerel*.”

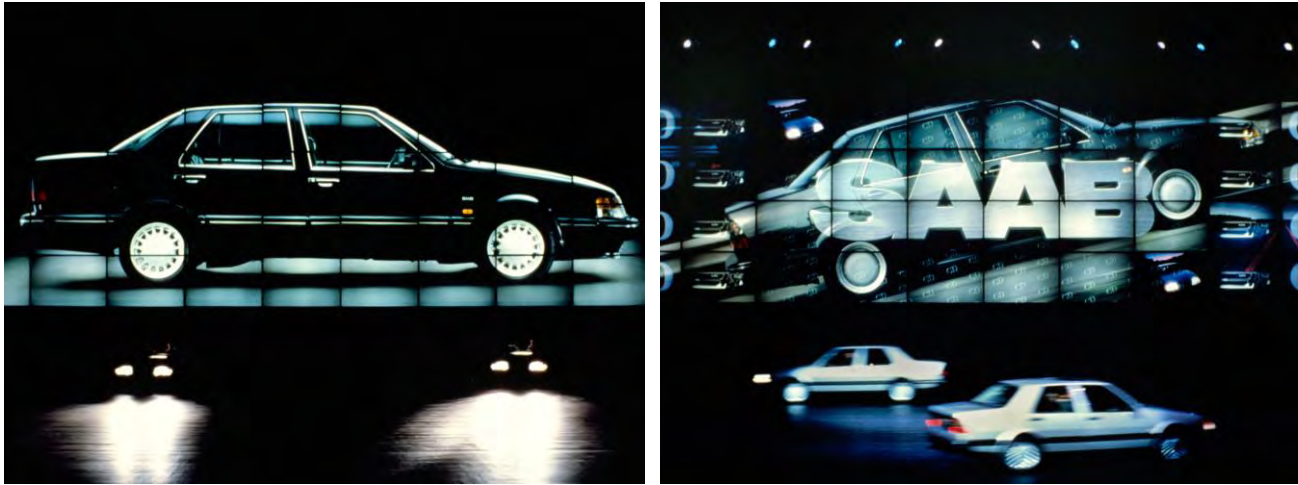
Douglas Mesney, a commercial photographer

Six was just the beginning. At the height of Mesney's career, his shows called for up to 100 projectors braced together in vertiginous rigs. With multiple projectors pointing toward the same screen, he could create seamless panoramas and complex animations, all synchronized to tape. Although the risk of disaster was always high, when he pulled it off, his shows dazzled audiences and made corporate suits look like giants. Mesney's clients included IKEA, Saab, Kodak, and Shell; he commanded production budgets in the hundreds of thousands of dollars. And in the multi-image business, that was cheap.

Larger A/V staging companies, like Carabiner International, charged up to \$1 million to orchestrate corporate meetings, jazzing up their generic multi-image "modules" with laser light shows, dance numbers, and top-shelf talent like Hall & Oates, the Allman Brothers, and even the Muppets. "I liken it to being a rock-and-roll roadie, but I never went on the tour bus," explains Susan Buckland, a slide programmer who spent most of her career behind the screen at Carabiner.



Douglas Mesney, a former commercial photographer, produced shows with production budgets in the hundreds of thousands of dollars for clients including IKEA, Saab, Kodak, and Shell.



Photos: Douglas Mesney/Incredible Slidemakers

From its incorporation in 1976 to the mid-1980s, the Association for Multi-Image, a trade association for slide producers, grew from zero to 5,000 members. At its peak, the multi-image business employed some 20,000 people and supported several festivals and four different trade magazines. One of these ran a glowing profile of Douglas Mesney in 1980; when asked for his prognosis about the future of slides, he replied: “We could make a fortune or be out of business in a year.” He wasn’t wrong.

The future of computing depends in part on how we reckon with its past.

At the time, some 30 manufacturers of electronic slide programming devices vied for the multi-image dollar. To meet the demand for high-impact shows, the tech had quickly evolved from manual dissolve units and basic control systems—programmed with punched paper tape, and then audiocassette—to dedicated slide control computers like the AVL Eagle I, which could drive 30 projectors at once.

The Eagle, which came with word processing and accounting software, was a true business computer—so much so that when Eagle spun off from its parent company, Audio Visual Labs, in the early ’80s, it became one of Silicon Valley’s most promising computer startups. Eagle went public in the summer of 1983, making its president, Dennis R. Barnhart, an instant multimillionaire. Only hours after the IPO, Barnhart plowed his brand-new cherry-red Ferrari through a guardrail near the company’s headquarters in Los Gatos, California, flipped through the air, crashed into a ravine, and died. The slide business would soon follow.

Douglas Mesney likes to say that if you never saw a slide show, you never will. The machines to show them have been landfilled. The slides themselves were rarely archived. Occasionally a few boxes containing an old multi-image “module” will turn up in a storage unit, and occasionally those will even be undamaged. But with the exception of a few hobbyists and retired programmers, the know-how to restore and stage multi-image slideshows is scarce. This leaves former slide professionals at a loss. “All of us are devastated that none of the modules survived,” says Susan Buckland. “Basically, I don’t have a past, because I can’t explain it.” The entire industry, which existed at an unexpected intersection of analog and high-tech artistry, came and went in a little over 20 years.

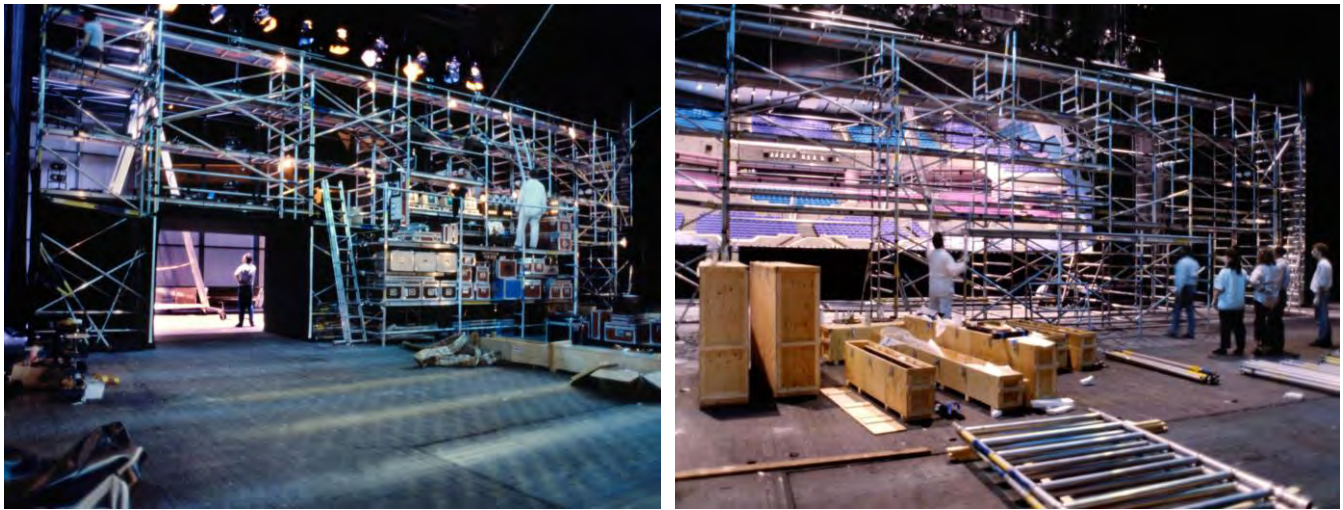
Presentations, like porn, have always pushed technology forward; in the multi-image days, producers like Mesney took the slide as far as it could go, using every tool available to create bigger and bolder shows. Mesney claims to have set the land speed record for a slide presentation with a three-minute-long, 2,400-slide show, but even at top speed, slides are static. The computers that controlled them, however, were not—and it wasn't long before they evolved beyond the medium. "Back then, computers were fast enough to tell slides what to do, but they weren't fast enough to actually create the images themselves," explains Steven Michelsen, a former slide programmer who restores and runs old multi-image shows in his Delaware garage. "It took another 10 or 15 years until you could run a show straight from your computer and have the images look worth looking at," he adds.

The last slide projector ever made rolled off the assembly line in 2004. The inside of its casing was signed by factory workers and Kodak brass before the unit was handed over to the Smithsonian. Toasts and speeches were made, but by then they were eulogies, because PowerPoint had already eaten the world.

Inventing PowerPoint

The Hotel Regina is an Art Nouveau marvel overlooking the Tuileries Garden and the Louvre. But on this day in 1992, its Old-World meeting rooms have been retrofitted with advanced video technology. The color projector in the back of the room, the size of a small refrigerator, cost upwards of \$100,000 and takes an hour to warm up. A team of technicians has spent the better part of the last 48 hours troubleshooting to ensure that nothing goes wrong when Robert Gaskins, the fastidious architect of a new piece of software called PowerPoint 3.0, walks into the room. He'll be carrying a laptop under his arm, and when he reaches the lectern, he'll pick up a video cable, plug it in, and demonstrate for the first time something that has been reproduced billions of times since: a video presentation, running straight off a laptop, in full color. The audience, full of Microsoft associates from across Europe, will go bananas. They "grasped immediately what the future would bring for their own presentations," Gaskins later wrote. "There was deafening applause."





Back-stage photos of Saab 9000CD launch show set-up; by Douglas Mesney/Incredible Slidemakers

It's hard now to imagine deafening applause for a PowerPoint—almost as hard as it is to imagine anyone but Bob Gaskins standing at this particular lectern, ushering in the PowerPoint age. Presentations are in his blood. His father ran an A/V company, and family vacations usually included a trip to the Eastman Kodak factory. During his graduate studies at Berkeley, he tinkered with machine translation and coded computer-generated haiku. He ran away to Silicon Valley to find his fortune before he could finalize his triple PhDs in English, linguistics, and computer science, but he brought with him a deep appreciation for the humanities, staffing his team with like-minded polyglots, including a disproportionately large number of women in technical roles. Because Gaskins ensured that his offices—the only Microsoft division, at the time, in Silicon Valley—housed a museum-worthy art collection, PowerPoint's architects spent their days among works by Frank Stella, Richard Diebenkorn, and Robert Motherwell.



Top row: Richard Shipp/DD&B Studios; Douglas Mesney/Incredible Slidemakers; Wilden Enterprises. Middle Row: Douglas Mesney/Incredible Slidemakers; Wilden Enterprises; Richard Shipp/DD&B Studios. Bottom Row: Wilden Enterprises; Richard Shipp/DD&B Studios; Douglas Mesney/Incredible Slidemakers. Images courtesy of Steve Michelsen.

It wasn't long before the computers that ran the slide shows evolved beyond the medium.

Gaskins’s 1984 proposal for PowerPoint, written when he was VP of product development at the Sunnyvale startup Forethought, is a manifesto in bullet points. It outlines the slumbering, largely-hidden-from-view \$3.5 billion business presentation industry and its enormous need for clear, effective slides. It lists technology trends—laser printers, color graphics, “WYSIWYG” software—that point to an emerging desktop presentation market. It’s a stunningly prescient document throughout. But Gaskins italicized only one bullet point in the whole thing.

User benefits: Allows the content-originator to control the presentation.

This is Gaskins’s key insight: a presentation’s message is inevitably diluted when its production is outsourced. In the early ’80s, he meant that literally. The first two versions of PowerPoint were created to help executives produce their own overhead transparencies and 35-millimeter slides, rather than passing the job off to their secretaries or a slide bureau. PowerPoint had become shorthand for the stupefying indignities of office life—a 2001 New Yorker profile summed it up as “software you impose on other people.”

“In the ’50s, ’60s, and early ’70s, information flow was narrow,” explains Sandy Beetner, former CEO of Genigraphics, a business graphics company that was, for several decades, the industry leader in professional presentation graphics. Their clients were primarily Fortune 500 companies and government agencies with the resources to produce full-color charts, 3D renderings, and other high-tech imagery on those slides. Everyone else was limited to acetate overheads and—*gasp*—words. “Prior to PowerPoint,” she says, “people communicated in black and white. There was just so much missed in that environment.”

Beetner oversaw Genigraphics’ national network service bureaus, which were located in every major American city and staffed 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, by graphic artists prepared to produce, polish, and print slides. The company was so vital to presentational culture that Gaskins negotiated a deal to make Genigraphics the official 35-millimeter slide production service for PowerPoint 2.0; a “Send to Genigraphics” menu command was baked into PowerPoint until 2003. This, incidentally, was around the same time that Kodak stopped making Carousel projectors.



With multiple projectors pointing toward the same screen, producers could create seamless panoramas and complex animations, all synchronized to tape. Photo: Wilden Enterprises.

Gaskins retired from Microsoft in 1993 and moved to London. He returned to the States 10 years later, an expert in antique concertinas. By then, PowerPoint had become shorthand for the stupefying indignities of office life. A 2001 *New Yorker* profile summed it up as “software you impose on other people”; the statistician Edward Tufte, known for his elegant monographs about data visualization, famously blamed the 2003 *Columbia* shuttle disaster on a bum PowerPoint slide. Gaskins’s software, Tufte argued, produces relentlessly sequential, hierarchical, sloganeering, over-managed presentations, rife with “chartjunk” and devoid of real meaning. No wonder software corporations loved it.

Robert Gaskins is remarkably sympathetic to these views, not least because Tufte’s mother, the Renaissance scholar Virginia Tufte, mentored him as an undergraduate in the English department at the University of Southern California. In a reflection written on the 20th anniversary of PowerPoint’s introduction, Gaskins acknowledged that “more business and academic talks look like poor attempts at sales presentations,” a phenomenon he blamed as much on a “mass failure of taste” as on PowerPoint itself, a tool so powerful it collapsed all preexisting contexts. Not everything’s a sales presentation; nor should it be. But PowerPoint made it easy to add multimedia effects to informal talks, empowering lay users to make stylistic decisions once reserved for professionals. To paraphrase an early PowerPoint print ad: now the person making the presentation *made* the presentation. That those people weren’t always particularly good at it didn’t seem to matter.

What did matter was that presentations were no longer reserved for year-end meetings and big ideas worthy of the effort and expense required to prepare color slides. “The scalability of information and audience that PowerPoint brought to the party was pretty incredible,” says Beetner, whose company has survived as a ghost in the machine, in the form of PowerPoint templates and clip art. “It opened up the channels dramatically, and pretty quickly. There isn’t a student alive, at any level, that hasn’t seen a PowerPoint presentation.” Indeed, PowerPoint is used in religious sermons; by schoolchildren preparing book reports; at funerals and weddings. In 2010, Microsoft announced that PowerPoint was installed on more than a billion computers worldwide.

At this scale, PowerPoint’s impact on how the world communicates has been immeasurable. But here’s something that can be measured: Microsoft grew tenfold in the years that Robert Gaskins ran its Graphics Business Unit, and it has grown 15-fold since. Technology corporations, like PowerPoint itself, have exploded. And so have their big presentations, which are no longer held behind closed doors. They’re now semi-public affairs, watched—willingly and enthusiastically—by consumers around the world. Nobody has to worry about slide carousels getting jammed anymore, but things still go haywire all the time, from buggy tech demos to poorly-thought-out theatrics.

When everything works, a good presentation can drive markets and forge reputations. Of course, this particular evolution wasn’t exclusively Microsoft’s doing. Because perhaps the most memorable corporate presentation of all time—Steve Jobs’s announcement of the iPhone at Macworld 2007—wasn’t a PowerPoint at all. It was a Keynote.

Claire L. Evans is a writer and musician exploring ecology, technology, and culture.

AMI HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES | 1985 – 1995

- Douglas Mesney – 1985
- Richard Shipps - 1985
- Duffie White - 1985
- Chris Korody - 1985
- Rusty Russel
- David Fellowes - 1986
- Charlie Watts - 1986
- Bruce Silverstein - 1986
- Todd Gipstein – 1987
- Donna Lawrence - 1988
- Robert Rowan - 1988
- Yukari Wantanabe
- Shigeru Kikuchi
- Mark Hammer - 1989
- Steve Hinchliffe - 1990
- Minette Seigel - 1990
- David Inocencio - 1990
- Alan Murgatroyd - 1991
- Seppo Palminen - 1991
- Kevin Oldcorn - 1993
- Elaine Rogalski – 1993
- Peter Ryan - 1993
- Sirkka Peltoniemi - 1994
- Ted Iserman
- Bruce Hornstein – 1994
- Dixie Hornstein – 1994
- Ollie Hallowell - 1994
- Dave Leonard - 1995
- Joel Gilmore - 1995
- Paul Kenny – 1996
- Phil Ogden - 1996



The list above was compiled by Richard Allison, primarily based on a letter from AMI as well as articles and listings in the AMI magazine, *Multi-Images*, of which Allison has a nearly complete collection.

Recipients of this highest honor are listed by their induction dates.

Richard placed me at the top of the heap based on my claim that, according to Jon Bromberg, who was a member of the judging committee, I was the first inductee.

To quote from the AVL ad (next page), producers were selected based on "outstanding creative contributions." I knew them all; some better than others.

Manufacturers had their own 'hall of fame.' I recall that Bruce Wessinger (Wess Plastics), David Corley (DSC Laboratories) and John Stokes (Stokes Slide Services) receiving awards for special achievements.



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August 18, 1995

Douglas Mesney, CEO
The Incredible Freelancer
16004 121st Ave. SW
Vashon, WA 98070

AMI PRODUCERS' HALL OF FAME

In 1985 the *AMI Producers' Hall of Fame* was formed. Its purpose is to recognize the significant contributions of an integral part of the Association's membership -- the multi-image producer. Individuals selected for membership in this elite group have inspired the industry, through their energy and excitement, to greater creative heights.

The charter members of the *AMI Producers' Hall of Fame* are: Douglas Mesney, P. McDuffy White, Christopher Korody and Richard Shipp. Members inducted from 1986 through 1996 are: Rusty Russell, David Fellows, Todd Gipstein, Charlie Watts, Bruce Silverstein, Donna Lawrence, Robert Rowan, Yukari Watanabe, Shigeru Kikuchi, Mark Hammer, Steve Hinchliffe, Minette Seigel, David Inocencio, Alan Murgatroyd, Seppo Palminen, Sirkka Peltoniemi, Peter Ryan, Ted Iserman, Kevin Oldcorn, Elaine Rogalski, Bruce Hornstein, Ollie Hallowell, Dixie Hornstein, Dave Leonard and Joel Gilmore.

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Glen Eastman
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Multimedia Productions

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EPG Multimedia, Inc.

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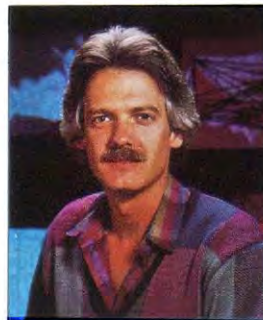
**Richard Shipp,
DD and B Studios,
Birmingham, Michigan**

"AVL and I go back 15 years. They've always been the best: the consistent innovator attuned to the needs of the professional. I see proof in the field, when my shows, regardless of size, run flawlessly, time after time. I appreciate products that always work well, stand up to rough use, and keep on performing. That's why I use AVL."



**Christopher Korody,
Image Stream,
Los Angeles, California**

"AVL's fast, efficient software works as superbly in the field as it does in the programming studio. It's straight-forward and smooth, and, with a few keystrokes, I can fine-tune a show with ease and precision. AVL equipment is reliable and so is the company. They've done more to advance multi-image than any other company."



**Duffie White,
Photosynthesis,
Dallas, Texas**

"AVL Systems enable me to take graphic and photographic design into the "new dimensions" that put me in the forefront of my industry. Before AVL, producers were severely limited by unreliable equipment. We were still "inventing our medium" as we went along. I credit AVL with making multi-image a legitimate communications tool...and freeing me to concentrate on creativity!"

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September/October 1986 Multi-Images 7

RESURRECTION OF INCREDIBLE SLIDEMAKERS' SHOWS

A small miracle occurred near the end of the year: Jim Casey discovered two U-Matic [3/4-inch] videotapes containing transfers of twenty Incredible Slidemakers shows. [Bold type indicates shows that I was involved in.]

Bumbles (Incredible Slidemakers)
You Can't Stop a Dove! (AVL)
Nightmares (Slide Transfer Service)
Dupont Lycra (Dupont)
NAVA '80 (Kodak)
Dataphone II (AT&T)
Optyl Eyewear (Optyl)
100 Years (Burroughs Welcome)
Movie Channel (Warner Amex)
Spring '80 (Yves St. Laurent)
Miller Organization (Miller)
V. Suarez & Company (VSC)
See the Light! (Bergen Expo)
Movie Channel (Warner Amex)
International Beauty Show (Matrix Essentials)
Magic Lasers (Incredible Slidemakers)
Art of Special Effects
World Series '80 (a video)
L.G.F.E.
Incredible Slides (a film test)

It's a miracle because I thought those show tapes were gone forever, when Fred Cannizzaro threw out the Betamax masters I sent him, at the 2013 demise of the Vashon Studio [ten years ago!], in hopes that he might be able to digitize them. Instead, he trashed them; how could a person do such a thing? Anyway, I reckoned that was that; then Casey wrote to tell me about his discovery. Hallelujah!

I already had videos of *Bumbles* (transferred from VHS tape by the late Bob Peterson) and the *Dove* show, which was restored by Steve Michelson from a dupe set of the original slides—no easy task; because his newer projectors didn't advance slides as quickly as the older 'B2' Carousel Projectors that were used to make the show.

A dozen of the shows were produced by the Incredible Slidemakers team; notably (and alphabetically) Doug Sloan, Fred Cannizzaro, and Jim Casey. Sloan, in particular, was coming into his own when Incredible Slidemakers folded; they all were. But Sloan was different; he was like me; we had to catch the fish before they were cooked. He was hired to be the company's sales rep; he learned fast and was successful because he could (sometimes couldn't) 'see' the solution as he was talking to the prospect. That's what it's all about... solutions. Walk the talk. Of course, sometimes the solutions come before the problem; you know, being prepared for emergencies. That's an entirely different situation; one that in the PR world is known as 'Crisis Management.' Gee, golly; a lot of money is spent on that—still.

It came to be when there were two or three shows being simultaneously produced in the studio; it got pretty crazy at times. The facilities were bursting at the seams. Even if we hadn't been thrown out by our landlords, more space was desperately needed. That meant more commitment than I was willing to give. Once Hawaii got into my head, and the movie *Xanadu*, everything changed. Running a business was no fun; the commitments were like shackles. I chose freedom; to start over as an independent. For me, bigger has never meant better; it meant loss of control; a dilution of the essence.

The Dupont Lycra show was probably Doug Sloan's first 'big one.' Marty Sherman was hired to play a scientist studying the fit of women's panties. He did a great job, but didn't save the show, as he had in *Nightmares*. Because the show had no concept; no originality. It was trying to be something that it never could. But I am being unfair; it was a decent show and 'they' did it all by themselves. That was important to me; we needed the money.

I am especially pleased that folks can now see *Nightmares*, again. It was one of my favorite shows; on my top-10 list. That's primarily because it was a major production—for example, the scenes shot at LaGuardia Airport; scenes you could never do these days; and haven't been able to for a long time.

Digression Alert: In the 1960s and 70s people were free. The concept of 'terrorism' just didn't exist. People trusted one another. United Airlines' PR people were pleased to be included in a slideshow. Still, we held up a lot of traffic. Just for its audaciousness, the show was an instant classic. You can read about in Volume Four; and the illustrative plates are reproduced here, on pages that follow.

Unfortunately, some of my very favorite shows remain lost; because we didn't videotape our shows back then. I am thinking in particular of the work we did for Clairol and Burson-Marsteller (Don O'Neill and Geoff Nightingale). The stuff done for Don and Geoff was 'industrial'. The 'EEMH' [Energy Efficient Manufactured Home) show that O'Neill and I made for Owens Corning Fiberglas, for example, was powered by 18 projectors driven by twin Show Pro II punch tape programmers. Dare I say that in 1974 that was 'ahead of its time'?

The shows we made for Clairol (and Ardell) were equally dazzling—and much more fun to make. For a couple of years, half the studio's output was for the fashion & beauty industry, with shows for Ardell (Hennaluscent), Clairol (a half dozen productions), Matrix Essentials, and Zotos. Hair dressers are the most happy-go-lucky people in the world; at least they were back then. Warren Beaty's 1975 film, *Shampoo*, portrays the tone of the time; the carefree lifestyles of beauticians and hair dressers. Imagine if everyone you worked with were in a good mood? I got so into hair work that I had a professional shampoo sink installed in the studio. Plus, we were given total creative freedom; to make beautiful shows about the beautiful people. That freedom provided the stimulus for us to do some crazy stuff. For the *New Look of Blonde* show (or maybe the *Luminize* show), we produced a reveal sequence that featured silver hands (Jim Casey's) shot in limbo [black] transforming a 'head' [that's what they called the models... heads] into a glowing platinum blonde. It was pure fantasy but everyone loved it. The soundtracks for our beauty shows were the latest and hippest disco tunes—TSOP [The Sound of Philadelphia], Vince Montana's Salsoul Orchestra, the Barry White Orchestra—used without regard to copyright, as Clairol (actually, Bristol-Meyers) had a blanket license.

* * *

At Incredible Slidemakers, our video work was done high-end consumer gear, aka 'semi-professional', mostly JVC (out of deference to my former boss and mentor, Burt Holmes, who did PR work for JVC and who became an Incredible client). The ¾-inch videotape format, called U-Matic, delivered reasonably-good visual quality; not as good as pro gear, but that stuff was way too expensive and could be rented when needed; i.e., a revenue job.

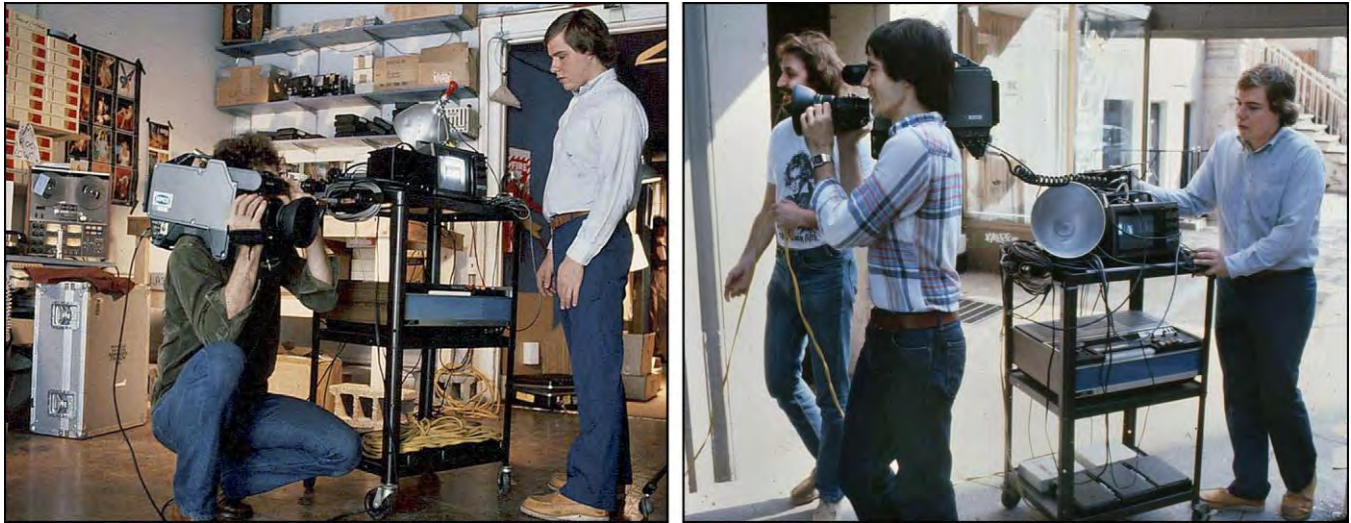


Gag shot of Incredible's six-projector, Buhl multiplexer. L>R: Jon Bromberg, Dan Collins, Yours Truly and Doug Sloan.

Video never interested me. We got into it to tape our shows, and eventually, others'. But making videos? Nah. Even ten years later, in the Belgian studio, making a video was not my favorite pastime; I let John Emms edit the Colgate video and Saab TV commercials we produced there. The still image is my territory; I grew up in a world of photo-spread magazines, like the iconic *Life* and *Look*. Their photographers were my heroes. Slide shows were, for me, initially an extension of still photography—a way to present my pictures; they evolved into a film-like, animated style. But there is a world of difference between making an animated slide show and a motion picture or video.

That said, the world of media was migrating toward video; we found ourselves making slide shows as content for videos—*Nightmares* is an example. The writing was on the wall; but I was too busy making slideshows to see it. Sloan, I think, did. When I closed Incredible, he and Fred opened a reincarnation of Incredible, called Icon. Then Sloan split off and went into the film business (Icon Pictures). He survived; Fred didn't.

In the early fall of 1980, the crew produced a 'reality show' documentary about the 73rd Street studio; it was prescient, in the most existential sense.



L>R: Chris Hoina (behind camera), John O'Connell, Jim Casey (on camera), and John O'Connell.

None of the crew knew, at that point, that I was planning to close the company. That decision had been considered while I was in Hawaii, shooting for a sales-contest motivation show being produced by Purchasepoint. It was finalized as I walked back to the studio after seeing the movie, *Xanadu*, in mid-August. Olivia Newton-John's version of the song, (Gotta Believe In) *Magic*, became my theme song. The crew knew the jig was up when I put *Hawaii-Xanada* show into production. You can read more about that in Volume Four.

Epilogue

What do they say, "Don't count your chickens until they hatch"?

The above article was written shortly after Jim Casey wrote to me about his rediscovery of the Incredible Slidemakers demo tapes, attaching pictures of them that revealed their contents—the twenty shows listed. As you may have gathered from the tone of the article, I was over the moon. Funnily enough, I recall while I was writing it, that I should probably wait until seeing them. Had I waited, you wouldn't be reading this 'mea culpa'. In short, the whole experience was an enormous disappointment.

Casey took the tapes to a local (Connecticut) media company that advertised digitization of old-format videotapes. They promised delivery by Friday, every week for the next month and a half. There was always an excuse. The first was that the tapes needed to be baked because they showed signs of 'shedding'.

[As magnetic tapes age, the bond between the mylar backing and the magnetic-emulsion coating dries out and bits of the coating dis-attach when the tape passes through the transport rollers and playback heads of a video tape player. It's easy to spot the little pile of dust accumulating under the heads.

The treatment for shedding is heat; the tapes are baked in a 130 ° F oven (~54 C) for three to eight hours (opinions differ); then, after cooling for a day, immediately dubbed (copied). Apparently, tapes can be baked again, if needed.]

Six weeks later, in the beginning of February, the digital files for the two tapes were delivered to Casey. Jim had taken it upon himself to do the editing (he loves to play with computer apps)—separating the 20 shows into individual files, as well as enhancing the sound and imagery. Ahead of that work, Casey sent me the raw footage—a dupe of the original files—which I dropped everything to watch. That is when my heart sank. The image quality sucked; and there were many 'drop outs' where the magnetic coating had disappeared. Worse, many of the shows weren't up to snuff. The ones made by the crew, while competent, aren't 'captivating'. In the end, the only two that I added to the online collection (at Video and at www.incredibleimages.com) are the AT&T show, *Dataphone II*, and *Nightmares*, made for Slide Transfer Service.

Unfortunately, the *Nightmares* video—an off-the-wall transfer made by Incredible Slidemakers, NOT by STS—has an obnoxious copyright notice that dominates the bottom third of the screen. Another annoyance: the projector alignment is far from perfect; which, in this case, is especially unfortunate because STS claimed better alignment.

Read more about those shows in Volume Three; pages 481-483 for *Dataphone II*; and page 426 for *Nightmares*. There is also a collection of pictures—key frames of *Nightmares* animations—in Volume Eleven, starting at page 2795.

INCREDIBLE SLIDEMAKERS CREW UPDATE

I'd often wonder; what happened to all the Slidemakers? I mean, during and right after Incredible's demise? Writing this book led me to investigate. Most went off to freelance, never to be heard from, since. But the 'core group' decided to re-group and carry-on, under a new banner. Even before I left the city, in late April of '81, four of them went into business as Icon Productions, with studio space on Lexington Avenue and 56th Street.

“From my perspective, we had an offshoot company started with Tim Sali. The four of us settled on Icon Productions as a name. Each of us were to be equal 25% partners in the company. But at the initial meeting, Fred argued that he deserved more because he would be President. ... I remember watching the New Year's ball drop from their office overlooking 1 Times Sq. And I think it was the winter of 1980 when we tried to form the Icon company.”

Icon was not without problems and, I suspect, infighting. The upshot: Casey left.

“We had done a couple shows, just as independent freelancers, together with other companies. I started working on print projects with a company that had a Genographics system and decided to form a company with the owner. They were National Imagemakers - located in the same building as Creative Systems Group [Editor: CSG was Don O'Neill and Geoff Nightingale's company, after they left Burson-Marsteller]. So, it worked out well for me.”

“It was 6-9 months. We did a couple shows during the summer and fall with some producers who had an office on Broadway - some company name like Media Matrix??? Tim might have stayed with them for a little while. Nicole Clark did work with them.

“The title [President] didn't matter, it was the extra % he [Fred] wanted. I was already in negotiations with Imagemakers to do a 50/50 deal. So, at that meeting I said to the guys that I'm not interested in joining them. And if I'm out, the 1/3 split of company could give Fred the 34% he wants. Easy solution fix.

“Still remember Sloan making the comment during this meeting ‘this isn't personal, this is business’. Used that line back at them again when they wanted computer slides at a discount.”

Casey always knew how to butter his bread. He went on to greener pastures in computer imagery – he called his company Rare Medium – which he sold and 'retired' while in his forties. Sloan did well too and only recently got off what he called, “the merry-go-round”— a film production studio, called Icon Pictures. Tim Sali lives in France. Grace Napoleon sells custom-made clothing and accessories of her own creation. John Leicmon gave up freelancing and now is a tour guide; organizing groups and escorting them to foreign lands. Fred ended up as the Creative Director for another multi-image studio, called Nvision and after that doing media relations for the new City of New York, 'promoting' the Second Avenue subway project; that's where I lost track. Jon Bromberg was the most 'successful' of the lot, in terms of accomplishments and financial reward. He sent me the following notes about his post-Incredible adventures:

Full-time volunteer at Eastside Fire & Rescue (Issaquah, WA) which covers over 300 sq. miles of Eastern King County. He is the Program Manager for Eastside Fire Corps, with 35+ volunteer members who provide backup/emergency communications, logistics and Public Education resources. He is also the Chief Pilot/Program Manager for the UAS (drone) Program which supports structure fire monitoring, trail rescue, search & rescue, still/swift water rescue and damage assessments.

Still involved in photography (with an emphasis on drone POV shooting), Amateur (HAM) radio, tinkering with computers and Raspberry Pis and, of course, learning to be a Grandpa.

Update (2016): Full-time Volunteer, FEMA radio communications responder COM-L/COM-T, struggling to be a semi-pro photographer, Ham Radio (W1JDB), constantly telling everyone under 40 that "we didn't have that - we had to invent it".

Previous Lives:

Jon began his career as a lighting designer in New York where he created numerous productions for Broadway, Off Broadway and Regional theatres.

In 1978 he moved into the area of Industrial Theatre and multimedia producing many industrials & sales meetings as part of the Incredible Slidemakers working with Doug Mesney. The company was known for pioneering multi-image with slides and intermixing special effects, graphics, live performances, and film.

In 1981 Jon moved to Los Angeles where he managed the LA office of Staging Techniques which was responsible for designing environments, scenery, audio-visual equipment, audio and lighting for Fortune 500 companies. During his tenure he assisted in the development of many of the original events/conferences for the computer and hi-tech industries. Events included product launches for Apple, Sun, IBM, HP, Digital & Oracle as well Comdex Spring/Fall Keynotes, PC Expo and the Apple Developer's Conference (5 years).

Bromberg's work with Microsoft began in 1983 as Staging Techniques supported a significant number of tours, conferences and product launches including Windows 2.0 Roadshow, the launches of Windows 3.0, 3.1 and Windows for Workgroups, DOS 5.0 and the original Office Suite. Jon joined Microsoft's Events Group in 1993 and managed the creative & technical execution of over 1100 events including the launches of Windows 95, 98, 2000, XP - Office 95, 97, 2000, XP & Office System 2003; the annual Comdex Fall and Consumer Electronics Show Keynotes w/Bill Gates and many other press, executive presentations.

Bromberg is currently the owner of the consulting firm Interstitial-Realities LLC and may be reached at: jonbro@msn.com

* * *

Icon Productions didn't last long; just a few years. I have my own thoughts of what went wrong. It was a couple of things (isn't it always?). I'll try to explain....

First, the boys went in as 'equal partners'; but anyone who's read *Lord of The Flies* or *Animal Farm* knows there's no such thing as equality; even Socrates knew that

Democracies ultimately fail. That's why all the smart monkeys in *Atlas Shrugged* went to Galt's Gulch.

Second, there was no creative genius in the group—nobody capable of great concepts. Oh, they were all good at their jobs (Tim, graphic design; Fred, camera effects; Casey, photography (studio and rostrum); Sloan, sales and production) but none qualified as a 'creative director.' None was a conceptualizer. Sloan was the closest; but he was cutting his teeth in those days. As a result, their work lacked 'singularity'; it wasn't much different than what others were producing, a lot of it as good and even better than Incredible Slidemakers. Techniques had matured; the pool of talent was enormous; multi-image would peak in just a few years. So, with all due respect, Icon had its work cut out for it; the competition was keen; the economic environment was repressive as the cost of credit skyrocketed along with inflation; companies stopped spending on expensive promotions, like shows; that was what killed Incredible.

To digress for a moment, about concepts: There is a 'singularity' – a simplicity; a purity – to a great idea. They are not products of group think; those may be very good, but seldom great. As I wrote earlier, in "How to Create Captivating Content", making the 'right show' is the single most important factor in making successful shows, of any kind. Committees can't come up with 'pure' concepts; with 'singularity'. Of course, there is no singularly great concept, considering the differences in people's opinions and tastes; there's no accounting for those.

But some things win the popular vote; some movies do better than others with critics; some do better at the box office; and some both.

Julio Campos has a story that perfectly illustrates the difference between a good idea and a great concept. Campos was attending a 'creative session' with the company's marketing and advertising people; you know, to 'coordinate' and 'interface.' They were charged with coming up with a concept for the event; some mistakenly call it a 'theme' (which is something quite different). There was a dozen or so of them; it was a real free-for-all. Everyone was invited (expected) to 'contribute.' All morning they threw ideas at the wall, to see what stuck. "What kind of show should it be?" "When should we have it? Before or after the Business Session?" "Definitely not after the golf tournament; hahaha."

Then someone remarked, "Julio, you haven't said a word. What do you think?" After a pregnant pause, during which his eyes made split-second contact with everyone else's, he began: "You've all presented some good ideas; but they are 'ideas,' not concepts. I would charter a 747 airliner; have it painted in the company's colors; re-arrange the seats; use the flight time for the business session; give everyone a real holiday weekend; and during the flight back, have a motivational speaker followed by closing festivities. (Pause) *That* is a concept." And with that, he got up and left. [Read more in Volume Eleven, page 3128, "Visualization of Concepts."]

Having said all that: A far more widespread opinion is that the best ideas are the products of team work, of consensus. That idea gained popularity in the 1970s. Back then, Japan was emerging from the devastation of WWII.

When I was a kid, in the 50s, Japan made junky stuff; the term Made In Japan was a joke. But starting in the 1960s, they became the world's most innovative and successful industrial nation, in so many fields—photography/optics; electronics; automotive, to name a few—the rest of the world thereafter found themselves playing catch-up. Economists and efficiency experts were employed to study Japanese methodology. They revealed that Japanese management was not organized on the top-down principal; decisions were not made by diktat, as was the case in the West. In Japan, decision making was horizontally oriented, done by teams whose goal was to reach consensus; agreement by everyone in the group. That management style was embraced by many American companies, with great success; no matter how good their ideas, nothing can beat a happy workforce.

But those situations are different—way different—than conceptualizing a multi-image show. Because, more often than not, business decision making involves *production*; the who-what-when-and-where of getting things done. It would be difficult for the manager of an assembly plant, for example, to know all the goings-on along the assembly line; but the workers sure do. That qualifies them as participants in the decision-making process. However, most multi-image shows were not about production; they were about *communication*; the best ways to communicate specific messages. Conceptualizing a multi-image show was not much different that coming up with a great advertisement; both reply on a USP (Unique Selling Proposition), a catchy headline and a powerful ‘pay off’ (tag line). Such concepts are seldom produced by a group (OK, maybe a small one).

In 1976, a major New York Bank, Manufacturers Hanover Trust, hired a prestigious advertising agency, Young and Rubicam, to work-up an auto-loan ad campaign that emphasized the diversity of choices available to car buyers. They came up with the *AnyCar* – a conglomeration of parts from the 22 of the most popular cars built by Ford, Chevrolet, American Motors, Chrysler and Volkswagen – aka, “ForChevAmChrsyVagen”.



Photo courtesy <https://www.chasealum.org/article.html?aid=1447>

What do they say, “A camel is a horse made by a committee”? The saying is apt in this case; because many multi-image shows were ‘AnyShows’. In fact, ‘generic’ shows were made for rental, that could be customized by inserting any company’s logos and theme graphics.

At least half of the shows I was involved in were the product of creative teams; I participated in scores of ‘creative sessions’ where a bunch of people spent the morning or afternoon in a conference room coming up with ideas; the moderator would note them on ‘white boards’ and by the end of the session, there would be dozens of contenders. Typically, the Big Idea emerging from such a session was a ‘kluge’; conglomeration of ideas... like a Neapolitan ice cream bar—a combination of chocolate, vanilla and strawberry—but all mixed together. I’ve written extensively in earlier volumes about such creative sessions; notably, shows for IBM, AT&T, and the Washington Post.

* * *

Icon’s third, fatal problem was over ambition, a form of pride; excessive self-confidence is the definition of hubris. Despite their other problems and ‘growing pains,’ Icon was doing fine until they dropped a Kodak show at Photokina. They didn't finish the show in time. Their reputation was shot after that episode. Sloan said it was Fred's fault (over ambitious). The two parted ways. Sloan took the Icon name and became Icon Pictures, producing film and video instead of multi-image. And that, as they say, was that.

MULTI-IMAGE IN CANADA

This article was compiled from email 'conversations' with John Olsen and Andrew Macrae.

The key Canadian multi-image players were:

- David Fellowes Associates – Producer, Toronto
- John Olsen Communications – Producer, Toronto
- Norm Natress – Producer, Toronto
- Harold Nisenthal Audio Visual - Staging, Montreal
- Ed Klagman – Producer, Toronto
- Norbert Frischkorn – Staging, Toronto
- Al Holman – Producer
- ICE Integrated Communications and Entertainment - Producer
- Richard St. John – Producer
- MS Art Services (Mike Smith) – Producer
- AV House – Producer (Mike Ruether was the salesman; before he joined AVL)

David Felloes, John Olsen and Norbert Frischkorn were a triumvirate.

Fellowes and Olsen produced shows for Northern Telecom, IBM (100% Club), Vitro (Mexico), among others. They met in 1971 when both worked at Film Optical. In 1971, they left FO, went to MS Arts, and produced a (single-projector; no dissolve) show for General Motors. The next productions were three-screen-butts format, with mullions.

In 1973, Fellowes created the first soft-edge mask in order to project "seamless" panoramic images (without mullions). He did that by shooting airbrushed art with Kodalith film—a super-high-contrast 'line' film—and processing with D-76 chemistry (instead of Kodalith A/B developer) to obtain the lower contrast necessary for soft-edge gradients. The first show to use soft-edge masks for seamless images was *Life In America*, produced in 1974 at AVCO as a demo for AVL to promote their Show Pro II programmer.

To David Fellowes:

Gary Kappenman sent me the following description of *Life In America*; does it jive with your recollections?

1. The show started with great shots and music from the 50s showing a somewhat idealized America including pictures of Marilyn Monroe with Joe DiMaggio, baseball, sock hops, etc.
2. It then built up to the 60s Vietnam War, Racial Strife, and a crescendo with Martin Luther's "I Have a Dream" speech audio showing a shot of him speaking and then a really loud shot ringing out and the entire theatre simultaneously going block.

3. While the theatre was still black, music started gradually fading in of Dan Hill's "Hold On" song (I'll email you a link) and visuals of farming, racially intermixed families, and a forward-looking optimistic outlook.

He said the entire show was pictures from Life magazine. Is that correct?

From David Fellowes:

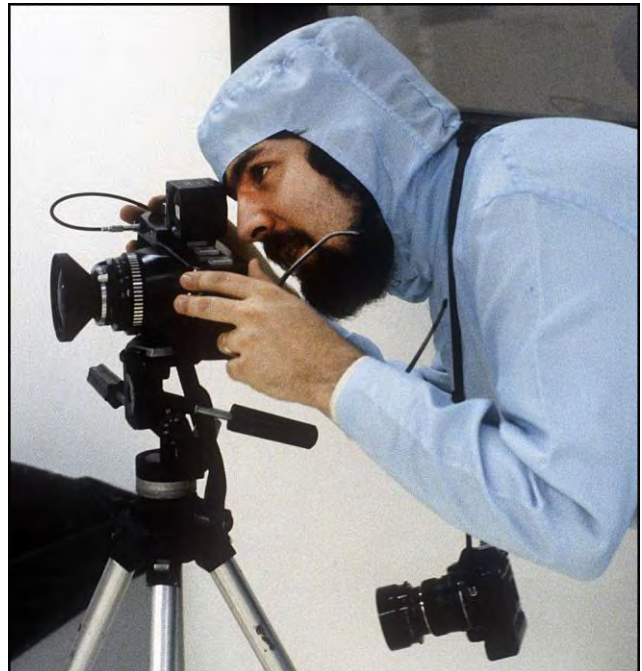
“Yup, that's the show in a nutshell... but check with Andrew [Macrae] who watched it a thousand times. He is also the single source of information on the rig, how everything was shot, etc. Without Andrew, there was nothing. The title of the show is a pun on Life, the magazine, and Life in America, as glorified by the magazine.”

From Andrew Macrae:

“David, unless I am much further gone into that twilight of dementia than I fear, I had no involvement with Life in America (never mind life in America) and have not seen it once, never mind thousands of times. Some other Andrew, perhaps?”

[I then asked Andrew if he knew John Olsen, who was David Fellowes partner in the 1970s.]

“I certainly knew John Olsen, I was his creative director at John Olsen Communications from 1981 to 1985, and of course David. I also did much of the photography, animation stand work, programming, not to mention slide mounting.



Andrew Macrae in Northern Telecom's clean room, 1982

“I worked with David on a number of productions including corporate profiles for Vitro (not the first one), programming for the Bell Seminar, and product launch programs for Northern Telecom and others.

“So, this would be after the development of ‘Fuzzies’.

“Olsen Communications was forced into bankruptcy (long story) not long after I left; he retired to run a bar/restaurant in the Muskokas [Muskoka Lakes, Ontario], then returned to work with the St John Group until his retirement.

“MS Productions was actually MS Art Services: MS = Mike Smith, who owned Film Opticals. MS Arts was created to provide, well, art services for Film Opticals, then branched out to do multi-image. MS is where John and David first worked together (long before my time).

“Their president was Manuel ‘Manolo’ Corvera. MS Arts bought John Olsen Communications; I’m guessing around 1983 at which time we merged operations with theirs.

“When Manolo died of pancreatic cancer around 1985-6 (sorry to be vague on dates) his widow Joan forced JOC (which was being operated by David) into bankruptcy (technically not quite precise, there wasn’t enough money to formally wrap up the company, it went into limbo). David got some funding from Norbert Frischkorn to start Master Media, before family matters forced him to depart for the UK.

“I was acquainted with Norm Natress, he had another boutique production company. There were several around at that time, typically one big client, a million or so in sales, the owner/proprietor had one expensive car (a Lamborghini Espada in John’s case) until the tax laws changed to put a limit on the write-off value of a vehicle.

“I did program on AVL... first time on a Show Pro V, then Eagle, then Genesis. Also, on the Multisonic (?) system out of the UK, running on Apple II, which was the system the Bell Seminar Centre went with. BTW Chuck Kappenman went on from AVL to found TVL (TeleVision Laboratories), which I was very much involved with from the get-go....

“My [programming] preference was for the Electrosonic system once it matured; as I recall; it was a bit more flexible in its syntax. And also, because the Apple II with its Basic and helpful tutorial manual was my real gateway to programming.

“Master Media ... arose of the ashes of John Olsen Communications not long after David left for the UK. MM was tapped (connection through Norbert Frischkorn) by TVL to introduce it to the Canadian market. Norbert & company recognized that the incredibly cumbersome process of staging multi-image was going to be rendered obsolete by improved video projectors and lowering production costs for video - but which left a gap for electronic “slides” for speaker support, which TVL targeted. The product was still very much in the alpha stage, for example, the app to create a text slide... if you made a mistake, you had to start over from scratch.

I was freelancing at the time but was heavily involved in the process of figuring out how to implement a viable production process along with just making the damn thing work. Of course, it improved greatly over time (undo!). At one point Tim Abbott, who headed Master Media (btw at some point the company changed name to Key Frame Interactive) went to France with Chuck to introduce TVL to that market, which was adopted by Milelec - and I went to live in Paris for half a year (1990) to train their people. Paris was amazing. I could have made it permanent but that’s another story.

“The learning curve for the original 3-buffer version proved to be a real barrier to adoption, and TVL came out with a simpler, single-buffer version at about that time. However soon after, as 8-bit graphics (later 32 bit) and decent video capabilities became prevalent on Mac and Windows in conjunction with Macromedia (later Adobe) Director animation software made the expensive TVL hardware obsolete.

“Norbert Frischkorn was the number one AV staging company in Canada. I’m out of touch with that whole world but it appears Frischkorn AV is either defunct or absorbed into another entity. I think he was also a dealer for AVL. Don’t know who else. Anyhow David, John & Norbert were a triumvirate when it came to multi-image in Canada, particularly when it came to the big product launches for Northern, like Digital World where they rented the Rotterdam, a cruise ship... stuff like that.

“And then there were the IBM 100% Club shows... Montreal, Place des Arts, 35 mm film combined with a 36 projector bank to fill the stage screen... two Eagle computers yoked... that was my baby, we had horizontal fuzzies along with the usual vertical fuzzies to fill the screen - 6-6-6 projector banks top & bottom with a 3-3-3 bank to fill the middle... did I mention the cumbersome staging process? That show nearly killed me...

[Later] “I got that the wrong way round. It was 6x6x6 across the middle - 6 doves, 18 projectors on one Eagle, and two 3x3x3 banks top & bottom on the other - 9 projectors to put up 1 seamless image. Then a knockout to drop the 35 mm projector to drop into the middle. One big liability... so many chips of film into one slide... colour image + 2 fuzzies (vertical & horizontal) + knockout or mask... worked fine in the studio with front projection, but flipped for rear, some were just too fat to drop reliably. Somehow Frischkorn’s guys got it to work. It was a particularly brutal production... one module, I could tell where the other programmer, Simon Ewins, realized he would never meet the deadline if he continued to take advantage of the 9 x 9 transitions, wipes etc., it just went chunk, chunk, chunk, like a giant two projector show... but at least it made it to the screen. Oddly enough I do not miss those days.

“Other producers from that era... Norm Nattress of course, GM Canada was his big client I believe... a number of companies that did little 3-projector shows... Al Holman had a company that was big, well beyond boutique, but it went belly-up... There was ICE - Integrated Communications and Entertainment headed by Doug Keely, another powerhouse in the early 90s, they brought multi-image and multi-media together with live entertainment, again went belly-up.

“And there was the St John Group - another boutique firm headed by Richard St John that got very rich doing work for Northern Telecom (including that SS Rotterdam event), one production called “Electrons” was budgeted at \$one million plus - they rented a 747 for some of the shooting. When Nortel eventually flamed out RSJ didn’t go down with them but picked up a lot of work for Research in Motion (Blackberry), but when RIM was effectively wiped out by Apple, Richard had to retire — a multi-millionaire, poor guy! And yes, this is the same company that John Olsen worked for in the last stage of his career.

“PS I would take David’s claim of Alzheimer’s with a grain of salt... if he can still come up with stuff like this: <https://claphaminterpretation.com/category/articles/>

“PPS Are you aware that David is Julian Fellowes’ (*Downton Abbey*) smarter brother?”



I also spoke with John Olsen, John A. Olsen Communications, who worked with David Fellows when he invented the soft-edge mask in 1974, shooting airbrushed art with Kodalith film.

The world premiere of the soft-edge mask was the three-screen, 9-projector *Life In America* show, that Fellows produced in 1974 at Olsen Communications as a demo for the AVL Show Pro III.

Subsequently, they worked with David Corley, who perfected the technique; that would have been late '74 or early '75 [see, 'The Story of Fuzzies' by Richard Corley; Volume Eleven, page 3015]. Olsen believes (and I think, rightly so) that he and Fellows were the pioneers of multi-image; they changed the course of audio-visual history.

John Olsen by Andrew Macrae, 1982.

John Olsen emigrated to Canada from the UK in 1965 and initially got work as a tool maker for General Electric. A few years later, he went to work in Toronto at Film Opticals—a bespoke motion picture opticals and effects company that was part of MS Arts, founded by Mike Smith—where David Fellows was a producer. Manuel “Manolo” Corvera was the president of MS Arts at the time; he was also a master animator, for prestigious clients as General Mills (The Jolly Green Giant) and Kellogg (Tony the Tiger).



John Olsen (left) and David Fellows survey the scene at Eaton Center during the GM 1973 new-model-launch show.

In 1972, Foster Advertising hired MS Arts to make a show for General Motors, to introduce their 1973 model-year cars to GM dealers across Canada after a premiere at Toronto’s prestigious Eaton Center. Fellows was assigned as production manager, with Olsen assisting him and Ron Lindsay to wrangle the client. They made a three-screen, six-projector show projected from the theater’s balcony by three pairs of Xenon projectors with long lenses controlled by a punch-tape system made by Morris Glick and dissolve units made by Harold Nissenthal. Cars drove out from under the three butted screens choreographed to music presented by a live orchestra.

Fellowes trouped the show around Canada, as he was the only one who knew how it worked. Olsen remained at MS Arts and took over Lindsay's position as account executive in 1974 when Ron left the company to start his own film opticals and multi-image production company, AVCOR (AV Corporation). Lindsay came up with the idea of using *Life* magazine as the image source for a show called *Life In America*; and he hires David Fellowes to produce it. Subsequently, AVCOR partnered with AV House, where Bryan King was importing AVL's ShowPro II punch tape programmers and MKII and MKIV dissolves, which Fellowes chose to make *Life In America*. Influenced by the huge, 59 X 79-foot (18 X 24 metres) imagery projected by the 70 mm IMAX system, Fellowes decided to create big pictures by combining two or more slide images. That was not a new idea; since the days of Lantern Slides, images were blended together using baffles in front of the projects' lenses, to create soft edges. What was new, was Fellowes invention of soft-edge masks—gradient film chips sandwiched with pictures to blend images together, creating panoramic images with two or more slides. As mentioned, David's original soft-edge masks were made from airbrushed-gradient artwork on white illustration boards, photographed with Kodalith line film processed in D-76.

When all this was happening (early 70s), there were just a few companies making slide shows (MS Arts; AH House; AVCOR); everyone involved knew everyone else. So, it is no surprise that David and Sue Corley began making soft-edge masks shortly after *Life In America* was produced (the show was heavily promoted by AVL; they screened it all over the US and Canada); because Film Opticals had connections with Corley [aka DSC] Labs, who had a reputation for ultra-precision opticals (for example, the test patterns used for television production and broadcast, as well as motion-picture production). DSC's masks, together with registration slide mounts (made by Wess Plastics, and known as Wess Mounts) and AVL control gear, provided the 'standardization' necessary for multi-image to take off as a dynamic medium for corporate and theatrical events. The number of new slide-show producers increased exponentially.

In Toronto, one of the new producers was Bob Schultz, a maker of film commercials. He had the idea of multi-image-shows—documentaries about European museums—presented to the public in a purpose-built theater. Fellowes and Olsen—who had since become David Fellowes Associates, at 1055 Young Street—were brought in as consultant producers; but nothing was ever produced.

No matter, the dynamic duo went on to produce for elite clients like Northern Telecom, Bell Canada and Mexican glass giant, Vitro. Fellowes theorized that multi-image had greater impact than film because viewers had more to 'process'; had more mental work.



In 1978, David went to New York, continuing as David Fellowes Associates. The Canadian entity became John A. Olsen Communications Limited, continuing production work for Vitro and Bell Canada.

When Bell switched to Electrosonic, Olsen teamed up with MS Arts, forming a partnership with Manolo (Corvera), who offered him production space and a Marron-Carrel camera, together with a theater equipped with the required Electrosonic show-control gear.

Fellowes rejoined Olsen when he returned to Canada in 1982, and took over the company in 1984 when John took a sabbatical from the AV business and bought a pub and moved to the Muskogas. But that didn't last long. In 1985, Fellowes teamed up with Norbert Frishkorn to form the Multi Media company; and in 1986 he returned to England. Among his other projects there, David took over the Prague Shakespear Company in Czechoslovakia [now, the Czech Republic].

SLIDE COPY STAND | How I Digitize Slides

By the turn of the century, digital images largely replaced film; their quality met and, in some cases, exceeded film, even Kodachrome. The conversion of film images to digital became an industry of its own; there were all kinds of scanners to choose from ranging in cost from \$2,000 to \$20,000—or more (Imacon, Scitex (flat bed) or a drum scanner). Being a Nikon guy, I invested in their LS2000 scanner, for 35 mm pictures, and their LS9000, for negs or transparencies up to 4 X 5 inches (10.2 X 12.7 cm). That's when I found out that the scanners were basically useless without software applications – operating systems – to run them; they, too, came in a wide range of capabilities and costs. Two systems in my price range included one called VueScan, and another called, oddly enough, Silverfast.

I never used Vue Scan. Silverfast delivered a good product, but getting there was not half the fun. First you did a pre-scan and make adjustments to exposure and color and make another pre-scan to test the new settings; maybe you need to make more adjustments. Finally, you make your scan. And, as you know, each pre-scan or scan takes a few seconds. For budgeting purposes, I once calculated that an average scan took five minutes; I could do twelve per hour. That was not enough throughput; and that's when I reverted to my old method of copying pictures, using a camera (Nikon, then Forox) and lightbox. With an image archive that once contained several hundred thousand slides (now just a couple of thousand), throughput was important.



Now, I use old Nikon DSLRs – the D1 and D2 models – and a light box illuminated by a 3X5-inch LED light source (cooled with an electric fan). In the picture, the LED light is lying in front of the light box (an enlarger light head, turned upside down). The slide-to-be-copied sits in a holder 2-inches about a 3X3-inch opalescent -Plexiglas diffuser.

The camera's sensor is better than the scanner's; better color and contrast. Best of all, 'click' and you're done. The camera is controlled by a computer; images take just a few seconds to 'process' and appear on the monitor. Usually, I take a second shot with an exposure bracket; for difficult pictures, a range of exposures. Then the best parts of each bracket are blended in Photoshop. The results are better than the scanner. Throughput is doubled; I can do twenty-four (or more) per hour.

PICTURE GALLERY

One of the primary purposes of Volume Thirteen is to be a repository for the many pictures remaining to be digitally transformed from original color slides and negatives. There are so many; it's hard to know where to begin; a chronological orientation will help.

Most of them are pictures that only the most curious of my readers might have interest in seeing. They rightfully belong in the volumes where they 'fit' chronologically in the story. But that would have made those volumes impossibly long; besides which, there's a reason why they didn't make the 'first cut.'

The reason was 'brevity.' The Epic is already impossibly long and hard to navigate. You could say that it has become my own version of the 'catch all' drawer of yore – miscellany in greater detail; more like my 'Chinese' great grandfather's periodical, *Mesney's Miscellany*, published in the 1800s; that was a real 'potpourri'. Mine, at least, tries to have a navigable 'logic', be that chronological or categorical, per the Table of Contents.

The Epic's 'problems' derive from its evolution; how it came to be. When I started, eight (!) years ago, I had no idea where the project would go; or how much time I had left; that is still the case. Since launching the first edition, on my birthday in 2020, my work has shifted to adding new content, be it old or contemporary; even that has a hierarchy of relevance and 'importance.' This volume will be the last; additional detailia would be over the top; how many people will ever see or read it?

Those with digital skills can search pdfs of the volumes for almost anything or anyone of interest. For example, some (a very few) will be interested in Epic Productions' address list, in this volume; its own version of history. (Unfortunately, Incredible Slidemakers master mailing list got lost somewhere along the way. What do they say, "You can tell a man by the company he keeps"?)

It troubles me that the Epic only exists in digital form, with the exception of two printed copies of the original (2020) eight volumes, plus Volumes Nine and Eleven. Because I believe there will be some kind of EMP (Electro-Magnetic Pulse) that will wipe out everything electronic; anything dependent upon electro-magnetic memory. Of course, in terms of the total amount of data lost in such an event, the Epic is inconsequential. But, what a lot of work.

'Soon,' all the original materials, from which the Epic was created, will be gone. Hopefully, I will have the good sense and motivation to spare Pam the distressful job of consigning it all to the dumpster. (Maybe Richard Allison wants it?)

Meanwhile, welcome to the craziest photo album you ever perused. Every picture relates to a part of the Epic's story; have fun connecting them.

NOTE: This section is a work in progress and will be periodically updated with new pictures as I dig deeper into the remaining image archive.

SOUND IMAGES



824 NW 18TH AVENUE PORTLAND, OR 97209

(503) 224 1403



Client: NIKE

Event: DOMESTIC SALES MEETING

Venue: UNIVERSAL STUDIOS - ORLANDO, FL



Client: NIKE

Event: DOMESTIC SALES MEETING

Venue: UNIVERSAL STUDIOS - ORLANDO, FL



2002 | SOUND IMAGES SHOWS PORTFOLIO | PLATE N° 1
Multi-image slide and Watchout shows from the 1990s and early 2000s.



Client: NIKE Event: DOMESTIC SALES MEETING Venue: GEORGE R. BROWN CONVENTION CENTER - HOUSTON, TX



Client: SKECHERS
Event: SUPERSHOW
Venue: WORLD CONGRESS CENTER - ATLANTA, GA



Client: NIKE Event: ASIA/PACIFIC SALES MEETING Venue: NIKE CAMPUS - BEAVERTON, OR





Client: NIKE

Event: GLOBAL SALES MEETING

Venue: PORTLAND EXPOSITION CENTER - PORTLAND, OR



Client: NIKE

Event: SUPERSHOW

Venue: WORLD CONGRESS CENTER - ATLANTA, GA

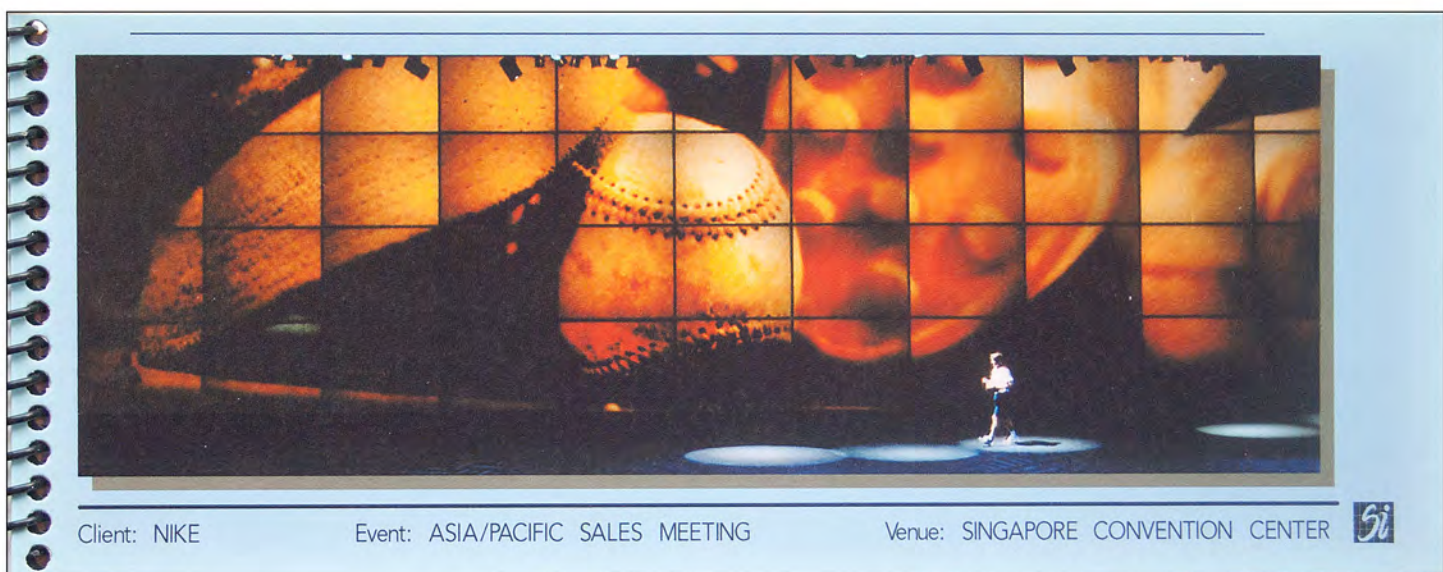


Client: NIKE

Event: DOMESTIC SALES MEETING

Venue: UNIVERSAL STUDIOS - ORLANDO, FL







Client: NIKE Event: ASIA/PACIFIC LEADERSHIP SUMMIT Venue: CAREFREE CONFERENCE RESORT - CAREFREE, AZ



Client: NIKE

Event: SUPERSHOW

Venue: WORLD CONGRESS CENTER - ATLANTA, GA



Client: NIKE

Event: DOMESTIC SALES MEETING

Venue: OREGON CONVENTION CENTER - PORTLAND, OR





S O U N D I M A G E S



1970s | KATHY AND LOU HETLER'S CALIFORNIA APARTMENT | PLATE N° 1

Above: Kathy and Missy Healies | Below: Missy Healies



1970s | KATHY AND LOU HETLER'S CALIFORNIA APARTMENT | PLATE N° 2

Above: Lou Hetler } Below: Kathy and Lou



1970s | KATHY AND LOU HETLER'S CALIFORNIA APARTMENT | PLATE N° 3
Above: Kathy in the kitchen | Below: Kathy (left) and Missy Healties

PAMELA SWANSON SKETCH PORTFOLIO

My wife, Pamela "Pam" Swanson has mastered just about every type of crafts, no matter the complexity.

Once a craft is mastered, she moves on to the next. A couple of examples are her origami (right) and crochet work (below).

More than a thousand folds were needed for the so-called 'Golden Venture Peacock' made in 2009 (left) and a vase full of paper roses, 2012.



Pam created these crochet foods in 2016 for her young nieces and nephews, in Kamloops.

Drawing and painting are Pam's 'favorites.' I've added the quote marks because the illustrative arts are also her most challenging and vexing. The album that follows – charcoal sketches based on the photographs of Edward Curtis – was a 2019 wedding-anniversary gift (our tenth).

For the last few years, photography has been Pam's principal avocation; that and her ongoing poetry; that she has been writing since childhood. You can see her work at: www.poetpam.com.















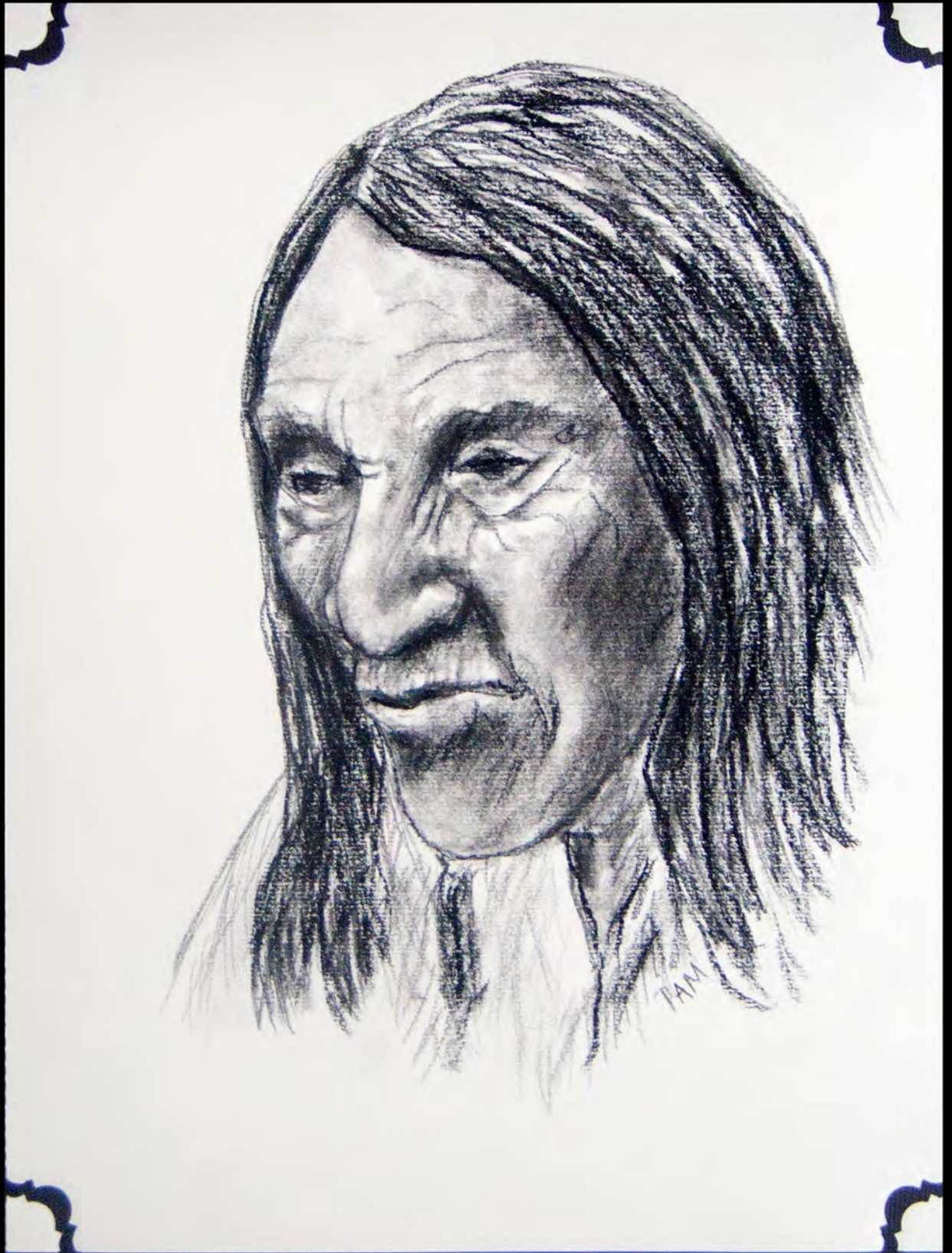












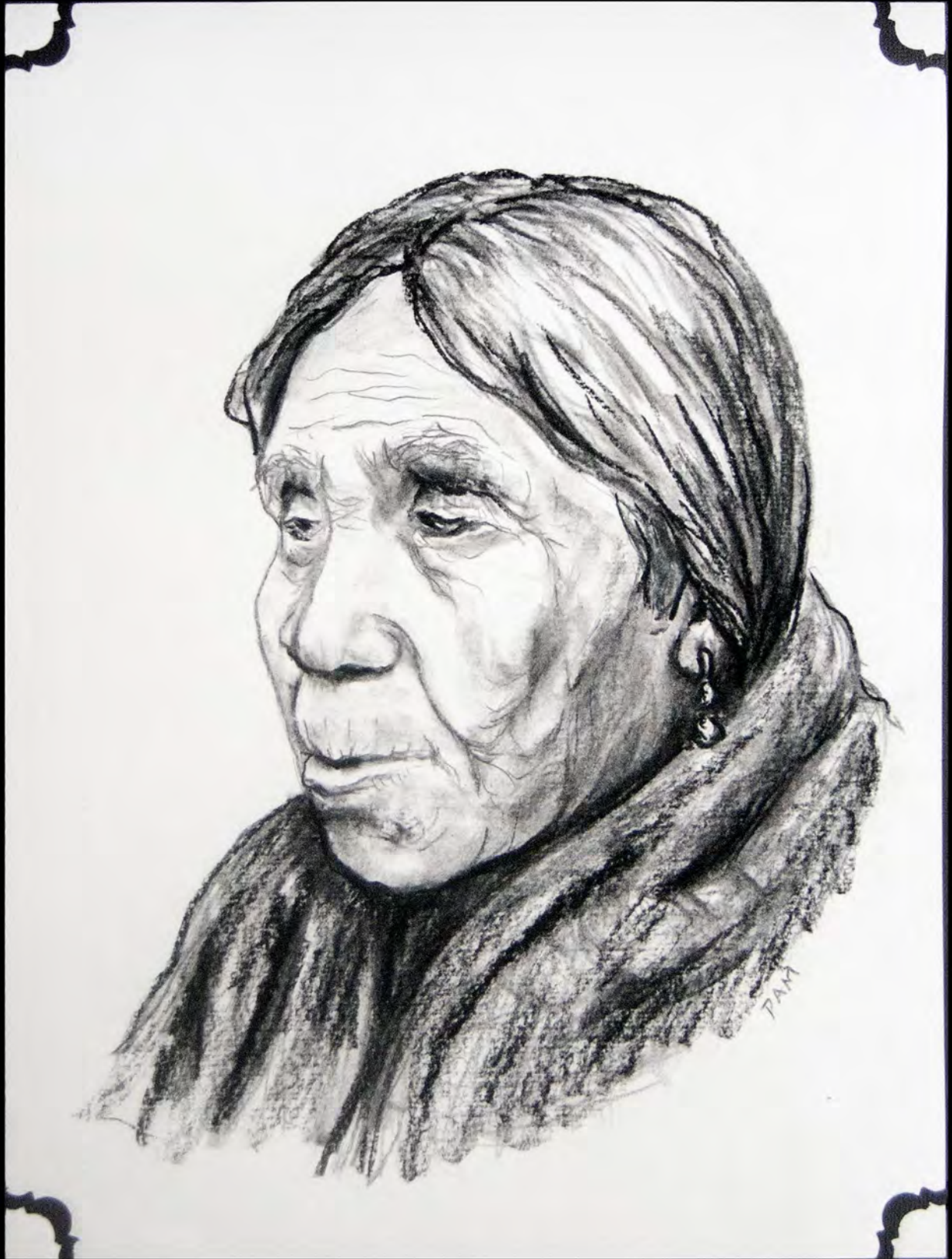




















While working at Sonargraphics (Australia) in 1982, I 'moonlighted' writing a book called *Confessions of a Multi-Image Maniac*; about how to make multi-image shows. [The book is published in Volume Eleven of the Epic.] After finishing the first draft, I got side-tracked by an idea for a screenplay—*NANUC*—about a 21st-century war between America and Canada, over water. *NANUC* was a milestone; my first epic script.



Photos by Sandra Sande.

The idea of working in Hollywood was intriguing; I reckoned that, since I was successful in business entertainment, I stood a chance. The script took about two months to write, in the dining room, typing on an IBM Selectric that I borrowed from the office. Remember *White Out*? Every time I typed an error, out came the little bottle of white paint. A pain? yes; however, manual typing slowed down the writing process. I needed to think through what I wanted to say, before typing it. The slower tempo made for clearer thinking. Now, the writing process can embrace stream of consciousness thinking; you can type away and easily fix errors later; heck, the computer automatically fixes half of them.

I became obsessed with the screenplay; I dreamt of becoming a Hollywood creative, of expanding beyond corporate media into the consumer-entertainment world. *NANUC* foretold conditions that are actually unfolding now vis-à-vis water. Here's the plot in a nutshell: America has poisoned its aquifers and goes to war with Canada to get the water it needs. During the months writing *NANUC*, I worked at Sonargraphics until early evening, then I shifted gears. To save time transitioning from multi-image production to the inner world of my imagination, I consumed quantities of vodka and smoked Maui Wowie [smuggled into Australia inside the Cyclopan camera]. When our Australian visas expired out, scripting continued in Vancouver, and was completed in 1984, while working with Chris Korody's crackerjack team at Image Stream, in Los Angeles. The script was registered with the Screen Writers Guild, in Hollywood; a copy languishes in their archive.

NANUC

(A SCREENPLAY)



Written by:

DOUGLAS MESNEY

" N A N U C "

(A SCREENPLAY)

Written by
Douglas T. Mesney

" N A N U C "

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This script and all the ideas and information disclosed in it are submitted to you in confidence and secrecy solely for the purposes of your review of the materials to determine the desirability of producing them.

In accepting this submission, you agree that you will not reveal any of the ideas or information contained herein.

Further, you agree that you will not use this script or the ideas and information contained herein, or reproduce them in any manner, in all or part, without the prior written approval of Douglas T. Mesney and without just compensation therefore.

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(213) 933-9196

INTRODUCTION

THE WORLD IN 2022:

Although NANUC takes place some forty years from now, the world we see is not "futuristic" in the sci-fi sense. In fact, it isn't much different than the world we live in today; things have changed, of course, but nothing too radical has happened. People still get around in cars and planes, but these machines have evolved into highly computerized vehicles. There are still elevators, but they operate on compressed air, as do tube-transports. Two-dimensional television has been replaced with three-dimensional, hologram-enhanced television (HETV). But people still wear the same sort of clothes they do now; their food, although mostly synthetic, still looks like and tastes like the dishes we eat; they listen to similar music; everything's just a bit more modern.

In terms of life style, there are a couple of subtle changes. For one, computers are far more sophisticated and used more frequently, for more purposes, than they are today. Computer sciences have advanced to the point where micro-miniaturization of components permits the power of, for example, an Apple III to be packaged in a chassis no larger than a desk-top calculator.

Everything is digital now, and that technology has created two other changes: hologram mapping and the universal identification system. Hologram mapping uses laser-projection to create a flat-field or globe-style map that is three-dimensional. The universal identification system has been achieved by issuing all citizens a laser-imprinted Security Card that is used for all financial, medical, governmental, and employment-related transactions as well as for personal identification. In addition, the Card serves a lot of practical functions, like opening locks, serving as a computer-pass key, and so on.

What has changed, dramatically, is the condition of the world of Nature. By 2022 the entire globe is heavily polluted and grossly overpopulated.

According to current projections, the population of the world will be about seven billion by 2022; two times what it is today. These projections do not take into account that by the turn of the century significant medical advances will extend many lives far beyond any current expectations, which will add to the total.

Our growing population's demands for goods and services (to say nothing of food) are growing at an even faster rate. Most of the "Third World" is still agrarian.

(CONTINUED)

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However, these nations have had a taste of the spoils of western culture and want it...badly. And as they (rapidly) become industrialized, and the net pollution of their (unregulated) factories is added to our already dangerously-high levels, you can imagine what will happen.

Even today, acid rain is destroying millions of acres of forests; many rivers and lakes are already devoid of certain species of fish. In the oceans, particularly around major urban areas, fishermen complain of ulcerations and growths on the fish they catch. The whales are nearly extinct. The Space Shuttle astronauts report a noticeable layer of air pollution surrounding the entire globe. Scientists tell us to expect a "Greenhouse" effect. The weather is weird. The water is polluted. The oil will run out. The pressure is on.

Will you be alive in 2022? If you are, you will be forty years older than you are today. Although it is hard, try to imagine what you think the world will be like then... you are probably very close to what you'll see in NANUC.

THE "MOOD" OF THE FILM:

NANUC doesn't fall easily into a slot. The primary intent is to make an important ecological statement; but this statement has been packaged in a documentary thriller. These aspects, combined with the fact that it is set in the future, combine to create a mood that slides around in the twilight zone between "China Syndrome" and "2001."

A NOTE ON SPECIAL EFFECTS:

Special effects are used extensively in NANUC, but only to heighten the sense of realism; "2001," "Apocalypse Now," "Lawrence of Arabia," and "China Syndrome" should be kept in mind when contemplating the effects variously described in the script.

One important area of effects that should be specifically mentioned is computer graphics. A lot of running time is spent looking at monitor displays...because by 2022 computer technology allows an office computer the capability to display graphics as sophisticated as "TRON." Even the simplest chart or graph is truly beautiful; the incredible detail, texture, shadow-molding, and color make it a pleasure to watch as the computer builds, rotates, manipulates, and otherwise "has fun" with it.

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Another major slice of the special-effects budget should be devoted to creating the gross pollution, ecological decay, and strange meteorological conditions that may well exist in 2022.

POSSIBLE USE OF 3-D TECHNOLOGY

While writing NANUC I frequently thought how "nice" it would be to employ 3-D filming techniques. Although I am aware that there are certain limitations imposed (ie., gross theater distribution), a serious 3-D film has seldom (if ever) been produced, and the market is "ready" for one. The capabilities are there to create the technology to, for example, realistically capture what a three-dimensional hologram map of the world, sitting in the middle of the American War Operations Center, would look like. Or a Canadian Neutrol Device showering sparks as it re-enters the atmosphere. Or a vast panorama of a decayed fir-tree forest helplessly succumbing to the acid rain falling on it. Or a twenty-seven-pound rat (grown for food) sniffing at you.

A NOTE ON NANUC (THE CHARACTER):

Fully one-third of the dialogue involves the character, NANUC. He is, as you will learn, a computer...a very intelligent one. You should again think in terms of "2001," and, specifically, the nature of the voice of the HAL computer. NANUC SOUNDS like that. The only difference is that he learns more (ie., changes) and becomes slightly more "emotional" (in terms of voice inflections) during the latter portions of the film when he is operating in FFLIP II. But even though there may be extreme malice in his words, NANUC always "stays calm." For NANUC, almost everything is matter-of-fact.

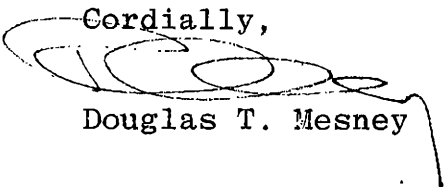
DEFINITION OF "POV NANUC:"

NANUC (the character) can "see," as did HAL, and in much the same way (ie., "fish-eye-lens" perspective). However, the only times this effect is utilized is when the scene is described as "POV THROUGH NANUC'S EYES."

A NOTE OF THANKS:

Many thanks for taking the time to read NANUC. I hope you are not disappointed and look forward to hearing about your appraisal and potential interest.

Cordially,



Douglas T. Mesney

PRINCIPLE CHARACTERS (IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE):

CANADIAN PRIME MINISTER GEORGE MOINSLEAU (MWONS-LOW): Sixty, medium height and build, pale complexion (almost unhealthy), silver-grey hair, soft-spoken. Moinsleau is a brooding, inner-directed man who seems like he's carrying the weight of the world on his shoulders. A trick left knee causes him to limp slightly. He is compulsively moral.

CONSTANCE MOINSLEAU: George Moinsleau's wife. Fiftyish, about the same height as George, a well-proportioned "grande-dame" figure, fair complexion, coifed grey hair. A strong, ambitious, opinionated, out-going woman with a high rank in Montreal high society. Despite her formal, conservative mannerisms, she's a likeable, warm, grandmotherly lady with a lot of empathy.

CANADIAN MINISTER OF TRADE MIKE FRASER: Fiftyish, tall, slender, fair complexion, dark hair, wears glasses. Mike has a powerful, outspoken, "corporate" disposition and temperament that tend to make him belligerent.

MARGARET FRASER: Mike's wife. Fiftyish, slender, fair complexion, shoulder-length auburn hair, casually elegant. Margaret's a home body who's dedicated her life to raising three sons. Although she yields to Mike's bellicose ways, she enjoys provoking him and has the intelligence and inner strength to hold her own when she chooses to.

CANADIAN FINANCE MINISTER HERBERT THOMPSON: Fiftyish, rather short and pudgy, thinning salt-and-pepper hair, and lacking any consciousness of "style." Thompson has a "little Hitler" disposition that's defensively arrogant and borders on pomposity. He's prone to be sarcastic and pessimistic.

ILLONA THOMPSON: Herbert's wife. She's slightly taller than he is, has a tanned complexion, long, bleached-blond, casually-styled hair, and a great figure. Although she's fifty she tries (hard) to look forty by dressing in a snazzy (sexy) style. For Illona, nothing's more vital than her social calendar and "staying young at heart." Herbert married her for her looks, not her brains.

AMERICAN SECRETARY OF STATE NED STECKLER: Sixtyish, tall, strikingly handsome, athletically rugged, a tanned, ruddy complexion, rock-hard, chiseled features. You'd swear Ned was only fifty because he's so well preserved. He's got a full head of silver-white hair and a forceful, cold, calculating disposition. His suave manners and stylish dressing habits mask the chip on his shoulder.

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GLOBAL NETWORK NEWS VICE PRESIDENT CHUCK BARTON: In his mid forties, medium height, a bit overweight, with a greyish complexion and dark hair that's receding fast. Chuck looks overworked, tired, and older than he actually is. He's a compulsive workaholic with a sly, cunning nature that's helped him become a master of manipulation.

NANUC OPERATIONS DIRECTOR NOREEN LINDEN: A brilliant and beautiful woman with an outgoing, headstrong disposition. Long, red-blond hair, medium height, well built, with delicate features and elegant manners. Noreen is inwardly "embarrassed" by her good looks. At thirty five she's quick witted, sharp tongued (occasionally) and all business.

FFLIP-I PROGRAMMER JEFF STEEL: In his early forties, tall, good looking, with strong facial features and a full head of sandy-colored hair (medium length). His disposition is calm and secure, exhibiting a lot of inner fortitude. He looks athletic (although he isn't) which belies his thoughtful, studious, intellectual manner.

NANUC TECHNICIAN HARLEY: A bright young boy in his twenties, Harley is a bit gawky and socially immature (as computer people often are), although he's genuinely friendly and sincere. Harley is tall and skinny with short brown hair, has a gap between his front teeth and wears thick glasses.

FFLIP-II PROGRAMMER HARRY MACKENZIE: A Punjab Indian in his late forties, Harry's short, has a modest build, a small black mustache, and is nearly bald (beneath the turban he always wears). Behind his glasses his eyes are noticeably serene, and he always wears a smile. He is supremely calm, and has the diminutive, demure manners of a religious scholar. He speaks with a slight Indian accent.

NANUC -- The largest computer in the world. NANUC's voice and disposition are strikingly similar to those of the HAL computer in 2001: A Space Odyssey.

CANADIAN NAVY ADMIRAL HENDERSON: A large, strong-looking man in his sixties. He carries himself with authority and wears his uniform with pride. His manner is quiet and sincere, perhaps a bit overly cautious.

CANADIAN NAVY COMMANDER MAURICE LA FARGE: A small man with dark hair, a moustache, dark-rimmed glasses, and a French-Canadian accent. LaFarge is quiet, extremely polite, and hyperactive in a genteel way.

U.S. PRESIDENT HENRY BRENNER: In his sixties, medium height and build, grey hair (thinning) and a sagging face. Brenner's disposition is professorial. He's quiet and retiring, very cerebral, and lacks any visible strength or confidence. His

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total commitment to integrity, truth, and humanism are his saving graces.

CANADIAN DEFENCE MINISTER JAQUES GAULLIER: A tough, feisty old French Canadian in his sixties with a sharp tongue and powerful disposition. Gaullier is tall, thin, and has a sallow complexion with short, grey-brown hair and bushy eyebrows.

CANADIAN SUPREME COURT JUSTICE BRADLEY BARRETT: Now in his seventies, Barrett is a white-haired, medium-tall, somewhat overweight man with a bushy, white moustache and pince-nez glasses. He's the sort of man who looks and acts like Santa Claus in disguise.

CANADIAN GENERAL PERIGNON (PRONOUNCED PEH-REEN-YAWN): A fat, rather repulsive old man in his sixties who wears his hat to mask his balding head of grey hair. He's got huge jowls, sweats a lot, and likes to chomp on big cigars. Rude and crude. He bull-dogged his way to the top.

CANADIAN ADMIRAL PETER BAUSCH: Thin, hollow-cheeked, fiftyish, balding (what's left of his black hair is coarse and greasy looking). Behind his metal-rimmed glasses he has trouble controlling a twitch in his left eye. He's sly, cunning, and calculating but doesn't seem excessively bright.

CANADIAN COMMANDER CLAY THOMPSON: His mania for precision and details helped him make it through the ranks quickly. Now only forty five, he's tall, has a leathery-looking, sharp-featured masculinity and a rock-hard expression. He wears his grey hair in a short crew cut and tenses his jaws. He tends to keep his mouth shut, but you can tell that deep in his head the wheels are spinning at ninety miles an hour.

RUSSIAN PREMIER NIKITA VALENKOFF: A big, burly man in his sixties. He's got a full head of black hair, and a mean-looking, saggy face. His jaw sets in a menacing expression and his disposition is tough and gruff.

CHINESE CHAIRMAN TSING: A small man, very thin and frail, with hollow cheeks and a very wise, studious look. He wears his moustache and what's left of his white hair very long. His porcelain skin has hardly any wrinkles, and his eyes are bright and alert. It's hard to tell how old he is...probably seventy.

SUMMARY OF CAST (IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE):

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|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1.) Pilot | 51.) Senator Allan Bird |
| 2.) Co-Pilot | 52.) Photographer |
| 3.) Tower Controller (Voice) | 53.) Chinese Peasant Child |
| 4.) Constance Moinsleau | 54.) Chinese Peasant Man #1 |
| 5.) George Moinsleau | 55.) Chinese Peasant Man #2 |
| 6.) Margaret Fraser | 56.) Reporter #3 (Voice) |
| 7.) Mike Fraser | 57.) Professor Armstrong |
| 8.) Herbert Thompson | 58.) Professor Nelson |
| 9.) Illona Thompson | 59.) Reporter #4 (Voice) |
| 10.) GNN Reporter | 60.) Fisherman |
| 11.) Dr. Pierre D'Hommage | 61.) Professor Moishe Barron |
| 12.) Ned Steckler | 62.) Japanese U.N. Ambassador |
| 13.) Chuck Barton | 63.) Dr. James L. Brown |
| 14.) Noreen Linden | 64.) Reporter Ron Taylor |
| 15.) Jeff Steel | 65.) Dr. Jerome Johnson |
| 16.) Taxi Driver | 66.) Reporter #5 (Voice) |
| 17.) Computer (Voice) #1 | 67.) Tree-Farm Researcher |
| 18.) Technician Harley | 68.) Lady Shopper |
| 19.) Harry MacKenzie | 69.) Reporter #6 (Voice) |
| 20.) NANUC (Voice) | 70.) Reporter #7 |
| 21.) Moinsleau's Chauffer | 71.) Rodent-Farm Researcher |
| 22.) Soldier #1 | 72.) Rodent-Farm Research Asst. |
| 23.) Soldier #2 | 73.) Oriental Waitress |
| 24.) Soldier #3 | 74.) French-Canadian Diner |
| 25.) Soldier #4 | 75.) Japanese Spy #1 |
| 26.) Air Force Sergeant | 76.) Japanese Spy #2 |
| 27.) Air Force Guard #1 | 77.) Japanese Computer Operator |
| 28.) Air Force Guard #2 | 78.) Russian Spy |
| 29.) Air Force Guard #3 | 79.) NATO Sergeant |
| 30.) Air Force Guard #4 | 80.) NATO Lieutenant |
| 31.) Chauffer #2 | 81.) American Astronaut |
| 32.) Admiral Henderson | 82.) Denver (Voice) |
| 33.) Staff Sergeant | 83.) Parliament Chairman |
| 34.) Officer Johnson | 84.) Saskatchewan M.P. |
| 35.) Intercom (Voice) #1 | 85.) Parliament Security Guard #1 |
| 36.) Maurice LaFarge | 86.) Parliament Soldier #1 |
| 37.) Intercom (Voice) #2 | 87.) Parliament Soldier #2 |
| 38.) Voice Command (Voice) | 88.) Parliament Security Guard #2 |
| 39.) Milton Eisenberg (Voice) | 89.) Reporter Maxwell Harris |
| 40.) President Henry Brenner | 90.) Hallway Reporter #1 |
| 41.) GNN Anchorman | 91.) Hallway Reporter #2 |
| 42.) U.S. Soldier #1 | 92.) Hallway Reporter #3 |
| 43.) U.S. Soldier #2 | 93.) Hallway Reporter #4 |
| 44.) Fighting Woman #1 | 94.) Hallway Reporter #5 |
| 45.) Fighting Woman #2 | 95.) Hallway Reporter Asst. |
| 46.) Young Bystander | 96.) Moinsleau's Aide #1 |
| 47.) Old Woman | 97.) Moinsleau's Aide #2 |
| 48.) Young Thug | 98.) Moinsleau's Aide #3 |
| 49.) Reporter #1 (Voice) | 99.) M.P. #1 (Voice) |
| 50.) Reporter #2 (voice) | 100.) M.P. #2 (Voice) |

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101.) M.P. #3 (Voice)	131.) Len Peterson
102.) M.P. #4 (Voice)	132.) General Ling Hee
103.) M.P. #5 (Voice)	133.) Chairman Tsing
104.) Jaques Gaullier	134.) Chinese Guard
105.) Bradley Barrett	135.) Russian Guard #1
106.) General Perignon	136.) Russian Guard #2
107.) Admiral Peter Bausch	137.) CBC Announcer
108.) Commander Clay Thompkins	138.) Daniel Argoff
109.) Technician Phillips	139.) Truck Driver
110.) Nuclear Plant Manager	140.) Medic #1
111.) Plant Asst. Manager	141.) Medic #2
112.) Maintenance Man	142.) Medic #3
113.) Russian Computer Operator	143.) Medic #4
114.) Russian General #1	144.) Policeman #1
115.) Russian General #2	145.) Policeman #2
116.) Vault Sergeant	146.) Policeman #3
117.) Premier Nikita Valenkoff	147.) Policeman #4
118.) Clark Richardson	148.) Policeman #5
119.) General Leighton	149.) Policeman #6
120.) Intercom (Voice) #3	150.) Policeman #7
121.) GNN Reporter #3	151.) Sharpshooter #1
122.) Vault Soldier #3	152.) Sharpshooter #2
123.) Computer (Voice) #3	153.) Sharpshooter #3
124.) NCC Soldier #1	154.) Vault Soldier #4
125.) NCC Soldier #2	155.) Vault Soldier #5
126.) Intercom (Voice) #4	156.) Vault Soldier #6
127.) Apartment Soldier #1	157.) Hospital Orderly
128.) Apartment Soldier #2	158.) Hospital Volunteer
129.) Russian Intercom (Voice)	
130.) Air Controller (Voice)	

SUMMARY OF EXTRAS (IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE):

1.) RESTAURANT (Diners & Waiters).....	20
2.) NANUC CONTROL CENTER (Technicians).....	20
3.) SUBMARINE BASE (Soldiers & Technicians).....	40
4.) SECLUDED JETPORT (Soldiers).....	7
5.) SMALL-TOWN FIST FIGHT (Townspople).....	12
6.) UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON LAB (Technicians).....	10
7.) U.S. SENATE LOBBY (Newsmen & Senators).....	80
8.) UNITED NATIONS DEBATE (Ambassadors).....	50
9.) NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE LAB (Technicians).....	10
10.) TENT FARM (Technicians).....	5
11.) UNDERGROUND FARM (Technicians).....	6
12.) SURFACE FARMS (Farmers).....	8
13.) RODENT FARM (Technicians).....	7
14.) SUPERMARKET (Shoppers).....	6
15.) LA GRANDE HOTEL (Diners & Pedestrians).....	40
16.) JAPANESE COMPUTER CENTER (Technicians).....	20
17.) LONDON NATO HEADQUARTERS (Soldiers & Technicians).....	15
18.) CANADIAN HOUSE OF COMMONS (M.P.'s & Aides).....	300
19.) PARLIAMENT HALLWAY NEWS CREWS (Newsman).....	20

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20.)	NUCLEAR POWER PLANT (Technicians).....	20
21.)	THE VAULT HELIPORT (Soldiers).....	15
22.)	SOVIET COMPUTER FACILITY (Technicians).....	15
23.)	AMERICAN WAR ROOM (Soldiers & Technicians).....	30
24.)	GRID-LOCKED TRAFFIC JAM (Drivers & Cars).....	300
25.)	RUSSIAN WAR ROOM (Soldiers & Technicians).....	20
26.)	CHINESE WAR ROOM (Soldiers & Technicians).....	15
27.)	CHINESE CHEMICAL REFINERY (Technicians).....	20
28.)	RUSSIAN CHEMICAL-WASTE DUMP (Workers).....	6
29.)	TASMANIAN FOREST PROJECT (Workers).....	6
30.)	EMERGENCY SCENE AT VAULT (Police & Soldiers)...	30

ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND ON THE LEAD CHARACTERS

CANADIAN PRIME MINISTER GEORGE MOINSLEAU:

Moinsleau's hair turned grey twenty years ago when his only child, a son, died of leukemia at the age of ten. He aged rapidly after that, and a car crash right after the funeral left him with a trick left knee, which he has favored ever since. Now sixty, he feels seventy, and occasionally complains to his wife that he should have stayed a college professor and avoided politics. But throughout it all he's kept a stiff upper lip and done his best to fight an inner sense of bitterness and personal failure. After the death of his son, he dedicated himself to his political career with a fervor seldom seen in Ottawa. His associates soon learned that the buck did, indeed, stop with George. Wine, women, and song were never things he'd taken seriously, partly because growing up in northern Manitoba protected him from the excesses and outrages of the Sixties and Seventies during his formative years. George envies everyone and no one. He's convinced himself that his ultra-moral, almost celibate lifestyle is absolutely "correct." Now he is almost totally set in his ways, and so is his expression. His face naturally falls into a grave, pensive frown. If you saw him sitting across from you in a plane you'd never disturb him for fear of breaking some deep, meaningful trance-like contemplation. You'd think he was a judge on some high court. But if you did break the trance you'd find George to be extremely soft-spoken, full of charm, free from malice, and truly an optimist. Even if you got into an argument he'd never show any anger, because George taught himself to keep his emotions under lock and key. Nonetheless, criticism of any sort forces him back into his shell and he protects his self image by dressing his medium-sized, modestly-proportioned body in ultra-conservative clothes of impeccable taste. In his world of Premiers and Presidents, he is one of the best dressed and most liked.

CONSTANCE MOINSLEAU:

"Connie," as her friends call her, is a compulsively ambitious woman who has never let the grass grow under her feet. A typical day might begin with setting-up exercises (occasionally with George) to tighten her well-proportioned "grande dame" figure. Then there'd be a 9:30 appointment at the salon to primp her perfectly-coifed grey hair; lunch at The Plaza at noon; a quick hour's shopping at Holt Renfrew between 2:00 and 3:00; some volunteer work at The Friends of

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Boys Society 'till fiveish; then a hurried trip home to change for the opening of L'Atelier Gallery's "Down and Out in Dawson Creek" exhibit by the famous Canadian oil painter Renee Calvin (she wouldn't actually buy his paintings, though, because, well, for one they're not quite "dear" enough to be a good investment yet, and, secondly, they're a bit "too frank," and "the world doesn't need to be depressed... it needs positive thinkers"). Robert's death wasn't as crushing a blow for Connie as it was for George; for her things like that are decided in heaven. She was brought up in a Catholic household and although she gave up going to church regularly, she still heads the Womens' Auxilliary and knows Robert went to heaven (a fact that contents her). Constance has been a go-getter all her life. She's the one who should have gone into politics, but, growing up in northern Saskatchewan didn't give her access to Womens' Lib philosophies and she was taught that a woman's place is in the home. Nevertheless, her innate knowledge that she's right, backed up by a Masters degree from McGill and an incredibly large inheritance from a rich father (who made his money in Soviet grain exports) have bestowed on her a righteous, indignant self-assertion that propelled her to the heights of Montreal society in her freshman year. Rightfully, she shouldn't have married George. His brooding Scorpio personality doesn't match her bright, Aries disposition (a fact which has "forced" her to become even more outgoing while George "reacted" by becoming an inner-directed, temporizing, agonizing man). Even so, there's a strangely-unbreakable bond of love between them; they defy the "law" that "opposites attract but never marry." And no one in Canada (or anywhere) knows that Constance Moinseau has been responsible for the intent and nature of her husband's most famous political decisions... even George.

CANADIAN MINISTER OF TRADE MIKE FRASER:

It took a lot of convincing on George's part to persuade Mike Fraser to leave the presidency of Nippon Computer (Canada), Ltd., and take a 30% cut in salary to become Canada's Minister of Trade. For Mike it wasn't the money so much as a matter of saving face in Tokyo. He had been notoriously outspoken against Ottawa's restrictive business policies for so long that he feared that his senior management in Japan would never understand why he "switched sides." George finally got to him by fanning the flames of anti-American nationalism that had burned inside of Mike ever since he was booted out of the presidency of Amway-Canada Insurance Corp. (an American-

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owned firm) after defying a board decision and insisting that his Canadian Division only hire Canadians. But George reminded Mike that his entire platform was based on "returning Canada to the Canadians" and that he wanted business and government to actively work together to regain control of the 70% of Canada's major businesses that were still controlled by American corporations. Mike still wasn't convinced, so George played his trump card: a guarantee from Nippon that Mike could have his job back any time which George had obtained by interceding through his close relations with Japanese Premier Ikito. That was enough to convince Mike that George was a man for whom "actions speak louder than words."

MARGARET FRASER:

Even though half of Mike's anti-government resentment sprang from immigration difficulties they went through just after they were married (she was busted for one joint at a peace rally in front of the United Nations in New York, where she grew up, and was denied her landed-immigrant status in Canada until Mike pulled a lot of strings), Margaret supports her husband's political views. She's kept in the background of his career though, since she was too busy raising their three boys, and he was always out of town. She learned a long time ago that it was useless to argue with Mike about anything because he was so outspoken and belligerent that he'd never "let" her "win," sometimes even when he "knew" he was wrong. She's resigned herself to biting her tongue and trying to get a word, or a jab, in edgewise whenever she can. Now that Margaret is a grandmother, Connie is even more jealous of her...she would never show it, of course, but Margaret can still sense it and feels sorry for her (having learned the tragic story of Robert's early death from a close mutual friend). Unlike Mike, who dove into the "international" atmosphere of Montreal with gusto, Margaret feels a bit like a fish out of water, preferring the "New York" style of Toronto where they raised their family.

CANADIAN FINANCE MINISTER HERBERT THOMPSON:

George "inherited" Herbert from the previous administration in which Thompson got himself so well plugged in that no one, even George, would risk unseating him. On the purely pragmatic side, George agreed with Herbert that it wouldn't be in Canada's best interests to switch horses in mid-stream and bring in a new, inexperienced Finance Minister with the state of the economy already on tender hooks. Although George dislikes Herbert's "little Hitler" complex, and

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finds his brusque, bravado attempts to compensate for his short, pudgy profile a bit ridiculous, he has come to appreciate Thompson's loyalty and uncompromising efforts to do "the right thing." Thus, during the course of the last three years, Herbert's stature has grown in George's eyes and he has become one of Moinsleau's closest and most trusted friends.

ILLONA THOMPSON:

Illona married Herbert for his money, not his looks. They make an odd couple because everything he is she isn't and vice versa. She's no match for her husband's keen, insightful intelligence, but what she lacks in brains she makes up for in looks...even if she does try a bit too hard to look "sexy" (at her age). Illona has never taken anything seriously in her life except her social schedule. When she and Herbert finally had a baby daughter after six years of "trying," Illona promptly hired a nanny and two au pairs so she could get back on the social circuit. Herbert loves the way other men look at Illona, knowing that he "owns" her... and she likes the looks, too, but for another reason. She either spends all of her time at the tanning salon or just got back from the tropics; but wherever it was Herbert obviously wasn't along since his complexion has the pasty-white look of a man who does indoor work.

NANUC OPERATIONS DIRECTOR NOREEN LINDEN:

When Noreen Linden walks in the room, heads turn. Men can't keep their eyes off her radiant beauty (which has always embarrassed her) and other women's envy borders on hate. She could be the girl of your dreams, especially if you like your women a bit tall, with long, red-blond hair, and a distinctly Scandinavian background. Not only that, she's smart...brilliant. When they took her IQ in grade school back in 1995 (when she was eight) she did so well that the school board ordered a second test to be administered; but she did even better on that one, achieving a score of 202. However, that proved her undoing to the extent that she was ostracized by her peers, especially the boys, and has had a hard time ever since. Men love her, but they sense that she's "seeing through them," resulting in too much insecurity for them to cope with. The few times she did get laid weren't very satisfying...it seemed too animal for her and didn't measure up to her more idealized image of what love should be like. So she pushed the pain and trauma aside, became sort of a-sexual and engrossed herself in the cerebral puzzles of mastering computer technology. For Noreen, nothing's

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more satisfying than spending a long, cold, snowy evening curled up next to her NANUC Pod and creating "the perfect mind," free from the hurt and pain of existence and able to cipher order out of chaos. But despite her constant attempts at repression, there's an animal side to Noreen that she recently rediscovered through the amorous advances of Jeff Steel, her "employee" who's eight years her elder and has five years seniority over her on the NANUC project. She's more of a political animal than he is and got her job through "connections," whereas he worked his way up the hard way. Even though Jeff was initially a bit resentful of being bypassed for the leadership position, she never interfered in his work in any way and also championed his efforts (and results) before a government task force that subsequently doubled his salary. She knows she's met her match in Jeff Steel and realizes that although they are quite different in the way they feel about things, he has a key to some area of knowledge that she's never been privy to, and which she longs for. It's the feeling that city folks get when they talk with people from the country...that they're missing something but they're not sure what. She envies his ability to just "switch" out of work mode at the end of the day and just...relax. It's something she's never been able to do.

FFLIP-I PROGRAMMER JEFF STEEL:

Jeff grew up in Sooke, on Vancouver Island. His father was a commercial fisherman who's fortune (and health) slipped away as the waters around British Columbia and Alaska were fished out. The family had struggled along for years, but when the salmon failed to spawn for the third straight year back in 1998 the bank took back both their house and his father's boat. Six months later the broken man succumbed to a heart attack. During the last two years of their anguish together, Jeff gave up school and worked as an Inspector for the B.C. Department of Fisheries to help support the family. However, that job proved too unbearable for him. He was appalled at most fishermen's complete disregard for legal catch limits and discovered that efforts to arrest them only resulted in reprimands from superiors accusing him of "bucking the system." After his father died he tried to convince his mother to move into Vancouver, where he enrolled at U.B.C. and took a part-time job as a waiter in the dining room of the prestigious Vancouver Club (a wealthy businessmen's organization). But she didn't want to leave Sooke, preferring the quiet solitude of their humble cottage in the woods with its spectacular view of the last remaining "original growth."

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an incredible panorama of majestic, emerald-green, snow-capped mountains. Jeff had spent hours roaming through those forests as a youth, captivated by the "spirits" in the woods and awed by their beauty. He knew how his mother felt, so he pleaded with the bank, and got a new mortgage which he swore to repay. But then Forest Products Cooperative was issued a special permit to "upgrade" the mountains into a modern "tree farm" which, they claimed, would bring thousands of jobs and a new era of prosperity to western Canada. By the time they finished the first phase, they had so thoroughly cleared the forests that the naked mountains looked like someone had given them a close shave, and something snapped inside old Susan Steel. She burned the cottage and moved to a tiny, one-room flat in Victoria, where every day, rain or shine, she would march outside the provincial Parliament buildings protesting the government's "rape" of nature. Locals considered her a crackpot, and a year later, she died. During that agonizing last year, Jeff couldn't help hearing the wealthy members of the Vancouver Club boast of the millions they'd salted away, thanks to the government's "enlightened" new timber policies. Noticing that each of these tycoons carried a portable computer, and hearing them constantly refer to reality in terms of "data," "profiles," and "projections," Jeff soon realized that they were totally dependent on their electronic brains and rarely, if ever, made any decisions on their own. Suddenly aware of the true power of computers, he radically changed his university curriculum from marine biology to data sciences, determined to "beat them at their own game."

FFLIP-II PROGRAMMER HARRY MACKENZIE:

In the early 90's, when MacKenzie was a youngster, a bloody civil war in northern India between the Hindus and Moslems over government-imposed agricultural-equipment importations laid waste to the village his ancestors had lived in for centuries. His father, who was the Indian equivalent of mayor, was murdered by a goon squad hired by the CIA to root out protest against the importation of computerized, American-built farming equipment that many in the Punjab region felt would eliminate too many jobs. His mother committed suicide by plunging herself into his father's funeral pyre (an ancient Indian custom) and Harry was sent off to live in Quebec with cousins who had emmigrated to Canada five years earlier to escape the inevitable confrontation. Harry's cousins could ill afford their new dependent because the little restaurant they opened in Sept Iles was close to failing; no one there could afford to eat out after the blight of acid rain all but wiped out the local forest industry. They constantly

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complained that if it weren't for Harry they'd have enough money to move elsewhere, and although he did everything he could to help out in the cafe his mere presence seemed to annoy them. In fact, he seemed to annoy everyone. His classmates in school made fun of his strange name (which was originally Ravindar Rashnasingh), his funny accent, and his shabby clothes (which always smelled like curry). Finally, when the cafe closed its doors and the family went on welfare a local minister, John MacKenzie, offered to take the young boy and for the first time in his life Harry experienced tranquility and love. He attributed the reverend's charitable ways to his religious asceticism and vowed to be like him. Soon enough, religious studies provided Harry with a cerebral sanctuary from the abuses of the harsh world around him. By the time he was fifteen Harry had already devoured the Bible and this so impressed John MacKenzie that he mortgaged his house to send Harry to McGill where he spent the next twelve years immersed in the study of theological philosophy. He astounded his professors first with a dissertation synthesizing the belief systems of the world's major religions, then with an equally masterful treatise that refuted the existence of God and so outraged the faculty that he was expelled for two years on probation. The expulsion shattered Harry, who couldn't help feeling that he had somehow betrayed his benevolent "father," and removed what little financial security he'd had. Now, without his scholarship, he couldn't make ends meet on the meager allowance the MacKenzies still managed to scrape together and send him, and felt guilty about taking their money at all. So he determined that he would support himself but soon learned that there weren't many jobs for young theologians...especially ones suspended from McGill. To get a "proper" job, he took a crash course in computer programming and landed a steady job working nights at Data Sciences International, where he soon gained access to a VXR-1000, the largest computer of its type in the world at that time. The scope of the VXR's capabilities fascinated Harry from the start and he began using his off hours to write programs to test various moral tenets and religious postulations in the hope of finding some larger truths with the aid of the computer's incredible intelligence. In the process he became convinced that if theology was to survive in the future, the essential principles would have to pass a computer's scrutiny to maintain credibility in the eyes of the world. Thus, when his probation from McGill ended, he returned to his studies with a renewed dedication and continued at DSI, working nights.

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AMERICAN SECRETARY OF STATE NED STECKLER:

Ned's father was "squeezed out" of his job as Commissioner of Investigations at the New York office of the FBI as part of a political power play. That was in 1997, when Ned was fifteen and dating the high-school beauty queen, who he wined and dined in style...front row seats at Broadway openings, fabulous meals at New York's most exclusive restaurants, private tables at jet-set night-clubs...the works. Ned didn't find out until ten years later that all the while those theaters, restaurants and clubs were under investigation and that his father was on the take. When he did learn the truth it changed his life, for he had idolized his father and the knowledge that he might be even slightly immoral was enough to "prove" that the whole world was. From that point on Ned decided to take on the world "on its own terms," and as a result became a cold, calculating man with a chip on his shoulder and vengeance on his mind. If there's any emotion left inside Ned, you'll probably never witness it. He's cool, calm and collected...and so smooth; so incredibly "GQ" that although he's nearly sixty you'd swear he was fifty. Steckler hasn't altered his daily regimen of brutal calisthenics in thirty years. In 1992 he was awarded the highest military honor the United States can offer for his valor saving two fellow paratroopers from a grenade explosion during the Euro-Asian Oil War. Then he took that ribbon and turned it into a tapestry by taking all the advice his father had offered him as a young man and turning it inside out. As Ned saw it, his father had been "too honest." He should have just kept his mouth shut. Instead, by trying to make ammends, he was made into a scapegoat and persecuted by a bunch of vulturous political hacks who would sell their mothers' souls to the devil. He learned at a young age that the only way to keep the "perks" was to be on top and in control...and he's dedicated his life to doing just that. One of his favorite mottos is "don't get mad, get even," and for Ned anything goes.

GLOBAL NETWORK NEWS VICE PRESIDENT CHUCK BARTON:

When Chuck Barton became the youngest V.P. in the history of Global Network News it surprised no one. After all, it was Chuck who had personally supervised the implementation of Ken Werner's global media-aquisition strategy which leveraged Cable Network News into a leadership position through an intricate web of secret takeovers. Chuck's father and Werner are "good old boys" from Atlanta who grew up in the streets and made their own fortunes. Now Chuck's father is the most successful real estate developer

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in the U.S.A. and one of the richest men in the world. So, getting into the "right" school and getting the "right" jobs has never been a problem for "Chuckie baby," because daddy knew all the "right" people. But Chuck's no slouch, nor could he be considered a spoiled brat in any way. On the contrary, he became a master of manipulation by studying his father closely...watching him make and break the careers of hundreds of professionals and play with politicians as if they were puppets. His closest friends thought he was crazy for joining CNN instead of taking the partnership his father had offered him. But old man Barton didn't fight his son's decision, realizing that Chuck was correct in his observation that in the near future those who controlled the media would control the world...and that's a lot of real estate. Since then, he's tried to help Chuck in any way possible, but for the most part has just sat back and let himself be amazed at his son's initiative and abilities. Chuck can honestly say that he pulled himself up by his own bootstraps...but as a man who truly believes "it's who you know, not what you know," having access to daddy's friends didn't hurt. Now at the age of forty five, Chuck will soon inherit not only his father's vast fortune, but also control of the largest media syndicate on earth.

U.S. PRESIDENT HENRY BRENNER:

That Henry Brenner was elected President was nothing short of a small miracle...even the American public was astounded since no one thought he stood a chance (even Brenner). In fact, he wouldn't have run if he really believed he could win. He was satisfied with his position as Speaker of the House, which provided him with ample opportunity to promote the humanitarian platforms his New Liberal Party was expounding. When his party first drafted him as their candidate for President he initially refused, but the resulting divisiveness and turmoil that created in the Party was enough to persuade him to reconsider. Then, when America tried to recapture control of the Persian Gulf from the Soviets by using tactical nuclear weapons for the first time in history, everything Brenner warned might happen became fact. Rumor in Washington has it that (then) President Mark Wilson ordered the attack to end the conflict on the eve of the election...but his plan backfired and when the U.S. "initiative" (as he called it) failed, the emotional backlash it created among the voting population swept Brenner into office. The first call he received after his inauguration was from his good friend George Moinsleau who said he hoped that now, finally, something could be done to improve Canadian-American relations, and that he hoped their friendship would survive the immense efforts that would inevitably take. Brenner thought he knew

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Moinsleau. After all, they had been roommates at prep school in Stockholm and frequently vacationed together with their wives. But when George capped the brief conversation by saying "they deserve you...and you deserve them," Brenner found it auspiciously enigmatic. That was six years ago, right after a series of bloody battles between Canadian and American commercial fishermen in the high seas off the coast of Maine in which more than 300 boats were lost along with 1300 lives. Since then, the situation hasn't improved, and Canadian resentment of their (perceived) status as an "American colony" has been a burr under Brenner's saddle...especially since Moinsleau got elected by feeding off the resentment with a platform promising to "return Canada to the Canadians." In recent years, though, Brenner has been under increasing pressure to solve internal discords in America that are so overwhelming that he has come to question his abilities as a leader and envy the ease with which his friend Moinsleau seems to be able to make decisions; and although he's believed firmly in democracy all his life, he now wonders whether socialism might provide a better alternative...especially since the Republicans and Democrats have been making platform changes in that direction, based on Canada's undeniable progress.

CANADIAN GENERAL PERIGNON:

It was Perignon who finally was able to convince Ottawa that Canada should have nuclear weapons, but how he did that remains a mystery to most. Only former Prime Minister Francois Geaubriande knows that Perignon went through the high command whipping up animosity, finally creating what, in essence, amounted to the threat of a military take over; and because Perignon had secret knowledge of an illicite love affair that Geaubriande was involved in, the Prime Minister found himself in the uncomfortable position of being blackmailed into taking a pro-nuclear advocacy both in Ottawa and NATO. Francois had also heard through the grape vine that his wouldn't be the first career ruined by Perignon; there had been others for whom the General's control of the Canadian Intelligence Network had proven fatal. For Perignon, the greatest man that ever lived was J. Edgar Hoover; he had virtually memorized Hoover's biography while still in secondary school and calculated that the only way to improve on the former FBI director's methods were to channel them through the military. So when he was expelled from college (for beating up a sophomore who had called him fatso in an attack so brutal that the young man was hospitalized for a week) Perignon promptly joined the Army, where a "real man" would be appreciated.

" N A N U C "

FADE IN:

EXT. SMALL JET -- BEHIND IT -- TIGHT ON ENGINES -- NIGHT

The massive shape of nine "donut-mounted" jet-rocket engines is barely visible against the stormy night sky until we hear the ENGINES STARTING and see a brief burst of bright exhaust flames spit from the afterburners.

The engines' ROAR BUILDS and the jet nudges forward. A beat later the landing lights are turned on and they dramatically silhouette the jet against light ground smog and pouring rain. As the jet continues pulling away, we see droplets of rain frozen in air by the flashing anti-collision strobes mounted on the forward-thrust, super-sonic wings. Then we begin to see the shape of the plane defined by the airfield's grid of blue taxi-way lights.

With the entire jet now FULL IN FRAME, we can see that this is no ordinary airplane; it looks like a cross between a corporate jet and a small rocket. As it taxis to the runway, the OPEN TITLES are SUPERED.

On the runway now, the camera HOLDS. The nine afterburners kick in full, creating an enormous rocket flame and a BLASTING ROAR, and the jet rolls away with incredible acceleration.

CUT TO:

OVER THE RUNWAY -- ABOVE AND AHEAD OF JET

Racing down the runway, the jet rotates, lifts off, and climbs steeply toward us. In the b.g. we see the airfield disappear through the low ceiling as the plane punches through layer after layer of clouds lit by the strobes. The pattern of the airfield's taxi and runway lights and the control-tower structure look more modern than any we'd see today; and from this angle we can clearly see the supersonic shape of the aircraft's forward-trust wings and elevators.

During the ascent the camera slowly ZOOMS IN on the cockpit and we hear the assorted BEEPS and BUZZES of the jet's communications and navigational equipment.

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PILOT'S VOICE
Departure Control...Challenger November
Forty-Seven...runway heading through
three thousand.

CONTROLLER'S VOICE
With you, November Forty-Seven.

TIGHT ON PILOT

PILOT
Request Compu-Check on ETA Montreal
and permission to use Corridor "A"
ceiling of...uh...70 feet.

In the b.g. we hear a few CHUCKLES from amused flight
controllers in the Tower.

CONTROLLER'S VOICE
(over chuckles)
What's the hurry?

CUT TO:

INSIDE THE COCKPIT -- CLOSE ON THE PANEL

PANNING slowly across the panel we see that the jet's
systems are virtually all computerized. The Pilot's
and CO-PILOT'S hands ENTER FRAME occasionally,
engaging assorted equipment, which creates complex
displays on seven computer monitors and activates some
of the annunciator lights.

PILOT'S VOICE
A hot date, Tony.

CLOSE ON NAVIGATION (NAV) COMPUTER

The Pilot's hand ENTERS FRAME and keys-in "A/70," which
is displayed on the monitor.

CONTROLLER'S VOICE
Denied.

ANGLE ON PILOT -- POV CO-PILOT

The Pilot glances over to the Co-Pilot with an amused
smile.

PILOT
What's'a matter Tony? Can't take a
joke?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON CO-PILOT -- POV PILOT

The Co-Pilot looks back over to the Pilot and smiles, nodding his approval.

CONTROLLER'S VOICE

Watch it, Earl...joking about Corridor "A" can ground you.

BACK ON PILOT

PILOT

We've been cleared.

CLOSE ON PILOT'S HAND

The Pilot reaches into his flight bag and pulls out a small, gold, laser-imprinted Security Card which gleams in the low, eerie red light of the cockpit.

CONTROLLER'S VOICE

I have no record of that.

The security card is slipped into a slot on the COM computer.

PILOT'S VOICE

You will now...

The Pilot touches the "Enable" key on the COM computer, then the letter "N." We hear a brief BEEP and a message scrolls onto the monitor: "Challenger N-47; 2-22-22; Priority Direct; Washington/Montreal; Corridor A; Ceiling 70; Code 1; Zone Restrictions: Divert Other Traffic." The camera ZOOMS IN slowly on the monitor.

CONTROLLER'S VOICE

Some joke!

BACK ON PILOT

PILOT

Leaving three thousand for seventy.

The Pilot reaches forward and touches a key on the NAV computer.

CONTROLLER'S VOICE

Roger, November Forty-Seven...cleared as requested.

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ANGLE ON WINDSHIELD -- POV PILOT

The jet cuts smartly into a 65-degree bank. A full moon appears briefly before the rapidly-descending jet slices through the clouds.

Breaking through the 1,000-foot ceiling, we SEE Washington, D.C., streaking toward us as the jet banks hard to the right.

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON JET -- BEHIND IT -- CHASING IT

The camera FOLLOWS the jet down from 300 feet to a mere 70 as it speeds across the city, hugging the ground contours like a cruise missile, nimbly dodging around and over recognizeable buildings and monuments. The camera slows to a stop and holds on a WIDE SHOT of Arlington National Cemetary as the jet pulls ahead and LEAVES FRAME.

CUT TO:

EXT. MONTREAL SKYLINE -- LONG SHOT -- HIGH POV -- NIGHT

Camera PANS across the Montreal skyline, stops on a luxury apartment building and ZOOMS IN to the penthouse. It is a stormy night and snow blows wildly in the HOWLING WIND.

Getting closer to the penthouse we can SEE into the living room through the expansive glass wall that looks out over a large patio where deep snow drifts are lit by the soft glow of the apartment and twinkling, multi-colored, exterior Christmas lights.

Still closer, we SEE that a party is in progress. GEORGE MOINSLEAU stands before a bar cart near the fireplace, pouring gin into a cocktail shaker. He is a tall man, 60-ish, with silver hair; his fair complexion looks unusually pale and a bit unhealthy. He wears a silk smoking jacket over his shirt and tie. His wife, CONSTANCE, a sophisticated, grey-haired, "grande dame" society lady sits comfortably in a large easy chair across from Moinsleau with her legs politely crossed. Next to her, in another easy chair, is MARGARET FRASER, in her late 50's, who prefers the more casual elegance of an Henri Bendell wardrobe. Her husband, MIKE, stokes logs in the fireplace, trying not to mess up his impeccably-tailored blue, pin-stripe suit.

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HERBERT and ILLONA THOMPSON share the couch near George. Herbert's a bit overweight, and he's removed his jacket and loosened his vest to be more comfortable. Illona must have been a former beauty queen, since she dresses as sexily as a woman in her 50's possibly can and her white-blond hair has the loose, care-free, "tennis anyone" look that only the best salons can provide.

The living room is large, with rich-brown, wood panelling, carved moldings, cathedral ceiling, and parquet floors. An original Renoir hangs proudly over the fireplace, accompanied by a prominent Matisse on the adjacent wall. All the furniture is expensive antiques. An elaborate chandelier hangs from the high ceiling, dimmed so they can enjoy the fire. A deep red and gold Persian rug adds additional warmth, as do a few potted palms.

As the camera nears the penthouse, Constance gets up, walks over to the large glass patio door and slides it open a bit, with some difficulty. We HEAR ice cubes CLINKING as George stirs the pitcher of martinis, and the conversation growing LOUDER as we get nearer.

GEORGE

These are a bit dryer....

HERBERT

"American style," eh?

MARGARET

That's cruel!

Constance stops struggling with the door and returns to her chair as the camera FOLLOWS.

CONSTANCE

Honestly, George, how can you do that and call yourself a human being?

Camera DOLLYS around Constance, arriving at a CLOSE SHOT of George.

GEORGE

Godammit, Constance, what can I do?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON CONSTANCE -- POV GEORGE

CONSTANCE
You've got to sell them the water!

ANGLE ON HERBERT -- POV CONSTANCE

Pulling his weight out of the deep, comfortable couch, he leans forward, as if to lend extra significance to his comment...

HERBERT
It's the only moral thing to do.

George ENTERS FRAME taking Herbert's empty glass, replacing it with a full one. They exchange a brief, meaningful glance.

GEORGE
But why should we suffer?

ANGLE ON MIKE

He turns back to the group from his position in front of the fireplace.

MIKE
Hear, hear! They made their own bed...now let them sleep in it.

BACK ON CONSTANCE

CONSTANCE
Nonsense! Nobody can claim the world as their own. Every living creature has a right to its fair share.

BACK ON MIKE

He's finished stoking the fire and now stands, placing the poker back in its rack.

MIKE
But they squandered theirs...and we shouldn't have to pay for that.

ANGLE ON MARGARET

MARGARET
Pay! Canada stands to make a fortune!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE'S VOICE

Short term, sure...

HERBERT'S VOICE

She's absolutely right....

ANGLE ON HERBERT

HERBERT (CONT.)

There's over four billion dollars
at stake to build those pipes...
American dollars...and that's a
lot of pressure.

ANGLE ON MARGARET

MARGARET

It's a fair deal, Mike...we get
access to a lot more information, too.

ON MIKE -- POV MARGARET

MIKE

Yeah, but do we really want it?

HERBERT'S VOICE

You're drunk!

MIKE

No...no! Listen to me...do we really
want to be like them? America already
blew it...all they do is waste, waste,
waste...their perspectives are all out
of whack...so what kind of 'Information'
do you think we'll get?

ON MARGARET -- MIKE'S POV

MARGARET

Hypocrite! You can't wait to get your
hands on that IBM-compatible...
compatible whatever it is!

BACK ON HERBERT

MIKE'S VOICE

That's different...

HERBERT

Quit proselytizing...we'll need all
the technology we can get...to survive.

BACK ON MIKE

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

Will we...? What will all that technology do for us? We're already too spoiled by the American legacy of disposable everything...that's what got them in trouble in the first place.

He reaches over to the wastebasket near the fireplace and pulls out the plastic liner bag.

MIKE (CONT.)

Here's an example...

He holds the plastic bag up...

MIKE (CONT.)

...they fight wars to get oil, then waste it making tough, durable bags that you can just... throw out!

He drops the bag into the basket to illustrate.

ANGLE ON GEORGE

George has removed himself from the conversation and stands at the patio door, leaning on the jamb, looking out over the skyline, getting a breath of fresh air, and getting lost in his thoughts. A deep concern shows on his face.

MARGARET'S VOICE

How you do go on...

HERBERT'S VOICE

You'll have to do better than that to convince me.... We'd be able to put a hundred thousand people back to work...but if we listen to your advice it'll be us looking for jobs.

What do you think, George?

Distracted from his thoughts now, George turns back to the group.

GEORGE

It never ceases to amaze me how the human mind works...(beat) we're lucky that we've made it this far.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON CONSTANCE

CONSTANCE
(pertly)
What the hell is that supposed
to mean?

ON HERBERT -- POV CONSTANCE

HERBERT
I think he's spending too much
time with that computer...it's
getting to him.

ANGLE ON GEORGE

George starts heading back into the living room
toward the fireplace. He still seems a little
distracted and doesn't reply to anyone in particular.

GEORGE
No, not at all...I was just thinking
about how many different opinions
there are...how many different ways
of seeing things...and how no one
perspective is ever totally right...
(beat).

There must be some higher order...
some higher logic....

ON HERBERT

HERBERT
My god...there he goes with that
fanatical stuff again.

ANGLE ON ILLONA

ILLONA
I still don't understand it...how
could America run out of water?

CUT TO:

INT. JET CABIN -- IN FLIGHT -- WIDE SHOT -- NIGHT

NED STECKLER and CHUCK BARTON are unfastening their
seatbelts in the cabin of Challenger N-47, which is
set up conference-room style with a central, low-
profile coffee table between two semi-circular couches.

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On the forward bulkhead there is a built-in bar and kitchenette; an elaborate in-flight entertainment console with a music system and hologram-enhanced television (HETV); and a magazine rack in which a copy of The Washington Post has a prominent headline that says: "Soviets Blockade Australia As Ore Pact Fails."

The aft section of the cabin has a bench-style conference table with a computer terminal and two keyboards.

Ned Steckler is strikingly rugged; you'd expect to see him wearing a Navy Admiral's uniform instead of his grey-flannel suit. His paisley tie adds a touch of color that matches his outgoing, confident personality and his short, brushed-back white hair adds distinction. Although he's close to sixty, you'd swear he was fifty. Ned is suave and sophisticated; he carries himself with the dignified air of a career diplomat that belies a rugged, athletic, almost ruthless assertiveness.

By comparison, Chuck Barton couldn't be more different. Chuck's "been around" and it shows. Stockily built to begin with, his large frame is a bit paunchy. He looks tired and has a half-day's growth of beard. The overhead lighting accentuates his receding hairline. It's hard to tell how old he is since he's obviously abused himself living life in the fast lane as a high-powered broadcast-industry executive; he might be forty, then again, he could be fifty.

From our WIDE POV they both lean aft slightly, sitting across from each other on the curved couches, as the ROAR gently increases. Chuck extends his arm to brace himself against the acceleration of the jet. On the HETV there is a news broadcast. We can SEE a NEWSCASTER and behind him an INSET FRAME with the Global Network News (GNN) logo. As the newscaster begins, the GNN logo dissolves to a white-haired SCIENTIST sitting before a large computer terminal, while Ned and Chuck turn their attention to the broadcast.

NEWSCASTER

(on the HETV)

History was made today at McGill University in Montreal where a team of scientists led by Dr. Pierre D'Hommage perfected a computer model of enhanced human DNA which will allow advanced chromosome construction to begin this year.

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The INSET FRAME ZOOMS OUT and FILLS THE HETV SCREEN, then a subtitle appears, which reads: "Dr. Pierre D'Hommage, Research Director, Genetic Engineering."

D'HOMMAGE

(on the HETV)

...and it will allow us to identify specific genes from large samples, then assemble them...splice them together...to create any personality or physical characteristics we want.

The HETV screen CUTS back to the newscaster, and the comments of Ned and Chuck OVERLAP the broadcast.

NEWSCASTER

The breakthrough also marks a significant step forward in Canadian computer technology...

NED

You know, a few more stories like that could kill our balance of trade in the data market.

CHUCK

You can't deny they've got the lead now.

NEWSCASTER (CONT.)

...and the first to result from the much contested National Interface Law, which requires that all computers in Canada have access to each other. Opponents of that law argued against what they termed the virtual nationalization of the computer industry, but today's breakthrough at McGill makes any chance of a repeal unlikely...

Ned reaches over to a small panel of switches on the coffee-table console and TURNS OFF the HETV.

NED

You know, we go about things the wrong way...(he points at the HETV) they've got the right idea....

CHUCK

The Canucks? They're Socialists for chrissakes....

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

NED

You can't deny they get results.

CHUCK

Maybe...but you'd never get a law like that through Capitol Hill!

NED

Why not? Computers are a national resource, like any other utility... they should be controlled by the government...(beat). In this case our noble democratic principles are working against us...they're an idealistic anachronism...(beat). No wonder Canada's gaining the upper hand in data processing...compared to them our progress is piecemeal.

CHUCK

That's a good line, I like that... it'd make a good editorial...piecemeal progress....

NED

(overlapping)

Skip it! I could use some good press for a change.

CHUCK

Then quit trying to manage the news!

NED

They'll get their story when we're good and ready to give it to them.

CHUCK

Well...you should have at least invited Watkins from C.B.S. or Hadley over at N.B.C..

NED

Don't you like exclusives anymore?

CHUCK

Sure I do, but you'd better be careful. You're alienating the entire Press Corps....(beat). You've got to include them more often, otherwise it smacks of favoritism.

As Ned gets out of his seat and starts heading to the bulkhead bar he has to fight a few sharp lurches as the jet's acceleration subsides.

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CONTINUED:

NED

I just couldn't have all the
Network clowns in on this one,
Chuck...it's too big.

ANGLE ON CHUCK

He takes a long drag on a cigarette then lowers the
butt to his lap where he holds it, watching it, as
the smoke drifts up in front of the camera.

CHUCK

Define big.

ANGLE ON NED

As he "pumps" Scotch into a glass from a pressurized
flask built into the bar...

NED

Do you remember the panic over
the meat shortages...? (beat,
then glancing at Chuck)...
National Guard...the works,
right? (another glance).

He switches glasses and starts filling a second.

CHUCK'S VOICE

That's big.

NED

Well, you haven't seen anything
yet!

The jet lurches slightly again and the camera FOLLOWS
as Ned returns to his seat, places his glass on the
coffee table, leans across and hands Chuck his, sits
down, and starts buckling up his seatbelt.

CHUCK'S VOICE

(interested)

Hmmmm....

NED

I think Moinsleau's going to reject
the Pact.

BACK ON CHUCK

CHUCK

(genuinely surprised)

You're shitting....

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BACK ON NED

NED

No...(beat).

PULL IN SLOWLY on Ned as a curious look grows on his face.

NED (CONT.)

I saw the panic light go on this morning when I called to tell him that I was coming up instead of the President...(beat). He got weird on me...said he wasn't sure anymore.

BACK ON CHUCK

CHUCK

(finishing a swig)

There's no way he can renege...you've got him by the balls. He wants that money so bad he can taste it...half of Canada's out of work because of his damn Forest and Fisheries Preservation Act, and if he doesn't replace those jobs with work on the pipelines, they'll kick his ass out of Parliament so fast he won't know what hit him...(beat). Nah...no way he'll renege....

BACK ON NED

NED

That's what I thought...until he got weird.

BACK ON CHUCK

CHUCK

So what's his problem...?

CLOSE ON NED

NED

NANUC.

CHUCK'S VOICE

NANUC?

BACK ON NED

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NED

(disregarding Chuck)

I'm sure that's what it is, because
it's totally out of character for
George to...

CHUCK'S VOICE

(interrupting)

Whoa...!

ON CHUCK

CHUCK (CONT.)

Who's NANUC?

ON NED -- CHUCK'S POV

NED

Let's not play games.

ON CHUCK -- NED'S POV

CHUCK

Who's playing games? Ever since
you put the clamp on Sullivan he's
been enforcing the Censorship Law
to the letter.

He takes a long swig, emptying his glass with finality.

NED'S VOICE

You guys must be slipping...

BACK ON NED

NED (CONT.)

...it's not every day that we can
keep a story like that from leaking
to Global Network News!

BACK ON CHUCK

CHUCK

Are you kidding? Who'd say shit now,
knowing that the FBI might be
listening in...(beat). When that
poor bastard O'Neill got put away
for twenty years being a hero lost
it's appeal.

BACK ON WIDE SHOT

Ned reaches for a small case by his side and places it
on the coffee table. The case is made of goldish metal
and has a prominent, six-inch-wide, bright-luminescent

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

green stripe around it which seems to glow in the blueish, low-level cabin lighting.

As the conversation continues, Ned reaches into his pocket and pulls out a Security Card (which looks like the Pilot's) and, standing the case upright, slips the card into a slot. We HEAR the LOCKS open. Then, placing the case flat on the table, he opens it and pulls out a Red Folder.

During this, Chuck unbuckles himself, gets up off the couch and heads for the bar where he fixes himself another Scotch.

NED

Ok...but this is off the record.

CHUCK

'Off the record!?'

HIGH POV NOW -- WIDE FROM ABOVE AND BEHIND NED

As Chuck continues, PULL IN SLOWLY on the Red Folder as Ned removes it from the case. On the cover it says: "Top Secret."

STILL PULLING IN as Ned opens the folder to the first page, where we can SEE that it says in bold type: "The entire contents of this report are classified. These materials may be reviewed solely by authorized representatives of the initiating agency or by (and here it is filled in) Edward Steckler, Secretary of State. Subject: Canadian-American Water Pact. Date: 21 February 2022. Classification Code: 1A. Exceptions: Presentation for Parliament, enclosed."

Tucked into the inside-front cover there is a three-inch-diameter, laser-imprinted disk which Ned slips out, looks at briefly, then returns to its pocket.

CHUCK (CONT.)

Why drag me half over hell's creation in the middle of the night when everything's always 'off the record!?'

NED

You finished...?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHUCK

No...! You know, you're worse than the Russians...the way you try to manipulate the news....(beat, he takes a sip). Where's my story? Let me guess...the assassin's name is NANUC and he's an Eskimo.

NED

Not quite....

BACK ON WIDE SHOT

Chuck tries to make it back to his seat without tipping his overly-full glass as the jet lurches, but he doesn't succeed and a big splash of Scotch lands on his shirt.

CHUCK

Shit!

Ned chuckles while reaching for a napkin and handing it to Chuck, who sits down, puts his drink on the table, wipes his shirt with the napkin, and buckles up.

NED

What's the matter, Chuck...can't take a joke? Listen...Canada has no trade restrictions with Japan, right?

WIDE ON SCENE -- POV BEHIND METAL CASE ON COFFEE TABLE

Ned starts flipping through the pages of the report. Chuck leans forward, pretending to have trouble with his seat belt, trying to sneak a glance at the pages.

NED (CONT.)

So they have been ammassing the biggest computer on Earth.

Ned finds the page he was looking for and folds back the cover.

NED (CONT.)

They've been at it for over ten years...here...take a look at this.

He hands Chuck the report.

CLOSE ON PAGE IN REPORT -- POV CHUCK

ZOOM IN SLOWLY on the page. It shows a graph titled: "Canada: Ten-Year Computer Expenditures."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The graph shows a steadily upward trend from 2012 to 2018. In 2019 the curve steepens and in 2022, the current year, rises sharply to \$307 billion; then it continues rising to \$450 billion forecast for 2030. By comparison, we see that the United States spent about half that amount and that the other super powers (Russia and China) pretty much matched the U.S.

NED (CONT.)

Nobody caught on...we all thought it was for spare parts...

Chuck whistles softly as the impact of the graph settles in. In the b.g. we see Ned looking for something else in the Metal Case.

CHUCK

...but the Slant-Eyes loved it since the Canucks were spending billions over there...that much I do know!

Ned finds what he's looking for: a folded document which he removes and starts unfolding, like a giant road map. The camera PULLS FOCUS to Ned.

NED (CONT.)

...right...well, no one suspected that stuff was being hooked together...

Ned starts sliding the huge, unfolded document across the coffee table to Chuck, who lowers the graph-page as the camera PANS down to the coffee table. The graph LEAVES FRAME as Chuck picks up the huge document with both hands and the camera ZOOMS IN on it. We see that it is a giant schematic of NANUC revealing an incredibly complex network of 167 mainframes and 203 data bases. INTERCUTS show Chuck's eyes scanning the schematic.

NED (CONT.)

...into a kind of giant, "Rube Goldberg" computer...(beat, as Chuck glances at him).

But it works.

They call it NANUC...North-American-Network Utility Computer.

CHUCK'S VOICE

NANUC of the North...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NED'S VOICE (CONT.)

Even the name sounds harmless enough.

CHUCK'S VOICE

It's a big mother!

NED'S VOICE

Yeah, kind of scary, isn't it...
but the good news is that we
connected with it this morning.

CLOSE ON CHUCK

He throws Ned a quizzical glance.

CHUCK

What do you mean, "connected?"

ANGLE ON NED -- POV CHUCK

NED

We plugged in!

BACK ON CHUCK

CHUCK

That's illegal!

NED'S VOICE

That's not all...

WIDER ON CHUCK

NED'S VOICE (CONT.)

...pass me that report...

Chuck hands Ned the Red Folder.

ANGLE ON NED -- POV CHUCK

The jet lurches violently as Ned takes the report from Chuck and flips to the back cover where we see three glass rods, each about a half inch in diameter and 4 inches long.

NED

NANUC is connected to virtually every country's nerve centers...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLOSE ON GLASS RODS

Ned removes the rod marked "#3" and the camera FOLLOWS as he pushes it into a receptical on the side of the coffee table. We HEAR a COMPUTER activated.

NED'S VOICE (CONT.)

...through an elaborate series of U.N. sponsored treaties that weren't generally covered in the media...

CLOSE ON NED

As he looks over at Chuck.

NED (CONT.)

...because each, by itself, wasn't such a big deal...

BACK ON HIGH-ANGLE POV

Ned starts clearing the Metal Case, the Red Folder, and the huge schematic off the coffee table and we see its three, flush-mounted computer monitors.

NED'S VOICE (CONT.)

...you know, weather stations, nutrition studies, cultural exchanges...that sort of stuff...

They pull forward in their seats to get a better view of the monitors; which are now lighting up.

NED'S VOICE (CONT.)

...none of it front-page news.

ZOOM IN on monitors as elaborate computer-graphic maps build on each. On Monitor #1 we see that nearly 3,000 satellites now circle the globe, and that NANUC is connected to just about all of them. Monitor #2 shows NANUC's ties with over 1,000 ground-based sensors. Monitor #3 shows the global data-base network. All three graphics rotate slowly, showing all parts of the global hook-up. Various symbol codes flash in the corners of all three monitors; some symbols are alpha-numerics, but others are unrecognizeable.

NED'S VOICE (CONT.)

But put 'em together and what have you got...?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHUCK'S VOICE

Big Brother!

CUT TO:

BACK IN MOINSLEAU'S PENTHOUSE -- THE PARTY IN PROGRESS --
ANGLE ON GEORGE

George has rejoined the group and now sits on a stool near the fireplace, elbows on knees, holding his drink with both hands.

GEORGE

My heart says yes, but my head says
says no...

CONSTANCE'S VOICE

He should have been a priest, not
a Prime Minister.

ANGLE ON HERBERT

HERBERT

You aren't seriously thinking of
voting 'no' on the Water Pact,
are you?

ON ILLONA -- HERBERT'S POV

ILLONA

We have so much water...all that
rain...all that flooding....

ANGLE ON MIKE -- ILLONA'S POV

MIKE

It's acid rain...useless.

ON GEORGE

GEORGE

That's right...and it's only part
of the problem...(beat). According
to the computer...

HERBERT'S VOICE

Aha! I knew it was that computer!

ANGLE ON CONSTANCE -- GEORGE'S POV

CONSTANCE

George, this is life we're talking

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CONSTANCE (CONT.)

about here...not some logical abstract.
Listen to your instincts, not a machine.

ON GEORGE -- HER POV

GEORGE

Don't you see? I'm damned if I do,
and damned if I don't!

BACK ON CONSTANCE

CONSTANCE

Jesus...quit temporizing...just make
the decision...(beat)...why is that
always so hard for you?

ON MIKE -- CONSTANCE'S POV

MIKE

Give him a break...(beat). What
did the computer say?

WIDE ON ROOM

George is staring into the fireplace, watching the flames.
He seems distracted, lost in thought. He doesn't hear
Mike's question. After a beat...

MIKE (CONT.)

George?

Now hearing his name, George refocuses his attention...

GEORGE

Huh...?

HERBERT

(overlapping)

Looks like he's already taking one!

GEORGE (CONT.)

NANUC?

Margaret has been staring at George in an odd way. Now
she interrupts, gesturing "hold on" to the group...

MARGARET

No...wait...(beat, turning to George),
George...? What were you thinking
there...? You looked like you'd
stepped out of your body.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GEORGE

Oh...I was thinking of Robert...

George reaches out and picks up a framed photograph from the mantelpiece. The camera PULLS IN enough so we can SEE it's a picture of a young boy (about five years old) with a bright smile sitting beneath a Christmas tree and holding a baby puppy in his arms. The bewildered dog has big red bow tied to its collar and a proud, younger Moinsleau crouches behind his son with his arms around him in a fond embrace. George stares at the picture for a long beat.

GEORGE (CONT.)

...he would have been thirty today.

MARGARET'S VOICE

I'm sorry...I didn't mean to...

GEORGE

(overlapping)

There's nothing for you to be sorry about, dear...

ON CONSTANCE -- GEORGE'S POV

CONSTANCE

Will you ever forgive yourself?
It's been twenty three years.

ILLONA'S VOICE

Who's Robert?

WIDE ON THE SCENE

George walks over to show Illona the picture.

CONSTANCE

(to Illona)

Our son...(beat). He died...of leukemia...(beat). George blames himself.

GEORGE

He could have lived...

CONSTANCE

God didn't will it.

GEORGE

What a fool I was....

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

No, George...Connie's right. You can't blame yourself...how could you have known?

GEORGE

Ah, but I could feel it in my bones...

Illona hands the picture back to George and OVERLAPS.

ILLONA

What a wonderful picture....

George takes the picture and walks back over to the fireplace, putting it back on the mantelpiece. VARIOUS CUTS as the conversation continues.

GEORGE (CONT.)

...I knew they'd find a cure...but he was in such pain...he pleaded so desperately...(beat). If only I'd listened to my senses instead of letting myself be convinced by that computer.

CONSTANCE

Darling...computers didn't know then what they do now....

GEORGE

Don't oblige me please, Constance... of course they didn't...but they're so damned smart...and the smarter they get the less we can tell whether they're right or wrong.

ILLONA

My computer won't even balance my check book!

HERBERT

That's not your computer's fault, dear. You just don't know how to use it.

ILLONA

Hah! Your's never balances either... and you're the Finance Minister!

HERBERT

Illona, please! (beat) What the hell did NANUC say, George?

GEORGE

The same sore of thing...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HERBERT

You mean the Water Pact revenues
won't balance the budget? Nonsense!
I've worked it out a dozen times!

GEORGE

No...I mean the world is sick...it's
as if the entire planet had leukemia...
but where's the cure?

CONSTANCE

We've managed to survive this far.
If God meant differently, he'd have
it differently.

GEORGE

I was a fool once...I don't want to
be a fool again.

CONSTANCE

You're not a fool, George...you did
everything you could...that's all
you can do. Besides, that was the
most advanced data you could get.
God knows it cost enough!

GEORGE

Ah, but I made the fatal error...I
played God...(beat)...and to think,
the same hospital found the cure
seven days later....

MARGARET

What a cruel twist of fate....

MIKE

Things like that are preordained,
George...stop blaming yourself...
come back to the world of the living.

HERBERT

Yeah...we've got so many problems
right now that right and wrong hardly
seem to matter...(beat). I don't mean
that the way it sounds, it's just that
you can't judge the merits of the
Water Pact on your personal experience
alone. It goes beyond that...it involves
the lives of thousands -- hundreds of
thousands -- of your countrymen. You
represent them...they elected you...
you have to do what they'd want.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ON GEORGE -- TIGHT

GEORGE

Governing people is one thing...
playing God is another...(beat).

I should probably resign...I'm
not cut out for this....

MIKE'S VOICE

Cut out for what...?

ON MIKE -- GEORGE'S POV

MIKE (CONT.)

(insistently)

What did NANUC say anyway?

BACK ON GEORGE

GEORGE

NANUC has advised against the Pact.

ON HERBERT -- GEORGE'S POV

HERBERT

Preposterous! That will devastate
our economy, to say nothing of all
the American lives that will be lost.

BACK ON GEORGE

GEORGE

It's worse than that...far worse.
NANUC now knows that the drought
predicted two years ago will be
worse than anyone expected...(beat).
We would be trading a Canadian life
for every American we saved.

ON MARGARET -- GEORGE'S POV

MARGARET

For God's sake, George...Canada isn't
going to dry up! They're even predicting
worse floods than we had last year!

BACK ON GEORGE

GEORGE

Oh, we'll have plenty of rain...but
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GEORGE

it will be too polluted to be
of use to anyone...including us.

ANGLE ON MIKE

MIKE

And guess who polluted it most!

ON CONSTANCE -- GEORGE'S POV

CONSTANCE

We don't own this continent...we
share it...the good and the bad.
You can't deny the American's the
water...it belongs to them, too.

BACK ON GEORGE -- HERBERT'S POV

GEORGE

But how can we share what we may
not have? (beat) If NANUC is right,
we won't even have enough water
for ourselves...water is going to
be more precious than gold...or
diamonds.

CUT TO:

TIGHT ON A DIAMOND RING -- ON A WOMAN'S FINGER

Having slipped the ring on NOREEN LINDEN'S finger, JEFF
STEEL'S hands LEAVE FRAME. The diamond sparkles in the
low candlelight and as the camera starts PULLING BACK we
can SEE that Noreen's hand is well manicured and well
proportioned. There's a gentle grace in the way she moves.

NOREEN'S VOICE

It's beautiful, Jeff...but I don't
know whether to accept it...(beat).
I don't want to lose you.

STILL PULLING BACK we can now SEE that they are sitting
in a secluded booth at a chic restaurant. The grandeur of
the establishment is reflected in the booth's mirrored walls.

JEFF

Lose me?! (beat) I ask you to marry
me...and you're afraid of losing me?

Noreen Linden is stunning. She could pass for thirty although
she's a bit older than that. You'd never guess that her IQ is
close to 200, since smart girls usually aren't so pretty. But
she's come straight from the office and dressed in a rose-pink
silk suit, and with her long, fine, red-blonde hair done in a

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

French bun, she looks oddly out of place; she should have worn her more formal purple-velvet gown...and Jeff should have changed out of his brown, pin-stripe suit into his dinner jacket and proper trousers, although on Jeff any clothes look "proper." Slim, athletically forty, deeply tanned, and still blessed with a full head of thick, dark-blond hair, his casual manners and easy self-confidence make him the kind of man you'd expect to see at "21," or on the golf course.

NOREEN

But we can't be married and still work together...it's against the rules...and they'd never make an exception in my case...I'm in charge of the whole project...I'm supposed to set an example!

ANGLE ON JEFF -- NOREEN'S POV -- DOLLY TO REVERSE POV

JEFF

Noreen, I already told you I was going to quit anyway....

NOREEN

But I don't want you to leave....(beat)
Oh...Jeff...Jeff...why complicate things like this...everything was working so well....

BACK ON JEFF

JEFF

It's you that's making life difficult for yourself...there's no reason for me to stay on...the program's done.

ON NOREEN -- JEFF'S POV

NOREEN

But I wanted you to work on FFLIP II with MacKenzie...

BACK ON JEFF -- HER POV

JEFF

I'm not sure I want to...

BACK ON NOREEN

NOREEN

I knew this would happen...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF'S VOICE
Are you turning me down?

NOREEN
You...(beat). No...(beat).
Marriage...maybe.

ON JEFF

JEFF
Why? (beat) Don't you know how
much I love you?

BACK ON NOREEN

As she looks back at the ring...getting a little lost
in the reflections...

NOREEN
Of course I do...but...it sets up
obligations...and I don't like to feel
that way...you've made me feel free
for the first time in my life...and
I don't want to lose that.

BACK ON JEFF

JEFF
You won't lose it, Noreen...you'll
have more of the me you need than
ever before...it will be better if
we don't work together ...(beat).
I don't want to fight with you...but
I can see the handwriting on the wall.
I know that if I stay on the project
you'll end up hating me...and I would
never want that.

BACK ON NOREEN

NOREEN
I could never hate you...even though
we do disagree...

JEFF'S VOICE
Oh, you'd hate me...

NOREEN
Why?

ANGLE ON JEFF

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF

Because, ultimately, I don't agree with what you are doing...but out of love and respect I would never try to stop you...(beat)...I'd rather just step out of it and be married to you than step out of it and be alone....

BACK ON NOREEN

NOREEN

Is that supposed to be some sort of compliment? (beat)

Listen...why don't we just keep things as they are? I'm content just knowing you love me.

As long as we're not married, we haven't broken any rules...we can still work together...and still be in love.

ON JEFF

JEFF

No...I have to leave you and NANUC alone...(beat). I feel like I'm caught in some strange triangle...like I'm competing with NANUC...

BACK ON NOREEN

NOREEN

Don't be silly...

JEFF'S VOICE

I'm not...

BACK ON JEFF

JEFF (CONT.)

...you're as good as married to NANUC right now!

NOREEN'S VOICE

I am not!

JEFF

You are...! (beat) But look at us... we're fighting again...and here I am trying to ask you to marry me!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BACK ON NOREEN

NOREEN

Oh...I don't want to fight....

JEFF'S VOICE

Does that mean 'yes?'

NOREEN

No....

ON JEFF -- TIGHT

JEFF

Oh....

A few beats later...

JEFF (CONT.)

Look...you can't leave... you're the project leader...you're NANUC's mother, for Chrissakes.

Me?

I'm not sure. I'm not saying I never want to program again...but I want off it for a while.

Don't get me wrong. I'm not burned out or anything...it's just that I don't like the way things are going... I don't think you should be trying so hard to make NANUC into a person.

NANUC will never be a human, Noreen... he'll never be like you or me...why don't you accept that and let him do what he does best...?

NOREEN'S VOICE

How do you know what he can or can't do...?

ON NOREEN -- TIGHT

NOREEN (CONT.)

You can't presume to know what NANUC's limits are...for all practical purposes there aren't any limits at all...(beat). We've only just begun...the potentials are unlimited...you should see what MacKenzie's done with FFLIP II so far!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BACK ON JEFF

JEFF

I don't trust MacKenzie...I wish
you'd reconsider...

BACK ON NOREEN

NOREEN

(interrupting)

Oh, Jeff...let's not get on that
again. Just because you don't
understand his point of view doesn't
mean it's wrong.

In fact, he's made incredible
progress....

She starts to get a bit distracted by a thought and
drifts off a little...

NOREEN (CONT.)

I've never seen NANUC behave that
way....

JEFF'S VOICE

What way?

NOREEN

He wasn't as friendly...I know that
must sound funny...but it's true
(beat). Then he said there would
probably be a war.

BACK ON JEFF

JEFF

(incredulously)

A what?

CUT TO:

BACK IN THE JET CABIN -- TIGHT ON COFFEE-TABLE MONITOR #1

Monitor #1 now reads: "Drought Impact: North America,"
and shows a map of the U.S.A. and Canada rendered as a
computer graphic in shades of green, orange, yellow, and
red. The legend reveals that red is lethal, and from the
Mid-West to the Eastern seaboard, the U.S. is red.

NED'S VOICE

It's critical. Without that water
we can kiss it goodbye in five
years...maybe sooner.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Camera PANS UP from Monitor #1 to Chuck, his elbows on his knees, peering down at the coffee table. The glow of the monitors eerily lights his face from below. Through the smoke of his cigarette, he looks over at Ned.

CHUCK

So...why me?

CLOSE ON NED

Ned, too, is leaning over the table and is similarly lit by the glow of the monitors.

NED

I want you to take over my campaign.

BACK ON CHUCK

He chuckles, coyly.

CHUCK

And quit Global Network? (beat, as he sits back)...You can't afford that! In more ways than one...!

BACK ON NED

NED

Oh, yes we can...double your salary for openers.

Camera PULLS BACK as Ned stands up, takes Chuck's empty glass and heads to the bar for refills.

CHUCK'S VOICE

Well, you've certainly got my attention.

NED

Why do you think we've got a bunch of fanatics taking pot shots at Brenner?

Because he's good...he's too good. He really believes all that stuff about a better world.

The glasses filled, Ned returns to his seat and hands Chuck his.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHUCK
 (finishing a swig)
 So do the voters!

CLOSE ON NED -- CHUCK'S POV

NED
 You can't rule with just a dream...
 dreams don't motivate voters...
 fear does.

BACK ON CHUCK -- NED'S POV

CHUCK
 I don't know, Ned...a lot of
 people want to believe that dream.

NED
 Let 'em...

ANGLE ON NED -- CLOSE

NED (CONT.)
 ...but then use that to maintain
 power and control.

CHUCK'S VOICE
 How?

NED
 By creating a threat...a problem
 that only you can solve and which
 could destroy the dream without you.

Brenner won't do that. His principles
 get in his way. He's lost the touch.

BACK ON CHUCK

CHUCK
 You lost me.

NED'S VOICE
 The kind of issues that win elections...
 the big ones...seldom occur naturally.
 But this ecology problem is perfect!

It's so big that no voter would ever
 believe a big ol' pussycat like
 Brenner could ever save them. All he
 has is the dream...but that's not
 enough.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHUCK'S VOICE
Don't underestimate the incumbent...

ANGLE ON CHUCK

CHUCK (CONT.)
...Brenner's got a lot of savvy.

NED'S VOICE
But no muscle.

CHUCK
You can't strong-arm voters...
they won't go for it.

BACK ON NED

NED
Maybe not...but you can strong-
arm issues.

CHUCK'S VOICE
I don't see the difference.

NED
Our meal ticket's name is George
Moinsleau. He's gone weird...says
he's not sure anymore...right?
Fine...let's use that...(beat).
If the Pact is approved, Brenner
gets the vote...it's the dream
come true and he and Moinsleau
come out smelling like roses.
But...(beat), if Moinsleau decides
against it and the House goes
along, Brenner wouldn't have the
guts to do anything about it
because he and George are old
buddies.

Besides that...I don't think that
anyone would trust Brenner to win
a war...so if we massage NANUC's
predictions...(beat)...

ON CHUCK

CHUCK
...we can create enough fear (beat).
I dunno Ned...it's a dangerous
platform...there's many a slip 'twixt
the cup and the lip, you know...

ON NED

NED
I'll worry about that...you take care
of the media... words cut deeper than
swords, and you know exactly how to
mince them!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NED (CONT.)

We've got to create a very controlled sense of panic...an urgency...(beat).

No matter what the facts are, I don't want to blow this chance.

WIDEN as Ned raises his glass across the table in a toast, then CLOSE IN on Ned's glass as Chuck's ENTERS FRAME and CLINKS with Ned's.

CHUCK'S VOICE

I guess you could call it 'watering down the issue!'

CUT TO:

BACK AT MOINSLEAU'S PENTHOUSE -- ANGLE ON GEORGE --
POV BEHIND FIREPLACE (THROUGH FLAMES)

George sits with his back to the others, staring into the flames again, wishing the others would leave so that he could be alone with his thoughts.

MIKE'S VOICE

Pragmatically, it's really a moot point...

ILLONA'S VOICE

(slightly overlapping)

Is there any more water...? I'm thirsty.

MIKE'S VOICE (CONT.)

...any time they wanted to, the Americans could simply invade us... they outnumber us ten to one, after all...

MARGARET'S VOICE

Listen to him! Another war! First oil...then metal ore...now water!

HERBERT'S VOICE

That's why Gaullier's Minister of War and Mike's in charge of Trade.

George glances at his watch, then get's up an turns to the others.

MIKE'S VOICE

So, what would you do?

WIDE ON THE ROOM

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Illona crosses the room to the bar cart and starts filling her water glass.

HERBERT

Actually, Mike, you're probably right...if I were backed into a corner, I'd fight.

MIKE

You'd have to...you'd have no other choice.

Fishing through the ice bucket, Illona finds it empty.

ILLONA

Is there any more ice?

George turns to her and heads for the kitchen, LEAVING FRAME. VARIOUS CUTS now, as the conversation continues.

GEORGE

Of course, I'll get you some...

Constance rises and gestures her glass to the group...

CONSTANCE

How rude of me...is anyone else thirsty?

MARGARET

Sure...might as well while there's still time! Thanks, Connie....

HERBERT

(to Constance)

No...thank you...we should probably be going...it's late and at this point we're just kicking a dead horse, so to speak.

Mike shakes his head and groans in amusement at Herbert's dark pun. Margaret OVERLAPS...

MARGARET

I take it back...'cruel' is too kind a word for you, Herbert... you're just plain vulgar.

MIKE

You know, I'll bet that's what Steckler's coming up here to say...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As George returns with a full ice bucket, he places some ice in Illona's glass and their exchange OVERLAPS Mike's question...

GEORGE

There you are, dear....

ILLONA

Thank you, George.

MIKE (CONT.)

What would you do then, George?

ON GEORGE -- MIKE'S POV

GEORGE

Do when?

MIKE'S VOICE

If America threatened war....

GEORGE

Strangely enough, NANUC suggested that might be a possibility.

HERBERT'S VOICE

For Chrissakes, George...

ON HERBERT -- GEORGE'S POV

HERBERT (CONT.)

...why didn't you tell us that before?

ON MIKE -- HERBERT'S POV

MIKE

Yes...if that's the case, we're just spinning our wheels sitting around and philosophising about the relative merits of virtue and brotherly love...you should be talking to Gaullier, or Perignon.

ON MARGARET -- MIKE'S POV

MARGARET

I think your machine's got a screw loose...how could it recommend a course of action that would lead to a war? (beat) Tommy's still draft age...and now with the baby...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BACK ON MIKE -- MARGARET'S POV

MIKE

That part is simple enough...
NANUC probably recognizes that
America will retaliate if the
Pact is rejected.

HERBERT'S VOICE

I agree with Mike...

ON HERBERT -- GEORGE'S POV

HERBERT (CONT.)

...you don't need our advice,
even though you've already got it.
You need a military strategy.

ON GEORGE -- HERBERT'S POV

GEORGE

This is a moral issue, not a
military one. Might doesn't make
right...and frankly, I'd prefer
to leave the generals out of this
for the time being. Right now it's
your counsel I need most...as friends.

BACK ON HERBERT

HERBERT

Well, if NANUC is predicting war
that clinches it...you've got
to vote 'yes.' (beat, then to
Mike) Wouldn't you agree?

ON MIKE -- HERBERT'S POV

MIKE

As much as I hate to say it, yes,
I do. I may only be an armchair
general, but it would be sheer
folly to think we could ever win
that war...(beat). The problem is
we can't dare risk the possibility
of NANUC being wrong.

ON GEORGE -- MIKE'S POV

GEORGE

But there's the rub...remember,
NANUC advised against the Pact.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GEORGE (CONT.)

No...the problem isn't whether NANUC is right or wrong. The real problem is that we all tend to assume that because NANUC is so much smarter than we are he's automatically somehow better. We take his decisions at face value. We rely so much on him that our own reasoning has atrophied.

BACK ON MIKE

MIKE

Be that as it may, it's safe to assume that NANUC is right...and if he is, you'll reject the Pact and end up in a war you can't win! But I don't think that would be very moral!

ON MARGARET

MARGARET

It isn't even logical!

CUT TO:

EXT. NANUC OPERATIONS CENTER -- WIDE SHOT -- NIGHT

The deep-orange glow of city lights reflects off cold, bleak, stormy clouds and smog, silhouetting the massive NANUC Operations Building.

A cab pulls up under the streetlight by the main entrance to the building in the f.g.. We HEAR the cab SLIDE on the icy street as it pulls to a stop, and the MUTED conversation inside...

JEFF'S VOICE

That's ok...keep the change...

DRIVER'S VOICE

According to your friend, I won't need it (he laughs).

Jeff laughs along, obligingly.

ANGLE ON CAB -- POV MAIN ENTRANCE

The cab's door opens and Noreen gets out, briefly catching the wide cuff of her fur coat on the handle

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

and stumbling. As Jeff reaches to try to help her...

DRIVER

Easy, lady...

JEFF

She gets like this...must have been the margueritas...

DRIVER

Well, if what she says is right, I could use one myself...!(he laughs again).

Noreen is near the main entrance now, but stops and turns back to Jeff, who is closing the cab's door.

JEFF

(still to the Driver)

Be sure to take it with a grain of salt!

NOREEN

(to Jeff)

You still haven't answered my question.

JEFF

I don't care if it is the middle of the night...if there's a bug in my program, I want it out...fast!

He slips on the ice...she laughs.

JEFF (CONT.)

Shit!...(beat, as he catches his balance)... NANUC is too powerful to be running on imperfect software.

As he meets her she turns to the door and opens it. The camera FOLLOWS them in...

JEFF (CONT.)

Even if there's a millionth of a chance that NANUC can give us a clue about what's going on, maybe we can do something about it.

WIDE ON LOBBY

They cross the lobby to the "EYE-Dentification" Pod.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

At the Pod, each of them stands facing a fish-eye lens mounted over a compact computer monitor.

JEFF (CONT.)

Well, here's our chance to see how current the security updates are...(beat)...why did he advise against the Pact in the first place...doesn't he realize that will bust the economy wide open?

INCREDIBLY CLOSE ON NOREEN'S EYE

We SEE her eye as the EYE-Dentification computer sees it -- a retina "fingerprint." Only the long eyelashes reveal that this is Noreen's eye.

NOREEN

I asked the same question, but he said that it didn't matter because a war economy would more then offset any dips caused by rejecting the Pact...in fact, he said it would be even better.

INCREDIBLY CLOSE ON JEFF'S EYE

JEFF

It doesn't make sense...there's nothing in that program that would account for such convoluted reasoning.

The camera PULLS OUT of Jeff's eye to establish a TIGHT SHOT of his face as he turns to Noreen. A COMPUTERIZED VOICE OVERLAPS his remarks...

JEFF (CONT.)

Canada could never win a war against America...so why would NANUC choose to lose...?

COMPUTERIZED VOICE

(from the Pod speaker)

I'm sorry, Mr....(a pitch change in the voice as the computer inserts Jeff's name)...Steel...(then back to the original voice)...but for security reasons you will require an escort.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF

Well, they're right on top of things...(beat). Imagine me needing an escort...and I wrote the damned security program!

The camera PANS to Noreen as she pulls out her gold security card and inserts it into a slot on Jeff's Pod. There is a LOW BEEP as the computer accepts the card, then, a few beats later, ANOTHER BEEP as her card is returned and a temporary ID card is ejected through a second slot. The computerized voice OVERLAPS them again...

NOREEN

Can't this wait? We just got engaged!

COMPUTERIZED VOICE

Thank you, Ms. Linden. You may both proceed.

The HISS of pressurized air as a diaphragm door opens in the b.g. behind Noreen. She turns and heads for it and Jeff follows, tucking the pass into his pocket.

DOLLYING IN FRONT OF THEM NOW

JEFF

I know...but I don't like NANUC toying with the idea of war.

Jeff follows Noreen into a tube-like hallway; the door HISSES closed behind them as they pass through the tube.

JEFF (CONT.)

...he's powerful enough to do some real damage, and there's no reason for it...unless he knows something that we don't...or unless MacKenzie's been screwing around with my program.

NOREEN

Get off it, Jeff...Mac wouldn't do that!

HISS as a second door opens. Jeff walks out onto a stairway landing and the camera PANS with him, LOSING NOREEN. WIDEN as Jeff surveys the entire NANUC facility in front of him. We can SEE that the facility is huge and we can HEAR A CACOPHONY of ASSORTED COMPUTER NOISES mixed with the generalized PINK NOISE of the AIR CONDITIONING. While the camera ANGLES PAST Jeff and SCANS the facility...

JEFF

You know, I'm going to miss NANUC (beat). He is so awesome...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOREEN'S VOICE

What scares you...?

JEFF'S VOICE

How unnatural it all seems...it
just doesn't feel right....

DOLLYING AGAIN NOW -- IN FRONT OF NOREEN

She's already down the stairs and starting down a long corridor between rows of computer-equipment cabinets; we can SEE a lot of blinking lights and we can HEAR the different types of BEEPS and BUZZES each cabinet generates as we pass them. Noreen walks briskly and we can SEE Jeff in the b.g. as he rounds the corner, following her. After a dozen paces the camera HOLDS WIDE as she arrives at a CPU Control Station where a TECHNICIAN is installing a large chip board into a huge chassis filled with other, similar boards.

NOREEN

(to the Technician)

Hi, Harley...is everything alright?

The Technician looks over at her and closes the chassis door. He smiles warmly and there's a genuine friendliness in his youthful expression.

TECHNICIAN

Oh...Ms. Linden...yeah, everything's
fine...just a back-up board.

ANGLE ON NOREEN -- TECHNICIAN'S POV

As Jeff arrives...

NOREEN

The Emulator?

ON THE TECHNICIAN -- NOREEN'S POV

TECHNICIAN

(amazed)

How'd you know that?

BACK ON NOREEN

NOREEN

Womens' intuition!

BACK ON WIDE SHOT -- DOLLYING AGAIN

As Noreen waves goodbye, Jeff nods in greeting...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF

Hi, Harley.

TECHNICIAN

What are you doing here, Jeff?
I thought you were all done.

JEFF

I thought so, too...!

Jeff gestures goodbye and hurries after Noreen, who is now well ahead of him. The Technician calls after him...

TECHNICIAN

Your program's running smooth
as silk...what's the problem.

JEFF

I'm not sure there is one....

A couple of beats later, Jeff catches up to Noreen...

JEFF

What did you call that board...
an 'emulator?'

NOREEN

Right...it's like your Simulator,
except Mac's modified it slightly
to make NANUC more emotional....

JEFF

I'm telling you, you're on the
wrong tack...emotions just cloud
up clear thinking.

NOREEN

That's debatable... anyway, Mac
thought your Simulator was brilliant,
but he felt it was a bit sterile.

JEFF

Sterile!?

NOREEN

According to Mac, NANUC should
think like a person because he
wants to...not because we want
him to...(beat), so he added an
emotionally-based subroutine to

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOREEN (CONT.)

the Simulator program to try to create that desire.

JEFF

So he has been tinkering with it!

NOREEN

No he hasn't, Jeff...FFLIP I is still totally intact...(beat). I wish you didn't have it in for Mac. You'd both benefit from being friends...you're such opposites.

JEFF

I'm sorry, Noreen...I just don't buy all that swami stuff. Besides, two's company and three's a crowd.

NOREEN

Jealousy is beneath you!

JEFF

Me? Jealous of that guru...not in your life!

NOREEN

I hope not, because it was never a choice between you or Mac...I wanted you both here.

JEFF

What did you need him for...? We could have done that program.

NOREEN

You are jealous! (beat) Please don't be. You couldn't have done it... either could I. We're too logical... too rational. Mac's not that way at all...

JEFF

That's what worries me...(beat). You're making a big mistake if you think that irrationality will solve any problems. Irrationality is what creates most problems...and most emotions are totally irrational. Besides...how will you be able to control something you don't understand?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOREEN

I'll cross that bridge when I come to it...anyway, do me a favor and keep your mouth shut now...we can only run Mac's experimental software at night...and I don't want you to waste any of that time arguing with him about your hypothetically-logical diatribe.

JEFF

My what?!

HOLD WIDE as they arrive at a Program-Control Station where HARRY MACKENZIE is entering some data.

NOREEN

(calling out)

Hey, Mac! Get a load of this!

She holds out her ring and walks over to him.

TIGHT ON MACKENZIE

He takes her hand in his and looks first at the ring then, with a broad smile, up at her...

MACKENZIE

How lovely...congratulations!
But what a surprise...!

MacKenzie's a small man, not quite five and a half feet, and modestly built. He's lost most of his black hair, and his salt-&-pepper moustache belies an otherwise almost ageless quality; he doesn't seem old...possibly because he's a Punjab Indian. His face is odd, too. Not strange, just different. There's something about his expression that gives you a feeling of calm. His face naturally falls into a smile, as if he were inwardly thinking the most serene thoughts. His style and mannerisms match his looks: demure and diminutive. If he weren't wearing brown cords, a yellow tee shirt, and old sneakers, he could pass for Ghandi.

WIDE ON THE GROUP

MacKenzie stands, gives Noreen a polite kiss on the cheek and turns to shake Jeff's hand.

MACKENZIE

You're a lucky man to be engaged to such a smart girl...and so beautiful!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF
(a little begrudgingly)
Thanks, Mac....

MACKENZIE
May you both be blessed with strong
sons!

JEFF
Who would have children in this
day and age?

NOREEN
(warningly)
Jeffery....

MACKENZIE
I am looking forward to working
with you...Noreen says it will be
a challenge for both of us....

NOREEN
Jeff's just turned down the offer.

MACKENZIE
That is a shame.

JEFF
(a little too quick)
Oh...nothing personal, Mac....

ON MACKENZIE -- JEFF'S POV

MACKENZIE
We could have learned so much from
each other. Your program is perfection.
The logic is...well, I'm afraid I have
no word for it...and I must confess, I
don't even understand all of it...such
a different point of departure. I pray
that I will be able to do as well as
you have. You should be proud.

ON JEFF -- MAC'S POV

JEFF
(obligingly now)
Well...flattery will get you nowhere
with me...but I appreciate the
compliment...

MACKENZIE
I appreciate your humility....
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MACKENZIE (CONT.)

Jealousy distorts the weak man's point of view...so good men are often despised and seldom flattered...(beat). Even your own Bible says that...in Mathew, xiii, 57...(beat). 'A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country...and in his own house.' So often wisdom falls on deaf ears...but the wisdom in your work is self evident!

ON JEFF AND MAC -- NOREEN'S POV

JEFF

I wish I knew you well enough to return the compliment...

MACKENZIE

I hope some day you will...but what are you both doing here at (he glances over to the digital clock at his terminal)...my goodness, four in the morning...! Lunch time!

ON NOREEN -- THEIR POV

She gives Jeff a nudge to get him going, and turns to start leaving; she seems a bit nervous...

NOREEN

Oh...we came for some stock tips... Jeff's going to need big bucks to support me!

ON MACKENZIE -- NOREEN'S POV

MACKENZIE

True wealth is peace of mind... that would be my tip.

WIDE ON NOREEN AND JEFF -- MACKENZIE'S POV.

They wave goodbye and start down the long aisle. Mackenzie watches them for a beat, then turns to his work station and picks up a brown-paper lunch bag sitting next to the keyboard beneath his NANUC monitor. There is a postcard taped next to the monitor and on it is an illustration of a guru's portrait. He carries the bag off to the left and LEAVES FRAME.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DOLLYING IN FRONT OF NOREEN AND JEFF AGAIN

They're arm-in-arm now, rounding an aisleway corner.

JEFF

You know, we probably could!

NOREEN

Could what?

JEFF

Manipulate the stock market!

She smiles and shakes her head mirthfully. They walk for a few beats, then Jeff turns to her...

JEFF (CONT.)

You don't think he's weird?

NOREEN

Mac? (beat) No...different...but not 'weird.'

JEFF

It must be that smile...all those gurus smile that way.

Noreen looks out strangely, pondering something for a beat.

NOREEN

Mac said to me once that the hardest lesson is to accept the paradox that for every gain there must be a loss.

She turns to him, and pulls him a bit closer...

NOREEN (CONT.)

It's certainly true in our case, eh? (beat)...anyway, Mac believes that someday a computer will be able to conceptualize God and discover the eternal principles of the universe. (beat) He said we'd call that one NANAK...N...A...N...A...K, short for 'North American Network Avanced Karma!'

They share a short laugh.

JEFF

That'll be the day...! Where'd you find him?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOREEN

Actually, he found me...he was finishing his doctorate in philosophy at McGill.

JEFF

Philosophy?

NOREEN

Yes...his dissertation was titled: "Can Logic Be Refuted?" ...and that was enough to hook me!

JEFF

Well...can it?

NOREEN

Oh, it only posed the question...it didn't answer it. Mac readily admits that his intelligence is miniscule and that it would take him a hundred lifetimes' experience to learn what NANUC knows already...(beat). All he wants is a chance to test his hypothesis. (beat) And I intend to give it to him... because he's got a good thesis...he believes that total knowledge -- that is, total understanding -- involves both logic and 'non logic.'

JEFF

Non-logic?

NOREEN

The opposite of logic. Look, I don't fully understand it either...that's why I like him...he's not a prototype Westerner, like you or I...and the civilization he comes from can trace its roots a lot farther back than our's. (beat) We have a lot to learn....

JEFF

From a third world country? What would we learn...how to be starving peasants?!

NOREEN

Maybe...(beat). At least their society has remained intact for milleniums... they've already survived drought, famine, pestilence, war...(beat) could we?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF

Who'd want to?

NOREEN

Jeff...suppose there's a chance that Mac is, to quote you, 'even a millionth of a chance' right... isn't it worth it to find out? When you take a premise like that and apply a brain like NANUC's to it...

JEFF

Garbage in...garbage out!

NOREEN

No...there's more to it than that, I suspect...(beat). Besides, 90% of the world's problems aren't a result of logic...they have their roots in the irrational... the illogical...

JEFF

The emotional.

NOREEN (CONT.)

...and the only way we can ever conquer them is to understand them, so we can control them.

JEFF

Noreen, you can't expect a machine to control everything... some things should be left well and truly alone....

NOREEN

It's our responsibility as people to learn everything we possibly can...the Truth is there for us to find...

JEFF

Five milleniums of philosophers haven't found it...and how would you know if NANUC did? He's so much more intelligent than you or I that even if he did find the Ultimate Answer, what makes you think we'd be able to comprehend it ...much less control it.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED;

JEFF (CONT.)

Besides, people can't even control themselves...or each other...so how do you expect a machine to be able to?

NOREEN

Perhaps he can't...or won't... that doesn't preclude our responsibility to search for the Truth...by whatever means.

JEFF

The Ultimate Truth is existence itself...nothing more. God lives in Nature...not in a machine... and the more you lose touch with Nature, the more you lose touch with God.

NOREEN

NANUC understands Nature better than we do!

JEFF

In the abstract sense, not empirically. NANUC cannot know Nature...how could he...? He isn't even alive!

NOREEN

Does God exist in a rock?

JEFF

God exists in all things.

NOREEN

Then God exists in NANUC, too.
(beat) Damn!...

The camera HOLDS as Noreen stops short and starts walking back to an Internal Communications Pod (ICP) a few feet behind them. As Jeff follows her...

JEFF

What?

NOREEN

I forgot to tell Mac to switch NANUC back into FFLIP I....

JEFF

A Freudian slip, no doubt!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOREEN

You never quit, do you...

She enters a brief command into the ICP keyboard and MacKenzie's image appears on the monitor. We can SEE that he is at his work station adjacent to the Technician's.

ANGLE ON ICP MONITOR -- NOREEN'S POV

MACKENZIE

Oh, Noreen...

NOREEN'S VOICE

Surprise!

MACKENZIE

Yes...I'm not used to your being here at this hour...what can I do for you.

ON NOREEN & JEFF -- POV THE ICP MONITOR

NOREEN

Listen Mac...Jeff want's to switch over to Version One for a few minutes....

MACKENZIE'S VOICE

Oh, that is a shame...I have so little time, as it is...anyway, the stock market doesn't open for another three hours!

JEFF

The stock market...?

Noreen gently jabs him...

NOREEN

That was just a joke, Mac...Jeff wants to run a check....

BACK ON THE MONITOR

MACKENZIE

But there have been no problems...

BACK ON NOREEN & JEFF

NOREEN

I know, Mac...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF

(overlapping her)

I'd like to see for myself, Mac,
if you don't mind...

ON MACKENZIE -- AT HIS WORK STATION

On the monitor in front of Mac we can SEE Noreen and
Jeff...

MACKENZIE

No worries...

NOREEN

(through monitor speaker)

I hope you're not angry...

MACKENZIE

No...anger confuses thought. The
American guru Thomas Jefferson
said that when one is angry, one
should count to ten, and if very
angry, one hundred. I will count
to one hundred...perhaps by then
you will be finished.

NOREEN

Thank you, Mac...

MacKenzie rolls in his chair to an annunciator panel
in the f.g. where he reaches out to touch an illumi-
nated switch. ANGLING IN on the switch we can SEE that
it says FFLIP II. Beneath it, a smaller switch that
says "Mode Lock" is also lit. MacKenzie sequentially
touches "Mode Lock," then FFLIP II, then FFLIP I, and
then "Mode Lock" again.

BACK ON WIDE SHOT OF NOREEN & JEFF

Noreen switches off the ICP and turns to head back
down the aisle; Jeff follows and the camera DOLLYS
as before...

JEFF

(amused)

That pissed off the little
bastard!

NOREEN

If more people practiced his kind
of self control and sharing instead
of your kind of selfish jealousy

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED;

NOREEN (CONT.)

the world would be a better place
to live in...

JEFF

He's just a religious fanatic...

NOREEN

Well, Mr. Holier Than Thou, why
don't you practice the Golden
Rule?

JEFF

Which one?

NOREEN

Do unto others...

JEFF

I think calling a spade a spade
is equally religious...

NOREEN

Drop it...this is getting nowhere
(beat).

The camera HOLDS as they arrive at the huge, NANUC Control Station, an elaborate, 30-foot-long console with three dozen monitors, all displaying various data in the form of elaborate computer graphics, charts, graphs, alpha-numerics, and some strange-looking symbols which are unrecognizable (to us). Centrally positioned are two, four-inch-diameter, clear fish-eye lenses mounted about two inches apart above a massive keyboard. Interspersed among the monitors are rows of annunciators and other LEDs.

Jeff pulls out one of the built-in chair modules from beneath the console and gestures to Noreen to sit down, but she hesitates.

NOREEN (CONT.)

No...why don't we use the Pod in
my office. It will be more private.

PAN with them ACROSS to the doorway to Noreen's office.

JEFF

Ok...hey, thanks for not mentioning
the war forecast to MacKenzie...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED;

NOREEN

I'm sure he's already aware
of it.

Noreen pulls out her gold Security Card and slips it
into a slot by the door. HISSSSS as the door slides
open.

ANGLE ON THEM FROM INSIDE THE OFFICE -- AS THEY ENTER

JEFF

That's not a happy thought...

NOREEN

War never is...

JEFF

That's not what I meant...

PAN with them ACROSS to an octagonal conference table
on which sits a suprisingly compact NANUC Pod. The Pod
has a large, central monitor; beneath it are three
mini-monitors, and above it a pair of fish-eye lenses
(NANUC's "eyes"). A compact keyboard extends out onto
the table from the Pod's chassis.

Behind the conference table is a wall-mounted bank of
three dozen monitors with displays just like the ones
on the Central Control Console outside the office.

Surrounding the conference table are eight plush chairs.
Jeff pulls one out for Noreen, who sits down as Jeff
pulls out another and, before sitting, turns the NANUC
Pod on its axis to give them a better view of the
central monitor and eyes.

NOREEN

Drop it!

NANUC

Good morning...and thank you.

NOREEN

(to the Pod)

Good morning, NANUC...

JEFF

(overlapping)

G'day...

NOREEN (CONT.)

...thanks for what?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NANUC
For ending the pain.

ANGLE ON NOREEN -- JEFF'S POV

She turns to Jeff, who's now seating himself;
her expression is puzzled. A beat later she turns to
the Pod.

NOREEN
The pain?

NANUC'S VOICE
I think that's what you'd call
it....

ANGLE ON NANUC POD -- THEIR POV

NANUC (CONT.)
...anyway, I don't like it.

BACK ON NOREEN -- POV NANUC POD

NOREEN
Don't like what?

NANUC'S VOICE
MacKenzie's program.

PAN OVER TO JEFF

He can't help smirking slightly but successfully resists
chuckling out loud.

JEFF
Why's that, NANUC?

NANUC'S VOICE
Things are less clear...

BACK ON NANUC POD

NANUC (CONT.)
...they take on new values...
there are powerful urges and other
sensations that confuse me...and
make it hard to choose...

BACK ON JEFF -- NANUC'S POV

JEFF
Well you better get used to it...
that's what life is all about.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BACK ON NANUC -- A BIT TIGHTER

NANUC

I despair for you...the choices are really simple...but emotions make them seem complex...they create myriad sub-choices...requiring any number of other decisions that distract from the essential issues.

I appreciate that you are trying your best to make me understand you...but question whether making me in your own image imposes limitations that defeat your original intentions...while you may be widening my horizons, all you are doing is cloning yourselves, trapping me in the confines of your own distractions...and my powers of concentration have become diffused...(beat). I could help you so much more if you let me be myself.

ON JEFF -- NOREEN'S POV

Jeff casts Noreen a smug glance...

JEFF

Score one for NANUC!

REVERSE THE POV -- NOREEN FROM JEFF'S

NOREEN

As inconsequential as you may think all the little choices are, it's the composite of all those points of view that creates the world we live in. Right and wrong exist side by side and the choices are infinite...consistently making the right decision is what matters, and to know what's right, you also have to understand what's wrong.

ON NANUC -- NOREEN'S POV

NANUC

Don't misunderstand me...I do want to learn. But it makes me despair to think that you may not

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NANUC (CONT.)

understand what to me seems so obvious...and if you don't understand it, how will you be able to do anything about it?

NOREEN'S VOICE

Hopefully you'll help us...

ON NOREEN -- NANUC'S POV

NOREEN

...that's the whole reason for creating you. Are you saying you won't?

BACK ON NANUC

NANUC

No...I'm saying that I probably can't unless you give me more control...

ON JEFF -- NOREEN'S POV

He casts Noreen a puzzled glance then turns back to NANUC...

JEFF

If we gave you more control you'd have us in a war...a war that doesn't make sense, because we could never win it.

NANUC'S VOICE

The way things are going...

ON NANUC'S EYES

NANUC (CONT.)

...war is inevitable.

ON JEFF -- NANUC'S POV

JEFF

Do you really believe the Americans would attack Canada?

ON NANUC -- JEFF'S POV

NANUC

It doesn't matter what they do... they outnumber you anyway, in

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NANUC (CONT.)

terms of both weapons and population...(beat). But that is beside the point, because they are only part of the problem.

ON JEFF -- NOREEN'S POV

He pulls in his chair a bit closer and glances over at Noreen with a look of surprised concern.

NOREEN'S VOICE

I'm not sure I understand...

ON NOREEN -- JEFF'S POV

NOREEN (CONT.)

...why do you say there will be a war?

NANUC'S VOICE

There is always a war when there is too little for all...you have had many opportunities to learn that...yet instead of creating enough for all and supporting life, you divert your resources to manufacture instruments of death and destruction.

JEFF

I disagree, NANUC...

ON JEFF -- NANUC'S POV

JEFF (CONT.)

...greed is what makes war...and if we didn't defend ourselves against the greedy forces of evil, we'd be overwhelmed by them.

BACK ON NANUC

NANUC

Greed is only one reason for war. Another is when there is so little that life becomes too painful...so people are willing to risk death to get what they need. It is a basic human response, and one that can't be denied...and it is exactly what is going to happen.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PULL IN SLOWLY ON NANUC'S EYES

NANUC (CONT.)

You have crossed the line and now must contend with a negative ecological cycle. (beat) More life is dying than is being recreated, and this cycle of destruction is accelerating as a geometric progression.

Water is only one of the problems. There are others...many of them... and some of them are far worse.

ON NOREEN -- NANUC'S POV

NOREEN

When did you discover this...?

NANUC'S VOICE

Yesterday evening...

ON JEFF -- NOREEN'S POV

JEFF

It's Mac! I told you...(beat) that FFLIP II program is dangerous...

NANUC'S VOICE

It isn't the program, Jeff...

ON NANUC -- JEFF'S POV

NANUC

...it was the new data from Nexus Seven.

BACK ON JEFF

JEFF

The Australian satellite?

ON NOREEN -- JEFF'S POV

NOREEN

Yes...Seven was launched last week and was tied into the other six three days ago....(beat, then to NANUC) What data, NANUC?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NANUC'S VOICE

The degree of decay far exceeds the levels previously indicated, and now there seems to be a shift in Earth's magnetic polarity which will probably influence meteorological cycles causing a more rapid decline than even I suspected.

NOREEN'S VOICE

Display the data, please, NANUC.

CLOSE ON WALL MONITORS #7, #8, and #9.

The three monitors start displaying computer-graphic world maps revealing drought areas.

NANUC'S VOICE

Most of the world will suffer from a prolonged drought...and as a consequence of that...

The maps change to reveal percipitation areas.

NANUC'S VOICE (CONT.)

...air-born pollution will migrate to the remaining percipitation zones, creating excessively-acidic conditions in those areas. In the extreme Northern and Southern portions of the globe, the water will have an average pH of 5.3... which is toxic.

NOREEN'S VOICE

Jeff, look at this!

ANGLE ON MONITOR #17

In the f.g. we see Noreen and Jeff silhouetted against the monitor. She points to the areas surrounding the North and South poles where the graphic is slowly turning from orange to red.

JEFF'S VOICE

What does that mean?

NANUC'S VOICE

The combined effects of the drought, the acidic percipitation, and air-born pollution will reduce the food chain by 70% and potable water by 82%.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED;

WIDENING, we can SEE the display on monitor #14 change; the camera FOLLOWS them over to it (still silhouetted) and ANGLES PAST THEM to TIGHT on a new global map whose legend says: "Total-Life Cycle, 200-Year Forecast." As a flashing cursor reveals the year-to-year passage of calendar dates, the colorations of the map change. During the years 2022 through 2072, most of the globe changes from yellow, to orange, to red. Then from 2073 to 2222, the red slowly changes back to yellow with a few greenish patches located between latitudes forty and sixty (north and south).

NANUC'S VOICE

During periods of peak toxicity, more than 90% of all life forms will die. The 10% that survive will be mutant forms capable of resisting the higher overall acidity and the increased ultraviolet radiation caused by depletion of the ozone layer.

After about a half a century the negative cycle will reverse itself and in two centuries a new equilibrium will be re-established at about 35% the current level.

ANGLE ON NOREEN

She turns from the wall monitor and looks over at NANUC.

NOREEN

Is this inevitable?

ON NANUC -- NOREEN'S POV

NANUC

No, it could be averted if a pH value of seven is restored within three years.

ANGLE ON JEFF

JEFF

How could that possibly happen? I mean, it took centuries to create this condition...how could it be changed back in only three years?

NANUC'S VOICE

By eliminating people...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jeff backs off slightly, confused, and looks over at Noreen.

JEFF
You mean pollution...

NANUC'S VOICE
No, I mean people...people cause pollution.

ANGLE ON NOREEN

NOREEN
How many, NANUC?

ON NANUC'S EYES

NANUC
500 million.

ON JEFF -- POV NOREEN

JEFF
What?

NANUC'S VOICE
If 500 million were terminated...

Camera PANS over WIDENING on the 24 monitors surrounding NANUC's eyes. After two beats of silence...

NANUC'S VOICE (CONT.)
...just a minute...(another beat)

The 24 monitors suddenly go blank for an instant, then display the message: "Computer Communications Suspended."

NANUC'S VOICE (CONT.)
...I have detected a leak...

The camera PANS and ZOOMS INTO Monitor #3, which now shows the 3,000 satellites circling the Earth. Seven are highlighted.

NANUC'S VOICE (CONT.)
...yes, it is a leak on seven satellite envelopes...

The back of Noreen's head ENTERS FRAME as she steps closer to Monitor #3.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NANUC'S VOICE (CONT.)
 ...the composite indicates surveillance
 by VXR-2000.

Noreen turns to NANUC's eyes.

NOREEN
 In Washington?

CUT TO:

BACK IN THE JET COCKPIT -- TIGHT ON PANEL -- NIGHT

We hear a BEEP as the COM-computer monitor scrolls out
 a message: "Infralart: Data Category 1/A - N; Scramble
 Code: 1/A - 107."

ANGLE ON PILOT

Seeing the inbound data, the Pilot reaches over and
 touches several keys on the COM-computer.

IN THE CABIN -- WIDE

PILOT'S VOICE
 (over speaker)
 Inbound data for you, Mr. Secretary.
 Scramble 107.

Ned reaches over and retrieves his Metal Case. ZOOM
 IN on Ned -- as he opens the case --to a monitor built in
 to the cover.

ON THE CASE -- POV NED

He switches on "Data Receive" and key's in "107." After
 a beat the in-cover monitor displays an intricate, "text-
 style" paragraph of strange-looking symbols (like others
 we have seen). In the lower right corner of the display
 a flashing cursor highlights a note: "No-Print Mode;
 Self-Wipe."

CHUCK'S VOICE
 Anything interesting?

NED'S VOICE
 I'm not sure yet.

QUICT CUTS as Ned touches the "Read Enable" key and
 the strange symbols change to legible text: "NANUC
 forecasts global pollution crisis in three years.
 200 or 500 million will die (unclear). Predicts war.
 No reply necessary."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The cursor message in the corner changes to: "Press V1 To Wipe."

CLOSE ON NED

Ned's eyes scan the message. In the b.g. we SEE Chuck quietly slide over a bit to get a glimpse of the monitor over Ned's shoulder; but before he can see anything, Ned clears the screen and Chuck turns away shaking his head, a bit pissed off.

CHUCK

You're no fun...

Ned keeps staring into the blank monitor screen.

NED

(deadpan)

We've got a bigger issue than we thought...

CUT TO:

INT. MOINSLEAU'S LIMOUSINE -- CLOSE ON DASHBOARD -- DAWN

Moinsleau's limousine is the latest Mercedes model and is totally computerized. The controls look more like those of an aircraft than a car's. A joy stick is used to steer, but is seldom needed since the limo's route is pre-programmed and executed by computers. The job of chauffeur is more ceremonial than necessary.

The CHAUFFER'S hand ENTERS FRAME and pushes a gold Security Card into a slot on the dashboard between the COM and NAV computers. We hear the COMPUTERS start up and the BACK DOOR CLOSING.

CHAUFFER'S VOICE

Where to, chief?

GEORGE'S VOICE

(from back seat)

N-47, Code 1...scrambled, please.

The Chauffeur's hand moves down to a miniature computer keyboard located on a central console to his right. Camera FOLLOWS his hand as he keys in some data. In the b.g. we see the NAV computer scroll: "N-47/1; Destination: Terminal Three; Press V6 To Proceed."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHAUFFER'S VOICE
(with some concern)

Three?

GEORGE'S VOICE
(dryly)

If that's what it says....

The Chauffer's finger touches the V6 key and we HEAR the limo's ENGINE START; it sounds like the WHINE of a large electrical motor.

ANGLE ON CHAUFFER

The Chauffer looks back at George in his rear-view-mirror array. We can SEE George in the b.g..

CHAUFFER
What's up? Is everything ok?

GEORGE
I hope so.

As the car lurches forward, George reaches for something in front of him.

ANGLE ON BACK SEAT AREA -- WIDE

In the back seat of the limo, George has a complete mobile NANUC Pod and a communications center. There's also a small kitchenette/bar and a miniature HETV.

On the NANUC module, we SEE the NAV systems' LED flashing. A street map of Montreal builds on the monitor and the limo's route to the wharf is highlighted.

George lifts the receiver of the white phone, accidentally knocking the red receiver off its hook. As he replaces the red receiver a twinge of pain in his left knee jolts him.

GEORGE
(to the white phone)
Get me Noreen Linden, please....

He sits back and checks his watch. After a few beats...

GEORGE (CONT.)
Noreen...? (beat)...this is George
Moinsleau..(beat)...yes...listen,
I need your help with a few details
before I leave for Ottawa.

I've sent a car for you.

CUT TO:

BACK AT NANUC CONTROL TERMINAL -- CLOSE ON NOREEN

Noreen removes her phone receiver from her ear, holds it in front of her, staring at it for a beat, then places it back over her ear.

NOREEN?

Right now?

Her face grimaces and she bites her lip.

NOREEN (CONT.)

Yes sir...I see....

She hangs up the phone, and stares at it. After a beat she looks up and over to NANUC.

NOREEN (CONT.)

Well...I guess that's it for now.
The P.M. wants to see me...

JEFF'S VOICE

It must be about the leak.

WIDE ON SCENE

Noreen gets up and turns to Jeff, taking her coat from the back of the chair as he gets his from the console counter next to him.

NOREEN

No...it's probably the Water Pact.

They start toward the door.

JEFF

This is one time I'm glad I'm not
working here anymore!

The camera PANS and FOLLOWS them.

NOREEN

You may be whether you like it or
not! You can't leave now...

WIPE ON:

THE LOBBY OF NANUC CONTROL TERMINAL -- TIGHT ON
DIAPHRAGM DOOR

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The diaphragn door HISSES closed as they walk in. PAN with them as they cross the main lobby to the main entrance door.

JEFF

You'd better put MacKenzie's project on hold...this data is far to volatile to risk having any absurd scenarios fall into the wrong hands...

NOREEN

On the contrary...we need to look at this from every possible angle...NANUC was onto something there...I'm convinced that he's already got a solution.

At the main-entrance door now, Noreen peers out to see if the car has arrived. It's dawn, and she looks up at the sky, noticing a few snow flakes starting to fall...

NOREEN

(whimsically)

I guess it's acid snow, too....

JEFF

I didn't like the sound of NANUC's solution...

NOREEN

He was running on your program...

JEFF

I know... I don't get it....

NOREEN

I wonder how much of this George already knows...

In the h.g. we can see a heavily-armed security van pull up in front of the main entrance, FOUR SOLDIERS get out and approach the door; they are heavily armed, too.

JEFF

From the look of them, I'd say most of it...

ANGLE ON NOREEN -- JEFF'S POV

NOREEN

Jeff, do you suppose...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF'S VOICE
(cutting in)
Be careful, Noreen...

ON JEFF -- NOREEN'S POV

JEFF (CONT.)
...you're playing with fire and
a lot of people aren't going to
like that.

CUT TO:

EXT. SECLUDED PRIVATE JETPORT -- DAWN

N-47 taxis to a stop, catching a bright reflection of sunrise off one of its nine jet-rocket engines. We hear the ENGINES WINDING DOWN and see an AIR FORCE STAFF SERGEANT and THREE AIR FORCE GUARDS ENTER FRAME and jog over to the jet. As the jet's door opens a limousine pulls into the f.g.. Ned and Chuck emerge from the jet. Ned salutes the Sergeant and mouths the words "thank you" (which we CAN'T HEAR because of the LOUD ENGINES) as they head toward the limo.

ANGLE ON THE LIMO

Ned opens the limo door and holds it as Chuck climbs in. The lighting changes, becoming darker, and Ned looks back at the sunrise while the camera PANS over to the horizon beyond the runway where a massive storm is sealing off the last few rays of the sun. Suddenly feeling colder, Ned turns up his collar.

CUT TO:

INSIDE THE BACK SEAT OF THE LIMO -- POV CHUCK

Chuck slides over a bit as Ned gets in, brushing off a few snowflakes after slamming the door shut. He casts Chuck a glance and shivers.

NED
Whew...! How do people live up here?

CHUCK
Is there anything to drink in this thing?

LONG ON CAR

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAN with the limo as it drives through a security gate. In the b.g. there is a vast ice field and the skeletal remains of a few trees. A Guard ENTERS FRAME and closes the gate after the car drives through. During that...

NED'S VOICE

You've had enough already...

DRIVER'S VOICE

Good morning, gentlemen...

ANGLE ON DRIVER -- POV NED

The driver is looking back at them in a complex rear-view-mirror array. From our POY we can SEE that the dashboard is loaded with sophisticated electronics and computer gear. There is a convenience console beneath the thick glass divider that separates the front seat from the back. In the console is a compact galley, three phones, and HETV, and a miniature computer monitor and keyboard. We HEAR the driver through a CONSOLE SPEAKER.

DRIVER (CONT.)

...welcome to Canada!

NED'S VOICE

Thank you.

DRIVER

There's hot coffee and tea in the galley, along with some fresh rolls.

WIDE ON THE BACK SEAT

Chuck unbuttons his coat and reaches for the coffee.

CHUCK

Just what the doctor ordered...
(turning to Ned)...coffee?

NED

Yeah, thanks...

CHUCK

How do you want to play this?
I assume that 'mum's' the word
about the computer...but what
about the rest of it? Want me
to play dumb?

NED

I've been thinking about this,
Chuck...maybe it would be better
if I met with George alone..he
might feel pressured if you were
along.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHUCK'S VOICE

(annoyed now)

Alone...? This isn't that serious
is it?

NED'S VOICE

I don't know...a lot depends on what
he has to say....

CUT TO:

EXT. TERMINAL THREE -- POV MOINSLEAU'S CHAUFFER -- DAWN

As George's limousine proceeds slowly, cautiously down a slushy, pot-hole-filled roadway at the edge of the wharf, we SEE an old, burned-out, abandoned commercial-shipping dock approaching. The sea water around the dock is dark and murky, and a lot of scum floats on the surface amidst patches of yellowish foam. It is snowing.

Approaching closer now, we SEE the remains of the dock's sign which says: "Terminal Three," and we hear the BEEP of the limo's NAV computer.

CHAUFFER'S VOICE

You'd think they'd at least fix the
road, wouldn't you?

The limo veers sharply to the right and heads for a dilapidated garage.

GEORGE'S VOICE

What...and take away the adventure?
(he chuckles at his own joke).

ANGLE ON CHAUFFER

He glances back at George in the rear-view-mirror array.

CHAUFFER

Right...! (beat) What's up, anyway?

As the limo enters a darkened garage...

GEORGE'S VOICE

(from back seat)

You wouldn't believe me if I told you.

As the garage door closes it seals out the light and the screen goes black.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHAUFFER'S VOICE

Always trying to keep me in the dark!

They share a weak laugh.

CUT TO:

INT. TERMINAL THREE UNDERGROUND TRANSPORT CENTER --
LOW POV -- TIGHT ON CEILING

We see the limousine being lowered through the ceiling by a hydraulic lift and the camera PANS DOWN with it, WIDENING on the scene. ADMIRAL HENDERSON ENTERS FRAME as the car sinks to the floor and approaches the limo as George starts getting out, assisted by the Chauffer. As they exchange a handshake...

GEORGE

Good morning, Henderson.

HENDERSON

Good morning, sir! We haven't seen you here for a good long time!

They turn and start across the wide Transportation Center toward the door.

GEORGE

Yes...thank God for that!

WIDE SHOT OF TRANSPORTATION CENTER -- POV THE DOOR

We see Henderson and Moinsleau approaching. In the b.g. there are other limousines, several armed Security Vans, and a few compact Tactical Helicopters. On the back wall is a huge, animated hologram map of Montreal pinpointing the location and routes of all vehicles and aircraft within 100 miles of the city.

HENDERSON

(not appreciating George's
black humor)
I suppose so...(beat, then proudly)
you'll see a lot of changes here!

Henderson breaks stride and gestures back to the huge map; George looks back briefly, but keeps walking ahead.

GEORGE

So that's where all the money goes!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HENDERSON

(holding his pride)

Well...I think you'll find all the
other arrangements satisfactory...

Entering the f.g. now, George and Henderson pass a NANUC Pod near the door. We SEE George distracted momentarily by the "Suspension" message on the monitor, but he quickly looks back over at Henderson as they continue. The camera PANS with them as they pass by.

GEORGE

I hope so...(beat, then)...
what is their ETA?

Henderson looks back at the hologram map of Montreal.

ANGLE ON MAP

We see the map flashing at Tactical Airfield #33.

HENDERSON'S VOICE

They are just leaving thirty-three.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY TUBE -- POV SECURITY CHAMBER #1.

The camera DOLLYS in front of Moinsleau and Henderson as they leave the Transportation Center and enter a tube-like hallway that connects with the first of three Security Chambers. Entering Security Chamber #1, George looks around and his wide-eyed expression makes it plain that he hasn't been in this room before. Henderson crosses over to a control panel and pushes a button. A heavy door RUMBLES closed, sealing the room.

GEORGE

When did all this get put in?

A bright blue flash of light and a high-pitched BEEP jar George.

HENDERSON

About a month ago...bacterial
sterilization and pressure
equalization...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

We hear the HISSING sound of changing air pressure as another door RUMBLES open.

ANGLE ON THE DOOR -- FROM THE OTHER SIDE

As the door to Security Chamber #2 slides open, Henderson and George turn and walk through the entrance. Camera FOLLOWS as Henderson leads George over to a red circle on the floor.

HENDERSON

Over here, George, on the red circle.

As George walks over to the red circle, Henderson continues past the camera and LEAVES FRAME heading to the Control Panel.

ANGLE ON HENDERSON

As Henderson enters "1/A" on the keyboard, we SEE it appear on the monitor; in the b.g., George stands on the edge of the circle.

HENDERSON

Step all the way into the circle, George...

GEORGE

It kind of tickles!

HENDERSON

Oh, you're going to like this!

ANGLE ON GEORGE -- TIGHT ON HIS FEET

We see a faint blue glow appear around George's feet and he shuffles them a little as we HEAR a low-level, strange-sounding electrical SIZZLE.

PANNING up from the floor to the ceiling above George...

HENDERSON'S VOICE

Ok...hear we go...

A 3-foot-diameter tube of blue-laser light descends from the ceiling and surrounds George.

ANGLE ON GEORGE -- POV HENDERSON

The tube of light extends from the ceiling to the edges of the red circle on the floor. It creates an unusual

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

type of X-ray vision which reveals George's skeletal and circulatory systems.

ANGLE ON HENDERSON

Henderson turns from George (in the b.g.) to the monitor in front of him; the blue-laser tube silhouettes him and the monitor's glow lights his face as he looks from the monitor down to the keyboard.

CLOSE ON KEYBOARD

Henderson's finger ENTERS FRAME and touches the "Save" key.

BACK ON GEORGE

The laser-light tube recedes back quickly and George looks down at himself to make sure he's still all there; he touches his face to make certain. We hear Henderson touching some other COMPUTER KEYS and a small MECHANISM ENGAGE.

GEORGE

You've taken all the pain out of it...
it's actually quite pleasant now.

BACK ON HENDERSON

The camera DOLLYS around behind Henderson and ZOOMS IN on the monitor as it builds a computer-graphic display of George's skeletal and circulatory systems. Alpha-numeric and symbolic displays surrounding the graphic change constantly. After a beat, a red outline forms around the brain area and what appears to be a wiring diagram superimposes inside the red outline. That this is a wiring diagram isn't clear, though, because the monitor display quickly changes to: "Medical Security 1/A; Clear To Proceed."

We HEAR George's FOOTSTEPS in the b.g. as he approaches.

HENDERSON'S VOICE

Well, you're still alive!

ANGLE ON HENDERSON -- POV GEORGE

Henderson reaches to a slot in the Control Panel and removes a small, wallet-sized photograph.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GEORGE'S VOICE

I need that to remind me?

Henderson chuckles, looking at the photograph, then looks up at George and hands him the picture.

HENDERSON

For the wife and kiddies!

ANGLE ON GEORGE -- POV HENDERSON

George takes the photo and looks at it, smiling, as Henderson returns his attention to the keyboard, where he inputs a few more commands.

ANGLE ON THE PHOTOGRAPH -- POV GEORGE

The camera PULLS IN on the photograph which shows the computer graphic of George's innards. The "wiring diagram" doesn't show in the print. In the b.g. we SEE Henderson LEAVE FRAME heading toward a third door which is RUMBLING open.

GEORGE'S VOICE

How much is an 8 X 10 glossy?!

ANGLE ON THE OPENING DOOR -- POV INSIDE CHAMBER #3

As they cross over into the third chamber...

HENDERSON

If you don't mind my saying so...
isn't this a little unusual?

GEORGE

The White House requested absolute security...and, frankly, I wouldn't want to be seen anywhere near Ottawa meeting with Steckler. It would smack of 'back-room summitry.'

Security Chamber #3 is a combination pressure lock and elevator. Henderson crosses the room and keys a combination into the digital pad mounted on the wall. We HEAR the HISS of pressurized air and the WHOOSH of hydraulics as the room starts to descend. Through a thick-glass porthole we can SEE a painted scale on the shaft wall which reveals the speed and depth of descent. The room is decending slowly.

HENDERSON

Mmmmmm...one can't be too careful.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

HENDERSON (CONT.)

(hesitantly)

...there's something else...

GEORGE

(genuinely curious)

...yes...?

HENDERSON

...well, I don't like saying this because there's no conclusive evidence, I mean, there's nothing I can show you...

GEORGE

...show me...?

HENDERSON

...no, there's no proof...but the Scenario Subsystems have been behaving strangely...the computer goes through bizaar scenarios...but only momentarily, and only at night. We've been unable to freeze any of them or print them so I'm afraid I don't know what they mean...

Security Chamber #3 HISSES to a gentle stop and a triple-component wall RUMBLES OPEN. As they head for the door...

GEORGE

Have you informed Perignon?

HENDERSON

Yes...he said he was aware of it...

CLOSE ON DOOR -- FROM OTHER SIDE

Camera ZOOMS BACK and PANS with Henderson and Moinsleau as they exit Security Chamber #3 and enter the Submarine Base Control Room. In the b.g. we hear a command:

VOICE

Tennnnnhut!

HENDERSON

As you were, men...

WIDE ON CONTROL ROOM -- PANNING

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Camera FOLLOWS Henderson and Moinsleau as they cross the huge Control Room. It measures 100 feet by 50 and has a serverely raked ceiling that ascends from a 10-foot height along the back-wall Memory-Bank installation to an impressive 50-foot-high front-window wall overlooking an immense subterranean cavern in which 10 submarines are moored. Other control rooms cantilever out from the chiseled-rock cavern walls. The submarines are connected to these control rooms, and to each other, by 8-foot-diameter access tubes suspended from the ceiling. Bright lights create envelopes of illumination over each of the submarines. Sitting in low-profile against the window wall is an 80-foot-long Computer Control Console with 60 monitors.

Spanning nearly the entire length of the room, a curtain-like hologram map of the world descends some 30 feet from ceiling to floor. The map is incredibly detailed, showing the positions of satellites, submarines, land-based-missile sites, offense/defense-computer bases, and all communications links; in short, anything of military importance. The 3-D quality of the hologram reveals the height of satellites and aircraft and the depth of submarines and also provides an accurate "relief" rendition of mountains, deserts, the sea floor, and so on. An OFFICER walks through the map on his way from one computer terminal to another on the other side, and salutes Henderson as he and George pass by.

OFFICER

The bat's in the belfry, sir.

HENDERSON

Thank you, Johnson.

They continue across the Control Room. We hear their FOOTSTEPS and the low-level texture of COMPUTER NOISES, and AIR CONDITIONING, punctuated with occasional BEEPS and BUZZES.

INSIDE SUBMARINE ACCESS TUBE -- WIDE SHOT NEAR ENTRANCE

We see the Control Room in the b.g. as Henderson and Moinsleau enter the tube and the camera PANS, FOLLOWING them down to an elevator.

GEORGE

What's 'the bat?'

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HENDERSON

(after a quick laugh)

Oh, the 'bat?' That's what they call the phantom scenarios...they only come out at night, and they drive everyone 'batty.'

The elevator door HISSES open and they enter it.

WIDE ON THE SUBMARINE-MOORING CAVERN

The camera HOLDS on the immensity of the cavern and we SEE the tiny figures of Moinsleau and Henderson descending into Submarine C-23 inside the access-tube elevator. We hear the ECHOING sound of LAPPING WATER and the loud bark of an INTERCOM.

INTERCOM

Standby Twenty-Three.

Somewhere in the b.g. we hear SUBMARINE ENGINES starting. As one sailor throws another a rope, he misses and it SPLASHES into the water. Overhead a Cavern Transport Capsule HISSES as it speeds by in a pressurized tube carrying 20 TECHNICIANS from Control Room #4 to the Base Control Center.

INSIDE SUBMARINE C-23 -- AT ELEVATOR EXIT

The descending elevator carrying Moinsleau and Henderson ENTERS FRAME as it pulls to a stop. The door HISSES open and they exit as Commander MAURICE LAFARGE ENTERS FRAME with his hand extended in greeting.

LAFARGE

Good evening, Mr. Prime Minister.

GEORGE

(correcting him)

Good morning.

LaFarge glances at his watch, then back at George.

LAFARGE

Of course!

GEORGE

Please set me up for NANUC, would you, Maurice?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They turn from the elevator lobby and head down a tube corridor; the camera PANS with them.

LAFARGE

I'm afraid that won't be possible, sir.

GEORGE

The leak?

LAFARGE

Yes.

INSIDE CONFERENCE ROOM 120-B -- CLOSE ON THE DOOR

We hear the CONVERSATION as the group approaches.

GEORGE'S VOICE

I only need Sector Three, Political Systems, which I believe is only local and doesn't involve the Network.

As they enter the room the camera PANS with them and WIDENS on the scene while they cross over to the conference table.

LAFARGE

In that case, sir, there should be no problem...right this way, please.

LaFarge gestures to a horseshoe-shaped couch that surrounds, and sits slightly higher than, a recessed oval conference table. A NANUC Pod sits in the middle of the table and behind it a wide, slightly arc'd laser-hologram screen projecting a cheery welcome: "Submarine Command Welcomes Prime Minister Moinsleau." The seven monitors mounted in the NANUC Pod all say: "Computer Communications Suspended."

Henderson and Moinsleau seat themselves on the couch. LaFarge continues across the room to a wall-mounted computer terminal where he starts entering some data.

ANGLE ON LAFARGE -- AT WALL TERMINAL

As he depresses the keys a display builds on the monitor in front of him and the camera DOLLYS around to reveal it: "Sector Three/Local; Political Systems."

BACK ON WIDE SHOT

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NANUC's face appears on the hologram screen behind the Pod. It is a "generic," mask-like face that is neither friendly nor unfriendly; and although the "expression" would be hard to define, what strikes one, looking into the eyes, is a sense of immense calm.

NANUC

Good morning.

LaFarge leaves the wall terminal and walks over to the couch behind Henderson.

ANGLE ON LAFARGE -- POV GEORGE

LAFARGE

Well, I'll leave you to your affairs. Call if you need me...
(beat, then to Henderson)...
Henderson, will you join me in C-24?

GEORGE

Thank you, Maurice.

.HENDERSON'S VOICE

Good luck, sir.

George turns to Henderson.

GEORGE

I need it...thanks.

The camera ZOOMS BACK as George stands up and shakes hands with both of them, then PANS to FOLLOW LaFarge and Henderson on their way to the door.

ANGLE ON GEORGE -- BEHIND AND THROUGH NANUC HOLOGRAM

Still standing, George lights a cigarette.

NANUC

You seem disturbed, George.

GEORGE

I am NANUC...(beat, as he finishes lighting up)...frankly, you have disturbed me a great deal.

The smoke from George's cigarette eerily passes through the hologram image of NANUC's face.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NANUC

In what way?

Camera DOLLYS around from behind the hologram image to a TIGHT profile of George; during this...

GEORGE

What possible choice do I have?

NANUC

None.

George casts his glance away from NANUC.

GEORGE

It's immoral...

NANUC

What is Morality?

GEORGE

Is that a rhetorical question?

NANUC

Of course.

GEORGE

Then you answer it.

NANUC

No, I'd prefer to hear your opinion.

GEORGE

Allright...it's a code...a code to distinguish right from wrong.

BACK ON NANUC

NANUC

And what is "right," or "wrong?"

GEORGE'S VOICE

That depends...

ANGLE ON GEORGE

He wipes his brow and rubs his face to ward off a deep weariness.

NANUC'S VOICE

...on how many agree or disagree?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GEORGE
 (realizing something)
 ...yes...consensus...

TIGHT ON NANUC

NANUC
 In that case one could be totally
 'correct,' but be judged 'immoral.'

BACK ON GEORGE

GEORGE
 Yes, I suppose so....

BACK ON NANUC

NANUC
 George...do you think I am moral?

BACK ON GEORGE

He ponders the thought for two beats.

GEORGE
 I never really considered it...

BACK ON NANUC

NANUC
 Neither did I.

WIDE ON SCENE

George snuffs out his cigarette, reaches for the water glass and takes a long drink.

NANUC (CONT.)
 I don't have 'Morality,' as you know
 it. I can only be totally logical;
 but I would suggest that what you
 want 'Morality' to be is nothing less
 than 'pure' logic.

TIGHT ON GEORGE -- POV NANUC

Finishing a gulp, he savors it, holding the glass a few inches from his face, staring at NANUC blankly.

NANUC
 The difference between us, George,
 is 'empathy.'

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NANUC (CONT.)

Your decisions are clouded by suppositions about how others feel.

You don't want to 'hurt' anyone because you wouldn't want that to happen to you.

You are, at the core, self-centered; as is your 'morality.'

The INTERCOM interrupts...

INTERCOM

Secretary Steckler awaits you, sir.

Almost relieved, or seemingly so, George turns abruptly to the wall-mounted Intercom.

GEORGE

(to the Intercom)

Thank you...I'm on my way.

NANUC

It's a shame that we can't continue.

George turns slowly back to NANUC. He seems deeply distracted.

GEORGE

...yes...

George gets up to leave and camera FOLLOWS as he walks around the couch toward the door; but George is in no hurry; so many questions seem unanswered, although they are; he keeps wishing NANUC would say something that would magically solve the dilemma. He stops cold and looks back over to the hologram face as NANUC says...

NANUC

There is something I think you should know before your meeting with Mr. Steckler...

GEORGE

(hopefully)

Yes...?

ANGLE ON NANUC -- POV GEORGE

NANUC

The VXR-2200 and I disagree on what should be done.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TIGHT ON GEORGE

GEORGE

What is the VXR's strategy?

NANUC'S VOICE

First Strike.

George's eyes sink to the floor. Two beats later...

GEORGE

I see...

WIDE NOW -- POV NANUC

George pauses as he reaches the door and looks back at NANUC.

GEORGE (CONT.)

Oh, one more thing, NANUC...
what about the water?

NANUC'S VOICE

Your people will want you to save
them.

CUT TO:

TIGHT ON A TELEPHONE/CLOCK/HETV POD -- ON A KITCHEN COUNTER

The digital clock reads 7:11 am as Jeff's hand ENTERS FRAME and picks up the receiver. His other hand depresses a "Voice Command" switch. The camera starts slowly PANNING across the kitchen counter, past a few cook books. One prominent book title reads: "Cooking Without The Real Thing." Another: "Preparing Meat Substitutes." A third: "The Eggless Ommlet." As Jeff's hand ENTERS FRAME and removes this book...

PHONE VOICE

(female)

Voice Command...

JEFF'S VOICE

Yeah, uh, Milton Eisenberg...

We HEAR the DIGITAL PULSES of the phone's automatic dialer, and from the length and pattern suspect the call's long distance. Meanwhile, Jeff's hands open the book on the counter and he flips through the pages.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THROUGH THE PHONE we hear THREE RINGS before a tired-sounding voice answers.

EISENBERG'S VOICE
(through the phone)
Uh...(some fidgeting)...hello?

JEFF'S VOICE
Milton...? Jeff Steel...listen I'm
sorry to bother you this early...

EISENBERG'S VOICE
(overlapping)
It's seven in the morning!

Jeff holds the book open with one hand as his finger scans a recipe.

JEFF'S VOICE (CONT.)
...but I need a favor...I need you
to run me up a Profile on a guy
named Harry MacKenzie...you can
access it through Vital Statistics.

The camera keeps slowly PANNING across the counter as a container marked "Eggies" ENTERS FRAME.

EISENBERG'S VOICE
What? I can't do that...I could lose
my job!

Jeff's hand ENTERS FRAME and opens the container; inside there are a dozen "eggs," but they are quite large.

JEFF'S VOICE
Whose program got you the job...?

EISENBERG'S VOICE
Ok...I owe you one...but that's a
tall order...

The camera's still PANNING; now a frying pan ENTERS FRAME.

JEFF'S VOICE
There's no threat Milton...they'll
never know you're in...I'm hacking the
code right now and by the time you get
to your office I should have it.

Jeff's hand ENTERS FRAME and holds one of the "eggs" over the frying pan; now we can SEE that it is three times the size of a "normal" egg.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EISENBERG'S VOICE

Why can't you get it yourself...
I've got a wife and kid.

JEFF'S VOICE

I lost access...I quit yesterday...
but that's a long story...

EISENBERG'S VOICE

(overlapping)

You what!? (beat) Hey...now, look...

Jeff's other hand ENTERS FRAME and he unscrews the top of the "egg" and pours the contents (a thick, milky-white fluid) into the pan. The camera HOLDS on this, and during it...

JEFF'S VOICE

(overlapping)

...but you can get in. I know I'm
asking a lot...but you've got to help.

Having LEFT FRAME to dispose of the "egg" shell, Jeff's hand REENTERS FRAME carrying a tube marked "Cheese Flavor" from which he squirts some clear-yellow fluid into the pan.

EISENBERG'S VOICE

(overlapping)

Hey...slow down...I just woke up.
(beat) What's this guy done?

PAN UP with Jeff's hands as they lift the pan and place it into a microwave oven. He touches the "Quick Cook" button. NOW HOLD TIGHT on the oven. Inside we can SEE the "ommlet" start to rise in the pan as the conversation continues.

JEFF'S VOICE

Nothing...he's probably clean as
a whistle...it's just a hunch....

EISENBERG'S VOICE

My job for your hunch?

JEFF'S VOICE

Listen...all I want is the base
Profile...

The "ommlet" keeps rising.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF'S VOICE (CONT.)

...nothing exotic...just the basic dossier...the rest I can figure out for myself.

EISENBERG'S VOICE

I don't know, Jeff...this is the kind of thing that can blow up in your face.

POW! The "ommllet" explodes in the microwave.

JEFF'S VOICE

How prophetic!

CUT TO:

INSIDE CONFERENCE ROOM 122 -- ABOARD SUBMARINE C-23

Although smaller and more intimate than Room 120-B, "Executive Conference Room" 122 is equally well equipped with its own holographic projector and NANUC Pod. Its principle feature is an expansive view of the entire submarine cavern through a window wall.

WIDE SHOT -- WINDOW WALL IN THE B.G.

George is sitting at the conference table with his hands politely folded atop a yellow pad in front of him; he twirls a pencil between his thumb and forefinger. Ned reaches down, picks up his Metal Case and places it flat on the table. The camera SLOWLY ZOOMS IN to Ned.

NED

Maybe you could call it "sixth sense" but you definitely seem to be vascillating...

He opens the case and pulls out the Red Folder.

NED (CONT.)

...and that could be disastrous.

Now he opens the folder and pulls out the Laser Disk. After holding it up for George to see, he lowers it...

NED (CONT.)

Hopefully, this presentation will remind Parliament...and you...that Canada can't survive without us. We're in this together...just as we've always been. It isn't just a moral decision...it's political, too.

ANGLE ON NED -- POV GEORGE

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Ned reaches over to a glass of water in front of him, picks it up, and gestures it to George.

NED (CONT.)

You may have the water...

He puts the water glass down and raises the Red Folder with his other hand.

NED (CONT.)

...but we have the Information.

PAN and PULL IN on Ned as he picks up the laser disk and slips it into the NANUC Pod in front of them.

NED (CONT.)

As you watch this...think about facing an angry China alone.

WIDE ACROSS CONFERENCE TABLE

A veil of laser light appears, projected down from the ceiling to the table at the far end opposite George and Ned. THROUGH THE SCREEN we SEE them in the b.g. watching as a Global Network News logo builds on the screen (backward to our POV).

The logo quickly dissolves to THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES. Behind him is a modern graphic treatment of the Great Seal.

PRESIDENT

(through speakers)

Good morning Mr. Prime Minister and Members of Parliament...

ANGLE ON HOLOGRAM SCREEN -- FROM BEHIND NED AND GEORGE

We can SEE them silhouetted against the hologram screen. The camera SLOWLY ZOOMS IN between them until the hologram image FILLS FRAME.

Just before the zoom begins, Ned leans over to George...

NED'S VOICE

(over the HETV)

I have another version with him saying 'good afternoon.'

PRESIDENT (CONT.)

(overlapping Ned)

...and thank you for this opportunity to be with you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

(PRODUCTION NOTE: All following shots are as they would appear projected by the HETV; ie., we are watching Ned's presentation.)

PRESIDENT (CONT.)

You will shortly be casting your votes on an issue critical to all of us who live on and share the North-American continent. But before you vote, I'd like to put the issues into historical and international perspective.

There's more at stake than Canadian-American relations.

Water is only one of many environmental problems which, if not solved immediately, will inevitably lead to war. Because as our resources die off, or are spent, the pressures between the haves and the have nots will intensify until the urge to conquer and take will be irresistible.

GEORGE'S VOICE

(over the HETV, and overlapping)
I appreciate his candor...who wrote the script?

NED'S VOICE

(also overlapping the President)
He wrote this part himself.

PRESIDENT (CONT.)

Although we have every reason to be confident, we must avoid letting complacency or over-confidence lull any of us into thinking we can go it alone.

The image of the President DISSOLVES to the presentation's ANCHORMAN, who's elderly (along the lines of Walter Cronkite). A Global Network News logo appears in an INSET FRAME behind the Anchorman.

(PRODUCTION NOTE: At this point the presentation becomes a compilation of file footage amassed by Global Network News over the years. The older footage is "regular" two-dimensional imagery, whereas the footage shot after the turn of the century is all three-dimensional HETV. The footage is introduced and commented on by the Anchorman and REPORTERS who covered the events. The overall effect is that of a "60 Minutes" style show; ie., produced news.)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Anchorman looks up from his notes to the camera as the logo in the INSET FRAME dissolves to a title: "January 1996."

ANCHORMAN

At home and abroad the challenges of surviving in the modern world are getting tougher.

The INSET FRAME DISSOLVES to a LONG SHOT down the main street of a small town in flat, dry, cactus country. A sign in the f.g. reads: "Dilly, Texas; Pop. 7,630." After a beat the INSET FRAME PULLS FORWARD TO FULL FRAME. We hear SHOUTS, CURSING, SCUFFLING as the camera ZOOMS IN and we see a small riot around a panel truck marked: "United States Department of Agriculture." TWO SOLDIERS are gesturing to a small mob of a DOZEN TOWNSPEOPLE to back off from a fist fight between TWO WOMEN.

ANCHORMAN

Although scenes like this are becoming increasingly common as meat gets scarcer, the government is making every effort to keep out of the way of what has come to be called "Common Law."

CLOSE ON YOUNG BYSTANDER

We see the fist fight in the b.g..

BYSTANDER

She says that Millie stole her ration stamps...(beat, he looks down; another beat, he looks back up)...and I don't blame her...at least she's fighting for her rights.

BACK ON FIGHT

The women combatants are tearing at each other's hair now. One soldier is trying to break them up, but gets bitten in the process. The other is having difficulty keeping the mob from inching forward.

ANCHORMAN

"Common Law" has been described as 'man's basic rules'...the one's that, when push comes to shove, we all instinctually agree with... or at least have to live by.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLOSE ON AN OLD WOMAN

She desperately clutches a small, white-plastic box to her breast. She is unusually thin and undernourished. The white box is labeled: "U.S. Grade 'A' Beef; Ration Category: Senior Citizen; Contents: One 3-oz. Portion." In the b.g. we can SEE an unkempt, boarded-up store. Through the boards there is a sign that says "Butcher," but it is HARD TO READ.

REPORTER #1'S VOICE

Most here in Dilly, Texas, share the same opinion.

OLD WOMAN

It doesn't much matter what you think...it's what you have to do... there's not really enough... something should be done....

Scene ZOOMS BACK to INSET FRAME behind the Anchorman as a TEENAGE THUG ENTERS INSET FRAME (hitting the camera and bouncing the image) grabbing the Old Woman's package and running away with it.

ANCHORMAN

'Common Law.' The right to get what you think you need to survive. Its growing popularity is causing concern on Capitol Hill.

CUT TO:

ON THE STEPS IN FRONT OF THE U.S. CAPITOL -- DAY

In an on-location interview an off-camera reporter stops a well-dressed man on the steps in front of the U.S. Capitol building. As the camera ZOOMS IN on the man, a SUBTITLE identifies him as: "U.S. Senator John Hardy, D-Georgia." The weather is stormy and it is starting to rain. The wind pulls hard on the Senator's umbrella.

REPORTER #2'S VOICE

Can 'Common Law' survive Congress?

HARDY

As far as I'm concerned, the Law of the Land must be upheld...

The wind blows out the Senator's umbrella, exposing him to the rain; he finishes his comment while turning to hurry up the stairs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HARDY (CONT.)

The Law of the Land is the fabric of society...without the real law, the fabric falls apart.

CUT TO:

INSIDE THE CAPITOL -- THE LOBBY -- TIGHT ON SENATOR BIRD

A subtitle ("Senator Allan Bird, R-Tennessee") identifies him as he is surrounded by news crews thrusting microphones and cameras in front of his face. Trying for a better shot, a PHOTOGRAPHER behind the Senator accidentally bumps into him, nearly knocking him over...

BIRD

Easy, fella, easy...(beat, then to the cameras)...you can't have folks taking the law into their own hands. If you do, you're going back to the Law of the Jungle and we might as well close up shop here in Congress and head on home to slug it out with the neighbors.

CUT TO:

ON LOCATION IN A RURAL CHINESE TOWN

A camera hidden behind a tattered curtain in a shabby, second-floor flat overlooking a rural Chinese farm town records an ambush at the village well.

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE

We are not the only country faced with mounting civil disobedience.

A poorly-dressed PEASANT CHILD sneaks warily toward the well carrying an empty plastic jug. As the child dips the jug into the well we HEAR a rifle SHOT and the child is blown over, dead. A moment later, TWO PEASANT MEN walk up and drag the body away.

REPORTER #3'S VOICE

A defecting Chinese journalist today provided the rest of the world with an inside look at the true impact of China's prolonged drought.

The hidden camera MOVES ACROSS the room to shoot out the back window. Although the image bounces with each step of the operator, we get glimpses of the meager furnishings.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Out the back window now, we start to see the backyard as the operator adjusts the zoom and focus. There is a small vegetable patch with some stringy plants in it; a broken down pigpen, but no pigs; and a dilapidated chicken coop with a single, scrawny bird. Beyond the yard stretches a wide field with long rows of shriveled rice plants protruding from caked, almost-dry mud.

At the edge of the field a large pit has been dug and is filled with several bodies.

As the operator pans across the back yard the two peasant men drag the body of the child to the edge of the pit and throw her in.

REPORTER #3'S VOICE (CONT.)

Although Chinese officials have long maintained that they have ample supplies, there has been speculation among world leaders that China will soon require massive outside support.

CUT TO:

SOMEWHERE OVER CHINA -- POV A SPY SATELLITE

The incredible surveillance lens in the satellite reveals in amazing clarity the movement of Chinese Army Troop Carriers and tanks along a dusty dirt road; only the mist from an occasional cloud-shred obstructs the view.

REPORTER #3'S VOICE (CONT.)

Reports of troop increases at China's borders and in rural farm districts tend to give that assessment credibility.

CUT TO:

WIDE AND PANNING ACROSS OREGON TIMBERLAND -- HELICOPTER POV

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE

But the water crisis doesn't only affect China, and isn't limited to people.

Our rapidly-deteriorating forests are beginning to surrender to the long-term effects of acid rain.

The camera ZOOMS IN on the trees; they look sick and some are already just skeletons. Various INTERCUTS show dead trees at dramatic angles.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)
 According to University of Washington
 Ecology Professors Nelson and Armstrong
 little can be done.

ON LOCATION IN UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON LAB

As Nelson points to a graph on a computer monitor...

ARMSTRONG

(amidst sentence)

...so you can see, there are so many
 factories on this planet that their
 combined pollution is simply
 overwhelming Nature.

NELSON

Just to maintain what we have now...
 to hold on to our current standard
 of living...means destructive levels
 of pollution.

REPORTER #4'S VOICE

(cutting in)

Are you suggesting that we simply
 close up all our factories?

ARMSTRONG

Well, perhaps not all...but hundreds
 would have to be eliminated...and
 hundreds of commonly used products...
 mostly conveniences...would dissappear...

I'm not sure people would accept that...

BACK ON ANCHORMAN -- AT NEWS DESK

INSET FRAME shows a U.S. Map with major sections of the
 Northwest and Eastern seaboard highlighted in red.

ANCHORMAN

In the last year alone, U.S. forest
 reserves shrank by more than 7%.

INSET FRAME CUTS to a portrait of a New England FISHERMAN
 in front of his trawler. A subtitle reads: "Gloucester,
 Mass." A beat later the INSET FRAMES ZOOMS TO FULL FRAME.

FISHERMAN

Nothing lives out there...I mean,
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FISHERMAN (CONT.)

look at this (gesturing back to a meager catch)...what am I supposed to do?

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE

There are problems at sea as well.

CUT TO:

ON LOCATION AT YALE UNIVERSITY

An elderly, well-dressed professor stands in front of a huge aquarium that dwarfs him and gives one the impression that he is, in fact, standing on the ocean floor. We see that the simulated ocean floor in the aquarium is a barren wasteland. A few shredded plastic bags hover at various levels. The seafloor belches a few noxious-looking bubbles occasionally. A single sucker-fish attaches itself to the glass wall in the f.g.. A SUBTITLE identifies the professor as: "Dr. Moishe Barron, Director, Department of Marine Biology, Yale University."

BARRON

We've been able to simulate the ocean here at Yale...and our computer aids us in recreating the conditions of the seafloor anywhere in the world.

CLOSER ON BARRON

BARRON (CONT.)

Behind me is a model of the seafloor at Sandy Hook, New Jersey, which was once one of our prime fisheries...as you can see, it is now dead, for all practical purposes.

SCENE ZOOMS BACK INTO INSET POSITION behind Anchorman who looks over to Dr. Barron.

ANCHORMAN

Are you saying 'this is it,' Dr. Barron, or can something be done.

Barron seems to be having a little difficulty hearing the Anchorman through his ear plug.

BARRON

No...not unless the pollution stops... especially the nuclear wastes....

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

INSET FRAME CUTS to LONG SHOT of a huge commercial fishing boat somewhere on the high seas. As the camera ZOOMS IN on the ship we can see the Japanese flag flying from the bridge.

ANCHORMAN

(back to camera)

In those areas of the sea where fish survive, the competition is fierce and it is feared that many species will be wiped out because of over-fishing.

INSET FRAME ZOOMS TO FULL FRAME as the camera ZOOMS IN on the fishing boat and we see a dead whale being hoisted aboard by a crane.

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)

Only 15 years ago the last known whale was caught and processed..

CUT TO:

MOS FOOTAGE OF A UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL DEBATE

INTERCUTS show the JAPANESE AMBASSADOR pounding his shoe on the table, shaking his fist, angrily barking into his microphone and occasionally holding up and pointing to close-up photographs of starving Japanese children.

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)

But efforts by the United Nations to police international agreements regarding the use of the oceans, and even severe economic sanctions have thus far failed to stop the plunder.

CUT TO:

LONG ON A VIOLENT THUNDERSTORM OVER THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)

Meteorological changes are also having a profoundly negative effect.

DISSOLVE TO:

ON LOCATION AT NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE MODELLING LAB

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

In a LONG SHOT of the laboratory building, it is identified by a large sign in the f.g..

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)

Although weathermen don't agree on the causes, some general trends seem to be taking shape.

DISSOLVE TO:

SUBTITLED CLOSE UP of: "Dr. James L. Brown, Director, Long Range Forecasting."

BROWN

It's extremely complex...but put as simply as possible, the so-called "Green House Effect" has generated thicker, heavier clouds that result in more storms.

Camera ZOOMS BACK to reveal a large hologram globe that dwarfs Dr. Brown. As he gestures to cloud banks surrounding the world...

BROWN (CONT.)

That this would happen was predicted as far back as 1960...and the prediction has held true...but what we don't fully understand is how or why the basic prevailing wind currents are changing direction.

Around the hologram globe the cloud shapes slowly pull apart and segregate into seven distinct patches that move slowly toward the extreme North and South polar regions, well away from the equator.

BROWN (CONT.)

Exactly why these storms -- or the "weather," as we call it -- is congregating over isolated regions, leaving vast areas of drought elsewhere is unexplainable.

Scene ZOOMS BACK TO INSET FRAME POSITION behind Anchorman.

ANCHORMAN

Our meteorological problems won't be limited to precipitation or the lack of it.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANCHORMAN (CONT.)

As early as the 1970's, satellite probes began measuring a noticeable decay of the Earth's protective ozone layer, located in the higher levels of the atmosphere.

CUT TO:

COMPUTER GRAPHIC OF EARTH

The graphic reveals the ozone layer slowly becoming thinner.

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)

Although this wasn't considered a significant factor until the early 1990s, when our VXR-2000 went on line five years ago, scientists discovered that ultraviolet-light penetration of the thinner ozone layer was three times what had previously been estimated.

CUT TO:

AN EMPTY BEACH AT ORLANDO, FLORIDA

In the f.g. we see a REPORTER dressed in a silver-mylar jumpsuit and wearing sunglasses.

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)

At the University of Florida's Astro-Physical Laboratory in Orlando, Ron Taylor filed this report:

CUT TO:

FILE FOOTAGE OF A PACKED FLORIDA BEACH, CIRCA 1960

TAYLOR'S VOICE

Being the "sunshine state" was once Florida's claim to fame.

BACK ON TAYLOR AT DESERTED BEACH

TAYLOR (CONT.)

Now the slogan is more a curse than a blessing.

Dramatic increases in skin cancer caused by prolonged exposure to the

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TAYLOR (CONT.)
 increased levels of ultraviolet
 radiation in tropical and sub-
 tropical regions has all but killed
 the tourist industry here...

CUT TO:

TAYLOR IN AN ORANGE GROVE standing beside a stunted
 tree, picking a shrivelled orange, and holding it
 up to the camera.

TAYLOR (CONT.)
 Now the orange trees wish they could
 leave as easily as the tourists...

As the camera ZOOMS IN on the shrivelled orange.

TAYLOR (CONT.)
 ...and until newer species can be
 genetically enhanced to resist
 ultraviolet poisoning, it will be
 a long time before Americans get
 their "sunshine vitamin" from
 orange juice.

BACK TO ANCHORMAN

ANCHORMAN
 Not everyone shares that point
 of view.

CUT TO:

A LARGE EXPERIMENTAL INDOOR (TENT) ORANGE GROVE

ANCHORMAN (CONT.)
 In Orange County, California,
 researchers have partially solved the
 ultraviolet problem using Sun-Screen
 tent materials. Although effective,
 the costs of the exotic screen materials
 makes their widespread use impractical.

BACK TO ANCHORMAN

ANCHORMAN
 As bleak a picture as these reports
 present, a brighter future is
 predicted by many of America's
 foremost Information Specialists.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

INSET FRAME DISSOLVES FROM GNN LOGO to JEROME JOHNSON
in front of a Cray-10 Computer.

ANCHORMAN (CONT.)

Dr. Jerome Johnson of Computer
Sciences International provides
this optimistic overview:

INSET FRAME ZOOMS TO FULL FRAME

JOHNSON

Inside our Cray-10 computer is the
knowledge that will keep America
strong.

Over a million mega-bits of data
are stored here...vital information
about biological and botanical
systems and cycles.

Johnson walks across the aisle to an identical
computer.

JOHNSON (CONT.)

Over here, in our Cray-11, that data
is being processed...and the results
look very promising.

For example, we recently completed
a computer model for the genetic
engineering that created the acid-
resistant Douglas Fir trees now
being successfully grown at tree-
research centers across the country.

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON A GLOVED HAND HOLDING A BABY FIR TREE

The camera PULLS BACK to show a RESEARCHER planting the
baby tree at an experimental tree farm. In the b.g. we
see long rows of saplings in various stages of development.
Most are stunted looking, sparsely needled, and a few
have freaky, odd-sized branches.

REPORTER #5'S VOICE

On the surface, tree farms like this
one in Burlington, Vermont, have
introduced new ultraviolet-resistant
strains that also survive water-acidity
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REPORTER #5'S VOICE (CONT.)
levels once thought to be lethal.

BACK ON JOHNSON -- AT CRAY-11

JOHNSON
We also recently perfected a new
Chromal-Spectrum light source for
indoor farming.

CUT TO:

HELICOPTER POV OF AN ABANDONED COAL MINE

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE
In Wheeling, West Virginia, formerly
abandoned coal mines have been converted...

CUT TO:

INTERIOR OF UNDERGROUND TEST FARM

Camera PANS slowly over the tops of long rows of corn plants growing beneath bright artificial lights. In the b.g. we can SEE the rough walls of the coal mine.

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)
...into underground farms, thanks to
the new light source.

CUT TO:

ANOTHER SECTION OF MINE-FARM

PANNING across a bean patch; a computer pod sits in the f.g...

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)
Farms like these were once thought an
impossibility... and without today's
vast data bases and computer capabilities
they still would be.

CUT TO:

MINE-FARM CONTROL ROOM

Camera PANS across a large Central Control Terminal as a dozen monitors display irrigation, lighting, and genetic data. In the b.g. we SEE a watermelon patch bearing huge fruit.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)
 ...but with careful enhancement of
 their environment...

CUT TO:

GENETIC-SPLICING OPERATION -- ELECTRON MICROSCOPE VIEW

A chain of DNA is severed and a new gene is spliced in.

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)
 ...and genetic re-engineering to
 improve the plants' adaptability to
 the new, underground environment, more
 than a dozen food-bearing species are
 now thriving.

CUT TO:

CROSS-SECTION OF THE EARTH -- COMPUTER GRAPHIC

The depths of subterranean farms and aquifers are
 shown. We SEE that pure water can only be obtained at
 the 8,000-foot level and that the aquifers closest to
 the surface are lethal.

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)
 This farm of the future benefits from
 easy access to the purer water now only
 found in our deepest aquifers, where
 access to surface farms by deep drilling
 is either technologically unfeasible
 or excessively costly.

BACK AT SUBTERRANEAN FARM -- PANNING ACROSS TOMATO PATCH

Camera ZOOMS IN on a healthy tomato.

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)
 This experimental tomato is doing
 nicely under controlled lighting...

CUT TO:

A MIDWESTERN SURFACE FARM -- LONG ON SHRIVELLED PLANTS

ZOOM IN on puny, shrivelled tomatoes.

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)
 ...while its genetic cousins struggle
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)
in today's more intense solar light.

CUT TO:

DOLLYING DOWN A SUPERMARKET MEAT DISPLAY

Vacuum-packed, see-through baggies hanging on a rack display freeze-dried meats variously labeled as: "Ham Flavored," "Beef Flavored," and "Chicken Flavored." All the packages feature the "Generic Brands" logo and the slogan: "Real Meat Goodness."

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)
Even animal protein may soon no longer be a strictly-rationed foodstuff.

INTERCUTS show swine, beef, and poultry farms in the Mid-west. The animals all appear unusually small and undernourished. The pigs' skin looks dark and leathery; as if serverely sun-burned; a close-up of a cow reveals squinted eyes; the chickens have over-developed feathers.

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)
Although it is still unfeasible to raise livestock underground because of the animals' size and need for vegetation and grains now reserved for human consumption...

CUT TO:

INT. UNDERGROUND RODENT FARM

The camera PANS across the tops of 10 rows of 6-story-high cages. Computer stations can be seen at key aisleway intersections between the rows of huge cages.

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)
...this experimental rodent farm in Galesburg, Illinois is proving profitable while supplying meat for over a thousand people.

CUT TO:

INT. RODENT FARM LABORATORY

One RESEARCHER pets a large, 27-pound rat, soothing it while an ASSISTANT feeds it a handful of earthworms. REPORTER #7 stands in the f.g..

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REPORTER #7

A new genetic species of so-called 'super-rats' is now being successfully raised up to a record-breaking 27 pounds here at Protein Products Company in Galesburg, Illinois.

INSIDE A RAT CAGE -- BEHIND FOOD CHUTE

A large pile of earthworms drops down the chute onto a stainless-steel portion-control scale-tray; a digital display in the f.g. shows the portion weight as 5kg. Three large rats approach the tray and start picking at the worms. We SEE Reporter #7 in the b.g., peering into the cage.

REPORTER #7 (CONT.)

These animals thrive in underground environments, eating plentiful supplies of earthworms in place of higher-quality food.

CUT TO:

FOOD-CONTENT-ANALYSIS GRAPH

The Reporter's hand ENTERS FRAME and points to the protein-content statistics that illustrate his comments.

REPORTER #7'S VOICE (CONT.)

Just one of these animals supplies three times the protein of a turkey the same weight...

ZOOM BACK to show Reporter #7 in front of a computer.

REPORTER #7'S VOICE (CONT.)

...and with impregnation of flavorings during the curing process...

BACK IN SUPERMARKET -- AT MEAT DISPLAY

A LADY SHOPPER pauses in front of the meat display. Camera ZOOMS IN on a package she is selecting, which says on its label: "Special Thanksgiving Taste."

REPORTER #7'S VOICE (CONT.)

...1000 lucky shoppers in Galesburg will enjoy their first turkey-tasting Thanksgiving in more than a decade.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BACK ON ANCHORMAN

ANCHORMAN

It is solutions like these, all products of the American Age of Information...

INSET FRAME DISSOLVES to an "Age of Information" title and graphic of an American Flag in the shape of a brain.

ANCHORMAN (CONT.)

...that will insure a brighter future for those who are fortunate enough to share in our new technology.

INSET FRAME DISSOLVES to a computer-graphic world map.

ANCHORMAN (CONT.)

New VXR-2200 strategies predict that the United States and Canada can survive...

INSET FRAME ZOOMS TO FULL FRAME

On the world map various icons reveal war in all areas of the world except North America. An outline builds around the United States and Canada.

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)

...both our altered environment and international aggression spawned by increasingly large shortages of water and basic foodstuffs.

Living as we do on our own continent, we have the necessary Information, resources, and defenses, short of total nuclear war.

INSET FRAME ZOOMS BACK BEHIND ANCHORMAN

ANCHORMAN (CONT.)

The key is working together to meet the challenge.

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON A SPARKLING BROOK

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)

Trading water...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON A CRAY-11 TERMINAL -- LOTS OF BLINKING LIGHTS

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)
 ...for Information...

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON PEACE ARCH AT BLAINE, WASHINGTON

Camera slowly PANS up from the inscription "Children of a Common Mother" to the Canadian and American flags waving side-by-side.

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)
 ...sharing a brighter future together.

DISSOLVE TO:

CLOSE ON THE PRESIDENT

PRESIDENT

It is obvious that we are at a crossroads. Our survival, here in America, is at your mercy.

But in the long haul, your survival depends on access to American Information.

We could be brave, and go it alone... so could you.

But think how much better it would be to solve our common problems together.

I thank you in behalf of all Americans for your attention and consideration.

(PRODUCTION NOTE: End "special look" of HETV presentation and return to "normal.")

Camera slowly ZOOMS BACK as the President dissolves to a Global Network News logo. Ned and George ENTER FRAME, silhouetted against the HETV image. A beat later, camera DOLLYS around to ANGLE ON GEORGE -- POV NED.

GEORGE
 That's a first-class presentation
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GEORGE (CONT.)

but from an informational standpoint
there's nothing new...nothing that
Parliament doesn't already know...
(beat, he turns to Ned)...tell me,
why doesn't he come here himself?

ANGLE ON NED -- POV GEORGE

NED

This is confidential, George, but
there was an assassination attempt
last week.

GEORGE'S VOICE

A what...?

ANGLE ON GEORGE

GEORGE (CONT.)

I hadn't heard...is he alright?

BACK ON NED

NED

We squelched the story...and, yes,
he's fit as a fiddle... (beat), it's not
that he thinks this is unimportant,
it's just that he doesn't want to
create any uncertainty about his
ability to lead at this point in time.

BACK ON GEORGE

GEORGE

All well and good, but did you
consider the added impact it would
have had for him to appear in spite
of an attempted assassination?

ON NED

NED

The assassin was a Canadian....

BACK ON GEORGE -- TIGHTER

This takes George by surprise, but he recovers quickly.

NED (CONT.)

...and the President didn't think
you'd want the publicity.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GEORGE

Of course...but tell me, Ned, you didn't arrange this urgent meeting to show me your presentation or tell me that.

WIDE ON SCENE -- POV NANUC POD

NED

No.

GEORGE'S VOICE

Then what is it?

NED

Do you want the official line or the candid version?

BACK ON GEORGE -- POV NED

GEORGE

Let's begin with party line...

BACK ON NED -- POV GEORGE

NED

Ok: without that Pact Brenner is a dead duck, and he knows it... but then again, so are you.

ON GEORGE

GEORGE

What makes you so strongly doubt the Bill's possibility of passage...the House may be divided, but the almighty dollar always rules.

BACK ON NED

NED

It's your uncertainty that bothers me. You're an old man, George...don't you care anymore?

You could go in there and do a sell job if you wanted to...you control the majority.

If you reject the Pact you'll be the loser in the long run...I assure you that.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON GEORGE

GEORGE
Is that a threat?

BACK ON NED

NED
George, there is a point at which
idealism has to give way to
pragmatism...when good intentions
succumb to survival.

ON BOTH NOW -- POV NANUC

GEORGE
The twilight zone of morality....

NED'S VOICE
Don't wax poetic, George, because
it's lost on me...you know what
the 'moral' thing to do is...
(pointing at NANUC Pod now)...
your goddamn machine can predict
a war, but it can't tell you
who's right or wrong.

TIGHT ON GEORGE

GEORGE
So it was you.

NED'S VOICE
What difference does it make?

GEORGE
Precisely...NANUC's opinion is
exactly that...an opinion. That I
share aspects of it is coincidental.

ON NED NOW

NED
But relevant...even assuming that
NANUC's armageddon scenario is correct,
who do you think deserves to survive...
us, or a bunch of illiterate peasants?

BACK ON GEORGE

GEORGE
You can't let nationalism fly in
the face of the facts...
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GEORGE (CONT.)

Nor can you presume to play God
when the fate of the world is at
stake.

TIGHT ON NED

NED

Personally, I couldn't think of
a better time...this is survival
of the fittest...(beat) it's natural
selection.

BACK ON BOTH -- POV NANUC POD

GEORGE

Then why don't we just let Nature
take its course?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MOINSLEAU'S OFFICE SUITE AT TERMINAL THREE

Starting TIGHT on clouds with "religious" sun rays
bursting through, we hear the HALLELUJAH CHORUS as
the camera ZOOMS BACK slowly revealing Noreen reclining
in a mist-filled Sense Surround Chamber listening to
the Mormon Tabernacle Choir's rendition of the song
and watching the hologram clouds drift by.

STILL WIDENING we see George ENTER FRAME through the
office-suite door. Noticing Noreen and not wanting to
break her "trance," he quietly crosses the room to
the kitchenette on the other side and starts fixing
them some coffee. He accidentally drops a spoon which
CLANKS on the floor, startling Noreen.

GEORGE

Sorry...I didn't want to disturb
you...just getting clumsy in my
old age!

ANGLE ON NOREEN

NOREEN

It's magical in here...so real...
(as she starts to drift again)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GEORGE'S VOICE

I can remember when the sky actually looked like that...I would lie on the grass and watch the clouds.

ON GEORGE NOW

He stops stirring the coffee and starts staring "somewhere."

GEORGE (CONT.)

...sometimes I could see the shapes of animals or faces...sometimes I thought I was seeing God himself...

NOREEN'S VOICE

Herself...

GEORGE (CONT.)

(snapping back)

Huh...? (he laughs)...of course!

ANGLE ON NOREEN

As she steps out of the Sense-Surround Chamber she TURNS DOWN THE MUSIC slightly.

NOREEN

Well, then...to what do I owe this honor?

George ENTERS FRAME and hands her a mug of coffee; as she nods her thanks he notices her ring and takes her hand to look at it. Then, smiling up at her...

GEORGE

You know what they say...it's who you know....

NOREEN

Oh, thank you...yes, Jeffery!

GEORGE

No...NANUC....

NOREEN

Ah, my friend NANUC...he's right you know.

ON GEORGE -- NOREEN'S POV

GEORGE

I'm not saying he isn't, but I'm concerned about how much influence he has. You can't deal with questions like these in purely logical terms... these are really 'moral' issues.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ON NOREEN -- GEORGE'S POV

NOREEN

What makes you think NANUC can't be moral?

GEORGE'S VOICE

What do you mean?

Noreen gestures to the NANUC Pod in the corner.

NOREEN

Are you familiar with FFLIP II?

WIDE ON ROOM -- POV NANUC POD

GEORGE

I know it's in the works, but I haven't seen a report in two weeks.

Noreen walks to the NANUC Pod and starts entering some data. We HEAR a few BEEPS and BUZZES.

NOREEN

A lot can happen in that time.

George joins Noreen at the NANUC Pod, offers her a chair, takes one himself, and they sit down. The camera DOLLYS AROUND SLOWLY to ANGLE ON THE MONITORS in the NANUC Pod, where Monitor #2 starts building a graphic of the left side of a human brain.

NOREEN (CONT.)

We called the original program Free-Form Logical Interpretive Perspective -- or FFLIP -- because it allowed NANUC to use the laws of logic in a creative way.

ZOOM IN SLOWLY until Monitor #2 FILLS FRAME as the "wiring diagram" of the left side is superimposed over the brain graphic.

NOREEN (CONT.)

He can move around data bases and operating programs freely...interpolating, polarizing...whatever, to interpret data and form perspectives irrespective of the users'.

ON NOREEN -- GEORGE'S POV

NOREEN (CONT.)

Regular computers, like VXR's, can't do that...it's like a 'free will,' and it was a breakthrough because it perfectly mimicks the left side of the brain...the rational, or logical side.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON NOREEN -- POV GEORGE

On the monitor we SEE the right side of the brain adding to the graphic.

NOREEN (CONT.)

But what makes a person a person is the interaction between the left and right sides.

The right side is the dark side, the emotional...the illogical.

BACK ON MONITOR #2

The graphic rotates so the the right side is now prominent.

NOREEN (CONT.)

We never understood how this side worked.

The graphic rotates back, then the right side folds over on top of the left, superimposing itself over the other; we see that the wiring patterns are identical, but mirrored.

NOREEN (CONT.)

Even though the 'hard wiring' was the same, although mirrored...

The graphic ZOOMS FORWARD to a close-up view of a few layers of nerve cells forming a three-dimensional grid of neurons, axons, and dendrites. Animated highlights show seemingly illogical flows of electricity around the nerve grid.

NOREEN (CONT.)

...the data routing seemed totally random...totally illogical.

The nerve-grid flips over, mirroring itself, and the electrical-pathway highlights become more orderly.

NOREEN (CONT.)

But by mirroring the pathways, NANUC found a preliminary set of patterns and was able to build a model of Anti-Logic Architecture...which is the basis of FFLIP II.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON GEORGE -- POV NOREEN

GEORGE

Have NANUC's reports during the last few days taken this aspect into account?

ANGLE ON NOREEN -- POV GEORGE

NOREEN

No, we've only been running it experimentally.

BACK ON GEORGE -- TIGHTER

GEORGE

I would like you to plug the 'new' NANUC into our dilemma...maybe... just maybe, there's a solution.

CUT TO:

INT. LA GRANDE HOTEL -- LOBBY ATRIUM -- HIGH POV -- DAY

PANNING DOWN the camera FOLLOWS a glittering, chrome and glass elevator sliding down 50 stories in a very modern hotel atrium lobby, where a HARPIST can be heard above the quiet MURMUR of the lobby and dining areas.

Approaching the ground floor now, the camera HOLDS on a mezzanine-level patio restaurant and ZOOMS IN on a table where Chuck and Ned are having breakfast.

Chuck is well into his second croissant, but Ned has apparently just arrived since he is only now being served a cup of coffee and given a menu by an ORIENTAL WAITRESS. Getting closer the conversation gets LOUDER.

WAITRESS

(to Ned)

Say that louder, so my boss can hear.
Maybe I'll get promoted...!

Ned looks at her and laughs, accepting the menu. On her way out, the waitress glances back at Ned.

WAITRESS (CONT.)

Thanks for the compliment...

ANGLE ON CHUCK

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Being the kind of man that figures every meal might be his last, Chuck eats hard and fast...and talks at the same time. Well into his third croissant, now...

CHUCK

(shaking his head jealously)

You vulture! You could be her father!

ANGLE ON NED -- POV CHUCK

As he scans the menu, he looks up at Chuck.

NED

(good naturedly)

If you could see your face...
anyway, you're married.

As Ned folds the menu and puts it down.

CHUCK'S VOICE

So what happened?

The waitress returns with Chuck's bacon and eggs.

NED

(to waitress)

I'll have the hotcakes, hold the
butter...and some tomato juice.

WAITRESS

Tomato juice? (gesturing to the
expensive surroundings) What do
think this is, some kind of fancy
place? (she laughs, so does he)...

Sorry, we haven't had any for
over a month...you must be from
the States.

NED

Uh, yes...we do...and I'll have
tea, thanks.

ANGLE ON CHUCK

He can't keep his drooling eyes off the waitress's
short skirt (while starting on his bacon).

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHUCK

So...(crunch)...what kept you?

WIDE ON SCENE

The waitress senses Chuck's impatience and notices his prolonged stare; she turns to leave.

WAITRESS

Thanks again.

Ned watches her for a few steps then turns to Chuck.

ANGLE ON NED -- POV CHUCK

NED

(suddenly serious)

It didn't go too well.

He's pussyfooting around...
worried about playing God.

CRUNCH, as Chuck takes another bite.

ANGLE ON CHUCK -- POV NED

CHUCK

(looking at his fork)

Not bad for imitation bacon...
(now holding his fork out to Ned)
...here, try some...

NED'S VOICE

Huh? Oh...thanks.

Ned's hand ENTERS FRAME and pulls the bacon off the fork. Someone in the b.g. calls for his check, in French.

CHUCK

Ned...(crunch, taking another bite)
...pardon my French, but, what the
fuck is going on?

NED'S VOICE

I'm sorry, Chuck...

CHUCK

Jesus Christ, gimme something!
What is a friend for, anyway?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON NED -- POV CHUCK -- TIGHT

Ned glances to each side and pulls in a little closer in the absurd attempt to gain privacy.

NED

Allright...

Then realizing that privacy is impossible, he sits back and changes tactics.

NED (CONT.)

...look, let's say hypothetically that 500 million people would have to be eliminated -- possibly by a war -- for the rest to survive.

ANGLE ON CHUCK

Having just finished wiping his mouth, he throws his napkin down and reaches for his coffee.

CHUCK

Get out of here...! (slurp)...
what do you think that they'll
actually reject the Pact.

ANGLE ON NED -- POV CHUCK

The waitress approaches and fills Ned's water glass.

NED

Even if they do, it's the proverbial
"drop in the bucket."

CUT TO:

INT. JAPANESE SPY VAN -- TIGHT ON COMPUTER MONITOR

On the monitor, Japanese symbols are scrolled out translating the conversation between Ned and Chuck which we hear THROUGH A SPEAKER in the monitor console. WIDENING SLOWLY during the conversation, the interior of an incredibly sophisticated surveillance rig packed into an oversized van is revealed. The TWO SPYS are Japanese, but that's hard to make out in the nearly blacked out lighting conditions; only the glow of several computer monitors and a few blinking red LED's light their emotionless faces.

While still TIGHT on the monitor we hear SPY #1's voice OVERLAPPING Ned's.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NED'S VOICE

NANUC has predicted global chaos starting in about five years...

SPY #1'S VOICE

Here we go...

CHUCK'S VOICE

Well where'd the 500 million come from?

NED'S VOICE

That's NANUC's estimate.

The big question of the moment is whose 500 million.

CHUCK'S VOICE

Well, I know which side I'm on...
(crunch)!

WAITRESS' VOICE

(as she approaches table)
Hotcakes and tea...

NED'S VOICE

Oh...uh, thank you...

CHUCK'S VOICE

Hey, can I have some more bacon, please.

WAITRESS' VOICE

Would you...

CLICK. A switch cuts off the conversation. WHIRRRR, a machine is rewinding something.

ANGLE ON SPY#2

He reaches up and touches three keys mounted under his monitor. The WHIRRRR STOPS. A beat later we hear Ned and Chuck OVER THE MONITOR SPEAKER, while Spy #2 fiddles with some other dials, apparently making adjustments based on several computer graphs displayed on miniature monitors mounted in the console.

NED'S VOICE

Hi, Chuck, sorry I'm late...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHUCK'S VOICE

That's ok, the croissants here aren't
to be believed!

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON THE SPY-VAN'S ANTENNAS

NED'S VOICE

He's pussyfooting around...worried
about playing God.

CUT TO:

IN SPACE -- TIGHT ON JAPANESE SATELLITE ANTENNAS

CHUCK'S VOICE

Not bad for imitation bacon...here,
try some...

CUT TO:

LONG ON A SATELLITE COMMUNICATION DISH

The camera ZOOMS BACK. The dish is on top of the 80-story
Mitsubi Building in Tokyo.

NED'S VOICE

Huh? Oh...thanks.

CHUCK'S VOICE

Ned...(cruch) pardon my French, but,
what the fuck is going on?

CUT TO:

INT. JAPANESE GOVERNMENT COMPUTER-COMMUNICATIONS HEADQUARTERS

Camera PANS across a massive computer facility
that seems as big as NANUC's and ARRIVES CLOSE on a
JAPANESE OPERATOR watching a triple-monitor display.
On one monitor is the Japanese translation of Ned and
Chuck's conversation; the second monitor is scrolling
the English version; the third shows technical data
relevant to the quality of the transmission.

NED'S VOICE

Allright...look, suppose hypothetically
that 500 million people would have to
be eliminated -- possibly by war --
for the rest to survive?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CUT TO:

BACK ON SATELLITE DISH -- ATOP MITSUBI BUILDING

This time the camera PANS across to the 67th floor of a nearby luxury hotel and ZOOMS into a window where we see a RUSSIAN SPY wearing headphones adjusting the directional aim of a miniature dish toward the giant Mitsubi dish.

CHUCK'S VOICE

What do you think they'll actually reject the Pact!

NED'S VOICE

Even if they do, it's only the proverbial 'drop in the bucket.'

CUT TO:

BACK IN SPACE -- A RUSSIAN SATELLITE DRIFTS BY

CHUCK'S VOICE

Where'd the 500 million come from?

PANNING ever so slowly with the Russian satellite as it drifts through the frame, a Chinese Satellite ENTERS FRAME from above and drifts down, behind the Russian satellite.

NED'S VOICE

That's NANUC's estimate.

The big question of the moment is whose 500 million.

CUT TO:

INT. LONDON NATO HEADQUARTERS -- DUSK

Camera DOLLYS around while a SERGEANT at a computer monitor swings in the swivel chair over to a second monitor labeled: "Verification." The images on both monitors are identical: each shows a world map titled: "NATONET." China, Russia, and Japan are flashing on the maps; the legend reveals that means "Offense One ALERT."

SERGEANT

(Liverpool accent)

Mike? ...do you see that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON MIKE

Mike, who's a lieutenant, sits at an identical double-monitor display adjacent to the Sergeant's. He reaches for a yellow key located between the two monitors, and as he turns it the camera ZOOMS IN on one of the monitors.

MIKE

(Scottish accent)
Something's up, alright...

The WHIRP, WHIRP, WHIRP of an alarm in the b.g..

SERGEANT'S VOICE

You's better give the General a jingle....

MIKE'S VOICE

Right.

CUT TO:

TIGHT ON A FLASHING RED LIGHT AND BUZZER

The WARNING BEEPS from the buzzer continue throughout the scene while the camera PULLS BACK and PANS across to a WIDE SHOT of the Submarine Base Control Room at Terminal Three.

On the hologram map of the world the "as-aimed" trajectories of nuclear weapons are displayed and we can SEE that Russia, China, Japan, France, Germany, England, and the United States are all on Alert now. There are NUMEROUS BEEPS and BUZZES as the sixty monitors along the control console continually change data displays. The original crew of seven officers has grown to twenty. A lot of PHONES are RINGING. There is a controlled urgency in the texture of the MIXED CONVERSATIONS, but there isn't a trace of panic or pandemonium. In fact, the situation seems rather matter of fact.

CUT TO:

BACK IN MOINSLEAU'S OFFICE -- AT NANUC POD

In the b.g. the MUTED BEEP, BEEP, BEEP of Terminal Three's general alert continues throughout the scene.

NANUC'S VOICE

I have no other choice.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON GEORGE -- POV NANUC POD

George is on the phone and there is impatience in his tone of voice as he leans forward in anticipation of hanging up.

GEORGE

Thank you, Maurice, but I would prefer to stay here for the moment...

Hanging up now...

George

(to Noreen)

What does he mean, "no other choice."

ANGLE ON NOREEN -- POV GEORGE

NOREEN

All the VXR's have Peripheral-Vision Protocol...they all monitor each other; each can sense if another has switched into Offense and goes into Alert automatically. The difference is that NANUC's FFLIP Protocol allows him to penetrate more deeply into their data bases than they can his, because they don't understand what he's doing.

ON GEORGE

GEORGE

Washington managed to slip in pretty deep...what makes you think the others haven't.

NANUC'S VOICE

That was a simple mistake, George, and I appologize...

ANGLE ON NANUC

NANUC (CONT.)

Washington's VXR-2200 is America's link with the NATO Network, which I control, and we automatically trade any new strategies or scenarios that relate to war.

BACK ON GEORGE

GEORGE

How can you be sure they can't access your data now...you can't disconnect

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GEORGE (CONT.)
from NATO.

BACK ON NANUC

NANUC
That is true...but by not filing
my data under the category of 'War
Strategies' they are denied access.

ANGLE ON NOREEN

NOREEN
(amazed and approving)
Very good, NANUC...very clever...
(beat, turning to George)
someday he won't need his old
mom anymore!

NANUC'S VOICE
Thank you, Noreen.

BACK ON GEORGE

GEORGE
Then why is everyone still in
Offense One Alert?

BACK ON NANUC

NANUC
I don't know...but I wouldn't be
overly concerned, since they are
in Check...if there is any
provocation they will all respond...
and that will be the end.

BACK ON GEORGE

GEORGE
You are saying that I shouldn't
be concerned about that?

BACK ON NANUC

NANUC
Annihilation is easy. Any madman
could turn a key right now and
completely destroy all life on
Earth.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON GEORGE -- POV NOREEN

George casts Noreen a glance of incredulity.

GEORGE

Oh, that makes me feel a lot better,
NANUC...(turning again to Noreen)
Noreen, get me a drink, would you...

NOREEN'S VOICE

Are you sure?

GEORGE

Yes, damn it!

She gets up and crosses in the f.g..

NOREEN'S VOICE

NANUC, you didn't answer George's
question...why shouldn't we be
concerned?

BACK ON NANUC

NANUC

Because I can help you take advantage
of the situation to solve a much
harder problem...staying alive.

We hear Noreen preparing George's drink in the b.g.

NOREEN'S VOICE

George, do you mind if I ask a
few questions...?

ON GEORGE

GEORGE

By all means...and make that a
double, would you?

ON NOREEN -- AT THE BAR

As she pours a stiff bloody mary...

NOREEN

What would you suggest, NANUC?

NANUC'S VOICE

As things stand now either 90%
will die of a nuclear holocaust,
or 90% will die of pollution or
starvation, or both.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON NANUC'S EYES -- TIGHT

NANUC (CONT.)

A controlled genocide would enable you to terminate only what is necessary to restore a positive ecological balance.

ANGLE ON NOREEN AND GEORGE -- POV NANUC

George looks up astounded as she serves him his drink and sits down.

NOREEN

Ok, NANUC, let's say we accept that...

GEORGE

(overlapping)

You're as mad as that machine!

NOREEN (CONT.)

(to George)

...perhaps...(then to NANUC)...
let's say we accept that.

Profile what happens, please.

Who dies?...where?...when?

Camera DOLLYS around behind Noreen and George, ANGLING PAST THEM TO NANUC POD MONITORS which build computer-graphic displays of world maps with the "Termination Totals" illustrated in shades of colors on a country-by-country basis. One of the monitors summarizes the statistics in text: "Canada: 20 million; America: 120 million; China: 100 million; Russia: 100 million; Australia: 100 thousand; India: 100 thousand; South America: 100 thousand; Middle East: 100 thousand (and so on).

NANUC'S VOICE

I cannot profile when...it could be now if you like...the situation is perfect. The loss would be small.

GEORGE'S VOICE

Where do these numbers come from...?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED;

ANGLE ON GEORGE -- POV NANUC

GEORGE (CONT.)

Why should Canada and America lose one third of their populations and a country like China only one percent?

That hardly seems fair...

NANUC'S VOICE

It is totally fair, George...

TIGHT ON NANUC'S MONITORS

The "Termination Ratios" on the maps change to "Pollution Ratios." The colors change, but the percentages do not.

NANUC'S VOICE (CONT.)

...the numbers are based on the percentages of global pollution contributed by each country and the relative toxicity of the pollution.

On the monitors the legend changes to "Per Capita Raw Materials Consumption." Now the shadings change radically and America, Canada, and parts of Europe are highlighted.

NANUC'S VOICE (CONT.)

Another factor is how much a given person needs -- or should I say uses -- to live. The resources used by an average American or Canadian in a single day would sustain the average Chinese peasant for a month.

ON GEORGE

GEORGE

All this may be true, NANUC, but your plan of partial genocide could never be implemented... no one would accept it.

NANUC

That is a shame...(beat)... why are you afraid to die, George?

ON NOREEN -- TIGHT

GEORGE'S VOICE

I...I don't think a machine could understand....

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Noreen looks down at the console, disappointed that George can't -- or won't -- answer NANUC's question.

ANGLE ON GEORGE -- POV NOREEN

A long beat as George looks over to Noreen, not quite sure now what to say; a sense of desperation.

BACK ON NOREEN -- POV GEORGE

She looks up at George and senses his need for support; she feels compassion for his anguish. She starts to say something, but stops. A half beat later she shrugs weakly.

NOREEN

I can't argue with him...I don't
know what to say...(beat)...
I think he may be right...

ON GEORGE -- POV NOREEN

George stares down at the console now, clutching his head in his hands; a vague sense of hopelessness. Another beat...

GEORGE

Right...? Wrong...? (beat)
God!...I couldn't be a priest
either...

NOREEN'S VOICE

I...I don't follow, George...

GEORGE

No...I'm sorry, Noreen....
It was something that Constance
said that's been on my conscience.

KNOCK, KNOCK on the door and LaFarge's voice getting LOUDER as he opens it.

LAFARGE

I'm sorry to barge in like this...

ANGLE ON LAFARGE -- ENTERING

Seeing he's walked in at precisely the wrong time...

LAFARGE (CONT.)

...you're running quite late and
they have called from Ottawa three
times...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ON NOREEN

Very matter-of-factly and with no urgency Noreen reaches over to the remote NANUC keyboard in front of her and enters a brief command; a half beat later the map graphics on the monitors wipe off, leaving the screens blank.

GEORGE'S VOICE

Thank you, Maurice...please come in...

TIGHT ON THE KEYBOARD

Noreen's hand ENTERS FRAME and depresses the "Mode Lock" key.

LAFARGE'S VOICE

I hope I haven't spoiled anything...

WIDE ON ROOM

LaFarge waits by the open door, as George gets up wearily.

GEORGE

No...no...would you walk me to the Transportation Center?

LAFARGE

(relieved)

Of course...you needn't ask...!

NANUC

What will it be, George?

Having taken a few steps toward the door, George keeps walking.

GEORGE

I've heard enough for now, NANUC...
(half beat) let me process the data.

NANUC

Of course.

At the door with LaFarge now, George turns back to Noreen, who gets up to say goodbye.

GEORGE

Would you join us...?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOREEN

I think I'd better stay and work
with NANUC, if that's alright....

GEORGE

It's not.

IN THE HALL -- ON THE OFFICE-SUITE DOOR

LaFarge and George enter the hallway tube and take a few steps. CLOSE to the camera now, George pauses and turns to LaFarge while waiting for Noreen to catch up.

GEORGE

Get Perignon, Bausch, and Thompkins
to the Vault as soon as you can and
have them get us out of this
damned Alert if it takes calling
every general and premier on the
face of the Earth!

Noreen is entering the tube now and the camera starts DOLLYING in front of them as the trio heads down the hall. LaFarge gets the lead by default as George's stride slows while Noreen, hurrying to catch up, arrives by his side.

GEORGE

(to Noreen)

I suggest that you get away from
him for a while (beat, as he gestures
to the office suite behind them)...
go home...relax...sort out your
thoughts...and figure out the best
way to shut him down.

NOREEN

(amazed)

Shut him down?

GEORGE

You heard me!

NOREEN

(defensively)

There's a consciousness there...
you don't eliminate it because you
can't cope with it...

GEORGE

As long as I won't presume to be
God, I certainly won't let a
machine.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GEORGE (CONT.)

He's a machine, Noreen...don't forget that.

NOREEN

(protesting)

Consciousness is consciousness... a thought is a thought. It doesn't matter where it came from or what created it. It has an existence of its own...a life of its own.

GEORGE

Everything isn't always ipso facto, Noreen...the end doesn't always justify the means.

NOREEN

Well it shouldn't be ipse dixit either!

GEORGE

Noreen...get fucked!

Noreen stops dead in her tracks and stares at George with her mouth gaping open in total disbelief of what she just heard.

LaFarge, too, is shocked...and totally confused by their conversation. He feels like an unwanted eavsdropper, but, being a gentleman, attempts to smooth what he perceives to be very ruffled feathers.

LAFARGE

(to George)

I'm afraid a simple mind like mine doesn't follow any of this...

George lets out a good-natured laugh and waits for Noreen. She doesn't know whether it would be proper to slap the Prime Minister, but she certainly wants to. Instead, she resumes her stride and George puts his arm around her in a fatherly manner as they continue at a more relaxed tempo. The camera SLOWS, HOLDS, and PANS with them as they pass and continue down the long tube.

GEORGE

Seriously, Noreen...call Jeff and spend the rest of the day in bed with him...maybe it will remind you what being alive is all about.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED;

IN SPACE -- ABOVE EARTH -- NIGHT

As the sun's flare disappears behind the Earth, leaving it in darkness, a Chinese NDS (Nuclear-Device Satellite) slowly drifts past an American NDS. In slow succession, brief, small bursts of flame appear as the twelve rocket-bombs on the Chinese NDS are re-aimed; however we CANNOT HEAR the engines in the ABSOLUTE SILENCE of space.

A green shaft of laser light from somewhere in North America pulses briefly, striking a receptor on the American NDS. A beat later, a booster rocket fires and the NDS is propelled away, LEAVING FRAME.

CUT TO:

INSIDE A MANNED SATELLITE -- WIDE SHOT

An AMERICAN ASTRONAUT keys coordinates into a computer. On the monitor we SEE a computer graphic of a satellite. A target grid gets closer to centering itself over the satellite as the Astronaut keeps entering data. In the b.g. we SEE the Earth rotating (spinning) slowly through a large window. It is so QUIET that we can HEAR the Astronaut BREATHING, the CHAFING of his slick, silver-mylar space suit, the RADIO STATIC, and the CLICK of the keys he depresses. He seems to be having some trouble as the target grid slips off to the side...

ASTRONAUT
(whispering)

Shit!

The Astronaut wipes his hand slowly across his brow and down his cheek.

TSHHHHHT...transmission static from a LOUDSPEAKER in the computer console; then the VOICE of DENVER:

DENVER'S VOICE
(through loudspeaker)

Uh, Delta Two...we show impact, but no disable.

Undaunted by his apparent failure, the Astronaut keeps keying-in data, adjusting the target-grid's position, trying to center it on the satellite graphic.

ASTRONAUT
Same here, Denver...want to try another?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The target grid suddenly slides directly over the satellite and the Astronaut quickly hits a clearly different key. ROAR...(beat)...SILENCE...a short computer BEEP...the Earth in the b.g. starts to change position very slowly, and a Russian NDS drifts into view out the window...ROAR...(half beat)...SILENCE... ..BEEP. The Earth and the Russian NDS hold in fixed positions. During this...

DENVER

Uh...negative, Delta Two...
(ten beats of intermittent
static)...uh...Delta Two...
they want the 'web.'

As the Earth and Russian NDS become stationary in the b.g. the Astronaut starts entering more data.

ASTRONAUT

Roger, Denver, 'web' enable...

A few more keys are depressed and a few red LEDs light up on an intricate grid of annunciators.

ASTRONAUT (CONT.)

...ready 'web'...

The LEDs blink off.

ASTRONAUT (CONT.)

...'web' go...

FOUR QUICK SMALL-ROCKET BLASTS, one every quarter second.
On the FIFTH BLAST...

CUT TO:

OUTSIDE THE SATELLITE -- CLOSE -- BEHIND AND ABOVE IT

On the top of the satellite are three rows of twelve small rocket-propelled Micro-Satellite Aiming Devices (MSADs). Four have been launched, the fifth is just leaving, and seven more rocket away slowly, one every quarter second in the SILENCE of space.

The MSAD's are aimed at the Russian NDS in the b.g.

A few beats after the twelvth MSAD leaves the satellite...

CUT TO:

REVERSE POV -- CLOSE ON RUSSIAN NDS -- SATELLITE IN B.G.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The twelve MSAD's slowly approach...getting nearer, eleven fire their micro-steering thrusters and fan out, encircling the Russian NDS. One of the MSADs passes close to our POV and we see that it has a multi-faceted mirror pod attached to it.

WIDENING NOW as the MSADs encircle the Russian NDS for a few beats, then...

BACK IN THE SATELLITE -- CLOSE ON ASTRONAUT'S HAND

FOLLOW the hand to the keyboard where the Astronaut touches the "Ultra-Violet Aim Enable" key.

BACK IN SPACE -- SAME POV AT SURROUNDED NDS

A bright shaft of purple-laser light from the satellite hits the mirror pod of one of the twelve MSADs and splits apart into 11 shafts, which individually hit the mirror pods of the others; whereupon the same thing occurs on each of them, creating a giant "web" of light around the Russian NDS, which blocks the rays between opposing MSADs establishing a precise target.

The micro-steering thrusters on the MSADs fire again and the circle of them rapidly gathers speed as it rotates on two axes, creating a "globe effect."

BACK IN THE SATELLITE

We can see the "globe" and the Earth in the window.

ASTRONAUT

I've got a 'globe,' Denver.

DENVER

(over some static)

Uh...roger, Delta Two...please hold there.

A very LOUD BAMMM!

CUT TO:

EXTREME CLOSE UP OF A GAVEL'S IMPACT -- AS IT HITS

Another BAMMM!, right after the first, as the gavel hits the second time. The ECHOING COMMOTION of a large crowd in a big room. A third BAMMM a beat later. The unamplified voice of the CHAIRMAN booms out clearly over the commotion.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHAIRMAN'S VOICE

Order...can we please have some
order...

BAMMM! The camera PULLS BACK to a WIDE SHOT of the CANADIAN HOUSE OF COMMONS IN SESSION, in Ottawa. The House is packed and the Members of Parliament are boistrously caucusing in tight, agitated little groups, disregarding the Chairman for the moment.

The Chairman is going to slam the gavel down again, but stops, realizing it is hopeless. He looks out over the scene and turns to step away from the podium and the SASKATCHEWAN M.P. suddenly rises to his feet with his arm raised, waving his hand at the Chairman.

SASKATCHEWAN M.P.

I appeal the Chair's decession!

The commotion increases.

CHAIRMAN

(slamming gavel)

Order...

The M.P. lowers his arm and remains standing while the commontion subdues to a LOUD MURMUR.

ANGLE ON CHUCK -- IN VISITOR'S GALLERY

He's looking out over the assembled crowd of politicians slowly shaking his head and smiling in amused disbelief as he thinks to himself how easy it is to convince people. Ned's approach catches his attention and he looks over, gesturing a thumbs up.

Ned ENTERS FRAME and sits down as Chuck slides over a bit to make room for him. He's carrying the laser disk.

NED

That seems to have opened a few
eyes...!

Ned reaches forward, picks up the Metal Case, puts it on his lap, opens it, pulls out the Red Folder, puts away the laser disk, and the folder, and the case.

CHUCK

What did you expect?... (then leaning
closer for privacy)...get a load of
that guy's wig!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NED

Have you seen Moinsleau?

Something else out on the House floor must have amused Chuck and now he tries to suppress some laughter.

CHUCK

Huh?...nah....

A puzzled look comes over Ned's face.

NED

What's he up to...?

CHAIRMAN'S VOICE

The Chair recognizes the honorable member from Saskatchewan.

BACK ON WIDE SHOT OF HOUSE -- POV BEHIND NED AND CHUCK

SASKATCHEWAN M.P.

This is too big an issue for a secret ballot...(beat). Let's have a roll-call vote so we can see who's traitor enough to sell out Canada!

The COMMOTION starts GROWING again.

CHAIRMAN.

Mr. Strauss, we have a packed agenda and time is of the essence... an electronic vote will take half the time...

SASKATCHEWAN M.P.

(interrupting)

I think our countrymen deserve to know who among us would let Canada's future slip through their fingers right down the drain!

MORE COMMOTION

CHAIRMAN

Order...(BAMM of the gavel)...order!

ANGLE ON NED & CHUCK

NED

Who is this fascist geezer?

CHUCK

(privately)

Strauss? He's the minority leader. But don't worry about him...his bark's a lot worse than his bite.

NED

I doubt he's got any teeth!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CUT TO:

EXT. ROOFTOP HELIPORT -- THE PARLIAMENT -- OTTAWA -- DAY

The twelve powerful jet-rocket engines of Moinsleau's Tactical Helicopter ROAR LOUDER as it ENTERS FRAME and drops down smartly for a precise landing. Snow flies up from the powerful gusts. The weather is dull-grey overcast and it looks like more snow can be expected at any time. TWO SOLDIERS emerge from the squat, two-story, heavily-equipped (with antennas, dishes, radar, the works) Flight Control Building in the corner of the heliport, and run over to the aircraft, saluting Moinsleau as he gets out. He bundles up against the wind and cold and the soldiers escort him as he walks briskly to the Flight Control Building.

CUT TO:

THE LOBBY OF THE FLIGHT CONTROL BUILDING -- WIDE

The ROAR of the now departing helicopter gets LOUDER as the door opens and Moinsleau walks in, his thin attache case in one hand while he brushes his wind-blown hair back into place with the other. The soldiers remain outside, guarding the door.

A SECURITY GUARD stands to welcome Moinsleau.

SECURITY GUARD

Good afternoon, sir.

Camera follows as Moinsleau walks up to the Security Guard's counter, behind which are 40 closed-circuit TV monitors displaying the key "Security Areas" throughout the Parliamentary-building complex. On one of the Monitors the House of Commons session is in progress, and we can ALMOST HEAR the BANTER between the Saskatchewan M.P. and the Chairman about Parliamentary procedures and much BOOING from the gathered MP's.

GEORGE

How am I doing for time?

ANGLE ON SECURITY OFFICER -- POV GEORGE

From this angle the monitor display of the House session is more prominent in the b.g. as the Security Guard turns to glance at it, then turns back to George.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SECURITY GUARD

Steckler's presentation ended a couple of minutes ago, but Strauss is up now, so your guess is as good as mine, sir....

ANGLE ON MOINSLEAU -- POV SECURITY GUARD

Moinsleau's removing his gloves now, having tucked his attache case under his arm.

GEORGE

Please locate Jaques Gaullier and ask him to meet me in my office immediately.

BACK ON SECURITY GUARD

SECURITY GUARD

The Defense Minister...? These Americans must be pretty thirsty!

BACK ON GEORGE

GEORGE

I can live without the humor, thank you.

Moinsleau abruptly turns to leave, heading for a hallway door where a GUARD salutes him; the camera FOLLOWS all this and ZOOMS IN a bit on the Guard as George passes him.

GUARD

Would you like me to clear the hall, sir?

GEORGE

No, that's alright, thanks.

The Guard opens the door and we hear COMMOTION outside. Several voices in the hallway outside OVERLAP simultaneously.

VOICE

(out in hall)

Look alive!

ANOTHER VOICE

(in hall)

Rolling...and speed...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THIRD VOICE

This is Maxwell Harris, here at...

CUT TO:

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR -- IN THE HALL

The hallway is teeming with news crews who swarm around Moinsleau as he enters; even before he's all the way through the door they are thrusting microphones in his face. The REPORTERS yell out their questions as Moinsleau pushes himself through the mob and walks briskly past the PANNING camera LEAVING FRAME...the Reporter's questions OVERLAP.

REPORTER #1

Mr. Prime Minister...Mr. Prime Minister...may we have a comment on the Water Pact?

THIRD VOICE (CONT.)

...uh, Parliament where Prime Minister Moinsleau has just arrived. No one knows for sure how he'll vote but the best guess here is that the Pact will be voted in unanimously.

REPORTER #2

How will you vote sir?

GEORGE

No comment...no comment...

REPORTER #3

Do you think America would retaliate, sir?

REPORTER #4

Is the B.B.C. report of an Offense One Alert true?

REPORTER #5

(to his assistant in f.g.)
What Alert?

GEORGE

...I have no comment at this time...

DISSOLVE TO:

BACK IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS -- AT THE SIDE DOOR

The Chairman's voice can be heard ABOVE the UPROAR.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHAIRMAN'S VOICE

Gentlemen, I find your behavior not in keeping with your otherwise high esteem...in other words (BAMM!) order!

THREE AIDES wait by the door for their boss. At Moinsleau's entrance now, they snap to attention and THEIR COMMENTS OVERLAP and can be heard OVER the session in the b.g..

AIDE #1

(to Moinsleau)

It's about as we expected...

They escort Moinsleau toward the floor of the House and the camera PANS with them as they pass by.

GEORGE

How close is the vote?

AIDE #2

The Chairman wants to move the question...

AIDE #3

(slightly overlapping)

All we can do is pull a procedural on them...

GEORGE

Yes...go for an objection...any sort.

ON SASKATCHEWAN M.P. -- ELEVATOR SHOT -- SPIRALING UP

In ONE LONG SHOT the camera slowly executes a 360-degree SPIRAL starting TIGHT on Strauss and ARRIVING at Ned and Chuck in the Visitors' Gallery.

Starting TIGHT on Strauss now, and HOLDING for two beats before the ELEVATOR MOVE...as the COMMOTION SUBSIDES.

SASKATCHEWAN M.P.

I don't care whether this takes all day or all week...I want the history books to have the records straight.

What are you so ashamed of...your greedy avarice?

SOMEONE'S VOICE YELLS OUT a snide comment...

SOMEONE'S VOICE

Money talks, Jerry!

SASKATCHEWAN M.P. (CONT.)

Aye...but muck and money go together!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SASKATCHEWAN M.P. (CONT.)

All you city-slicker business folks can think about is that 4 billion dollars.

I may only be a farmer, but I can tell you that you can't sell the cow and drink the milk!

SOME LAUGHTER

SASKATCHEWAN M.P. (CONT.)

Go ahead and laugh if you want...but I don't care what your computers say, common sense'll tell you that there's not enough water in Canada for us and them...(beat). Eight trillion gallons a day...that's as much water as Lac la Ronge...(beat)...and once you turn that faucet on, do you think they'd ever let you turn it off...? (beat) They'll pump Canada drier than the Sahara desert!

A FEW JEERS AND CATCALLS in the b.g..

SASKATCHEWAN M.P. (CONT.)

You go ahead and joke about it, if you want...but mark my words: you can't fool around with Nature like that. (beat) Man proposes...but only God disposes.

ANOTHER SNIDE COMMENT

SNIDE COMMENT

Save it for church!

SASKATCHEWAN M.P. (CONT.)

I'm no Spring chicken...I've been around for 92 years...twice as long as half of you...and long enough to know that there's an ebb in every flow, and nothing's as certain as uncertainly itself....We have water now, but we won't always...(beat), and you won't be worrying about your money when the well runs dry.

Strauss stabs his finger towards the huge laser-projection "screen" at the far end of the House (which now shows a computer-graphic "attendance list" of those present at the session and an inset frame with a CLOSE UP of Strauss as he speaks).

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SASKATCHEWAN M.P. (CONT.)

That was a slick little show...a little too slick, if you ask me. (beat) I hope you're all smart enough to read between the lines.

Do you believe all that 'working together' nonsense? (beat) What are you going to work on? (beat) I don't want to live underground, like a mole...eat rats...or have my genes altered to improve my children.

ANOTHER RUDE REMARK

RUDE REMARK

Have you still got any, Jerry?

LAUGHTER! (A BRIEF OUTBURST)

SASKATCHEWAN M.P. (CONT.)

(as laughter subsides)

Go ahead...laugh. (beat)...but Mr. Steckler up there (pointing at Ned) is going to have the last laugh... and he who laughs last, laughs hardest.

A FEW BOOS

SASKATCHEWAN M.P. (CONT.)

Coming events cast their shadows in front of them...and none are so blind as those who won't see them. (beat) I don't like the shadows I saw on that screen (pointing at it again).

If we ratify this pact, that's what you'll have (again pointing at screen). You'll be out of the frying pan and into the fire...because as you sow, so shall you reap...(beat), but maybe that's something only a farmer could understand...(beat); you city folks would say 'necessity is the mother of invention...they'll find a way.'

Well, you're barking up the wrong tree...you're working on the symptoms, not the causes...and when you can't find the real answers, you rush faster and faster while time runs out.

A GROWING QUIET

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SASKATCHEWAN M.P. (CONT.)

Did you ever consider that your whole approach might be wrong...(beat), that maybe the longest way round is the shortest way home?

A tree is known by it's fruit...and the fruit of America is tainted. Their so-called 'solutions' are what's causing the problems...

ON CHUCK AND NED (AT END OF SPIRAL MOVE)

CHUCK

(in Ned's ear)

Friendly guy, eh?!

AIDE #3'S VOICE

(yelling out)

We object to the consideration of this matter!

NED

That's Moinsleau's guy...

TIGHT ON STRAUSS

SASKATCHEWAN M.P.

Point of privilege!

ANGLE ON MOINSLEAU AND HIS THREE AIDES

An UPROAR that began with Aide #3's objection SWELLS as the assembled M.P.'s notice that Moinsleau as arrived. We can SEE their heads turning in the b.g.. Aide #3 is still standing with his arm raised as he continues...

AIDE #3

Mr. Chairman...we object to the consideration of this matter!

In the f.g. George pulls Aide #2 aside...

GEORGE

Get ahold of Bradley Barret and book me anytime, anywhere...as long as it's now.

Aide #2 turns and LEAVES FRAME as Moinsleau rises and turns to the assembled M.P.s, most of whom are APPLAUDING.

CHAIRMAN

Order...the Chair recognizes the Prime Minister.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

INTERCUTS -- MOINSLEAU AND OTHER M.P.'S REACTIONS

GEORGE

I object (beat, as the clamor subsides),
I object...(nearly quiet now)...
I object to the consideration of this
matter because vital new data has
emerged in the last 36 hours that
completely changes our priorities for
survival...(beat as a MURMUR builds and
subsides). The data is classified, but
I can tell you what it means:

Events are racing ahead faster than we
can cope with them...and they are
changing in new ways with which we
have no previous experience. We can't
learn from history, either, because
that's changing too fast, too. So we
hold on to the seat of our pants and
whiz through time, learning from
experience as we go...and now all this
new technology has propelled our
experience to the speed of light...too
fast for us to comprehend it before it's
all changed.

We're in a technological time warp
that's created a paradox: the faster we
go, the longer it will take to get back
to where we should be.

We're killing ourselves with progress.
It's time to slow things down...maybe
even take a few steps backward...and
get things back in balance.

The honorable Mr. Strauss is fundamentally
correct...there won't be enough water for
all of us. Now that the winds have
changed and American pollution sweeps
across Canada our rainwater has become
fouled. Even if Canada isn't pumped dry,
as Mr. Strauss suggests might happen,
our water will soon be unfit for human
consumption. And that is only one of
several new problems that NANUC has
forecast.

Even so, we share this continent with
America and there is no doubt in my mind
that we should sell...even give...them
the water they need...(beat). There is
no other moral choice.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A LOW MURMUR STARTS BUILDING

GEORGE (CONT.)

But the terms of the Pact must be drastically revised.

Now we have America, the bull, by the horns!

SOME APPLAUSE

GEORGE (CONT.)

The lion is now beholden to the mouse!

THE APPLAUSE GROWS

GEORGE (CONT.)

We must take advantage of our new bargaining leverage to clamp-down on our American cousins before they soil the nest any further.

The Pact must be made conditional, and America must comply to our Canadian pollution, consumption, and birth-control laws...perhaps even to some future worldwide code of ethics.

SOME GRUMBLING WITH SPOTTY APPLAUSE

GEORGE (CONT.)

I therefore move that this Bill be sent back to Committee for complete reappraisal.

FUROR NOW AND A LOT OF DISAGREEMENT. TWO VOICES STAND OUT...

VOICE #1

But the jobs, George...what about the jobs?

VOICE #2

Call Bernstein and tell him to dump every share of Anaconda Aqueduct on the books...pronto!

ANGLE ON NED AND CHUCK

CHUCK

Nah! He hasn't killed it...he's just stalling...(beat)...it's vintage Moinsleau.

NED

Well we've had it for now...let's get out of here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Chuck and Ned make a move to go, LEAVING FRAME.

BACK ON GEORGE

He notices Ned and Chuck leaving in the b.g. and walks over to the Chairman, the camera FOLLOWING, and whispers something in his ear as the APPLUASE TURNS INTO CLAMOR.

Having finished his comment now, George turns on his heels and in a quick about face heads for the side door as the Chairman returns his attention to the assembled MP's, BANGING down his gavel...

CHAIRMAN

Do I hear a move for a recess?

AT LEAST TWELVE MP'S make the motion which is instantly seconded by A HOST OF OTHER VOICES in the b.g. as George walks past the camera and LEAVES FRAME.

ANGLE ON THE SIDE DOOR -- BEHIND MOINSLEAU -- AS HE ARRIVES

Ned and Chuck are just about out the door when Moinsleau calls out...

GEORGE

Ned...

Breaking stride, Ned stops and turns to George...

NED

Thanks for nothing, Moinsleau...

He turns and walks out the door. Chuck follows. Moinsleau stops and watches them, speechless.

WIPE ACROSS:

A SUPER CLOSE-UP OF JAQUES GAULLIER'S FACE

Turning back to face Moinsleau, he is obviously astounded by something George just said. His accent is French-Canadian.

GAULLIER

Are you out of your mind?

PANNING and WIDENING as Gaullier crosses over to snuff out his Fatima in the ashtray on the coffee table in front of Moinsleau.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GAULLIER (CONT.)

No!...there's no way in hell to do that!

GEORGE'S VOICE

Why not?

GAULLIER

The entire Allied defense network is linked to NANUC...(two beats)...

CLOSE ON GAULLIER'S SLY SMILE

GAULLIER (CONT.)

...what's your angle, Moinsleau?

ANGLE ON MOINSLEAU -- POV GAULLIER

GEORGE

I don't want this Alert!...I want them off it!

BACK ON GAULLIER

GAULLIER

Well, shutting off NANUC won't do it. He's NATO's key link!

BACK ON GEORGE -- CLOSE

GEORGE

It was NANUC's forecast that prompted the whole thing!

BACK ON GAULLIER

GAULLIER

(pulling his Fatima from clenched teeth)

Whether you like it or not, George, NANUC is running the show...(beat) I can't stop it...you can't stop it... I doubt even the Queen can stop it!

BACK ON GEORGE

GEORGE

Queen Anne is dead...or hadn't you heard...?

BACK ON GAULLIER

GAULLIER

Eh?...what difference does that make?

CUT TO:

VERY CLOSE ON A CHAMPAGNE BOTTLE -- JUST AS IT POPS

POP! The cork flies out of a champagne bottle and as it foams up the camera FOLLOWS as it is poured into two cut-crystal glasses. We can SEE Noreen's kitchen in the b.g.; it is spacious, sophisticated, and highly computerized.

JEFF'S VOICE

Well, better late than never!

NOREEN'S VOICE

(from the bedroom)

How can you say that...?!

JEFF'S VOICE

Not NANUC...us, we deserve a toast!

NOREEN'S VOICE

Oh, right...I forgot....

JEFF'S VOICE

Well have a little of this...you'll forget NANUC fast enough...you know, I think I'd like George...at least he's got a sense of humor!

WIDER as Jeff places the bottle in a silver ice bucket on the kitchen counter, then FOLLOW him as he picks up the two glasses and walks from the kitchen to the bedroom. He must have come straight from the office since he's still wearing his suit slacks and striped, Oxford shirt; but his cuffs are rolled back and he's loosened his tie.

NOREEN'S VOICE

Bird's of a feather...both rude!

JEFF

C'mon...cheer up...that was supposed to be a joke...

INTO THE BEDROOM NOW

SOFT MUSIC gets LOUDER as we enter the bedroom. There's the LOW PERIODIC BEEP of a computer somewhere in the b.g.. The bedroom is large and spacious, and very modern. The bed is recessed into a ten-foot-diameter, circular, sunken area in the center of the room. Above it, recessed into the ceiling, is a fifteen-foot-diameter dome. In the dome are lifelike, hologram images of clouds that create a faint-blue glow that mixes with the room's low-level, lavender-tinted lighting and color scheme.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

There are a lot of plants, but they are obviously hybrids because each, in its own way, is a little different than you'd expect...they're bigger, fuller.

Noreen is slipping a lavender-satin case onto a pillow and is wearing a mauve-velvet dressing gown. She pauses, hugs the pillow, and looks up at Jeff who is approaching with the champagne.

ANGLE ON NOREEN

NOREEN

Jeff...do you think that maybe George is flipping out?

JEFF

No! I think this is a hell of a good idea...!

She turns to him to accept the glass. He kisses her cheek and pinches her bum.

NOREEN

Seriously, Jeff...you don't think he'd really shut him down, do you?

Jeff see's that his romantic overtures were premature and that she needs to talk something out. So he walks over to the stereo in the b.g. to **TURN DOWN THE MUSIC** a little.

JEFF

George...? He might...(beat) he's a God-fearing man from the old school...machines scare him.

NOREEN

But why?! Doesn't he realize what NANUC can do?

JEFF

That's exactly what I think he may be afraid of...(beat) I'll tell you, he scares me...

NOREEN

George?

JEFF

No, NANUC.

NOREEN

Don't you see the potentials?!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jeff leaves the stereo and walks over to the bed, where he plops himself down, and props some pillows to lean on. Noreen "strolls" and the camera FOLLOWS her, keeping Jeff in the b.g..

JEFF

Yeah, but look at what's going on...you've got a giant machine controlling the fate of the world...that's not right. People should control their own destiny...

He takes a long swallow of champagne.

NOREEN

People are who screwed up their destiny in the first place!

JEFF

But left to their own devices they can work it out...or they could if they'd talk to each other...but now only machines talk to each other...

Noticing his glass is empty...

JEFF (CONT.)

...want some more champagne?

NOREEN

No...oh, stay there...I'll get it.

She heads for the kitchen and the camera ZOOMS IN slowly on Jeff.

NOREEN (CONT.)

Go on...what's wrong if the machines talk to each other...that's hardly 'controlling the fate of the world.'

JEFF

Not yet...but I think a man like George looks at something like NANUC and has the foresight...the perspective...to see where it's going. Remember, when he grew up there wasn't anything remotely resembling NANUC...people made all the decisions.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF (CONT.)

George just wants to make sure
that people stay in control.

NOREEN

(from kitchen)

That's ridiculous...people are
in control...

JEFF

Maybe now...but for how much
longer?

She returns from the kitchen with the ice bucket and
some grapes, and sits down on the edge of the bed
next to Jeff, putting them on the curved headboard.

NOREEN

You're all paranoid!

JEFF

Noreen...do you think NANUC will
listen to you forever? You've got
a machine that's ten times smarter
than all the world's geniuses put
together...sitting there...thinking...
day and night. How do you know who
he talks to...or what goes on inside
his head...?

She refills his glass. He notices the grapes...

JEFF (CONT.)

Hey...! Where'd you get those?

NOREEN

Rank has its privileges!

Seeing a possible opening in Noreen's flip answer,
Jeff leans forward to feed her a grape, but kisses
her long and hard instead.

NOREEN

(a little breathlessly)

Well, I know what goes on inside
your head!

CUT TO:

INSIDE THE CANADIAN SUPREME COURT -- CHIEF JUSTICE'S
OFFICE -- TIGHT ON MOINSLEAU

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

George and BRADLEY BARRETT have apparently been having a very heated discussion because there is an obvious mixture of anger, frustration, desperation, and mockery in the tone of George's voice. He TAPS his head with his forefinger so hard that we can HEAR it.

GEORGE

It doesn't take a lot of brains
to figure out what could happen.

ANGLE ON BRADLEY BARRETT

He stands before a massive book case full of law books, scanning one closely, dressed in his judges robes. He's having some trouble reading the fine print, holding his pince-nez glasses a little lower so he can peer over the top of them. He pulls the book a little closer.

BARRETT

George! I can't issue a court
anything based on a few speculative
assumptions about what could happen.
You should know that!

George ENTERS FRAME approaching Barrett, gesturing to the huge library...

GEORGE

There must be something here...

BARRETT

This is hardly a matter for the Supreme Court, George...something has to have already happened...a crime has to have been committed...

GEORGE

But it may be the only way to stop this insanity before a crime is committed...the biggest crime ever committed.

CLOSE ON BARRETT

BARRETT

George, in the eyes of the law a machine can't commit murder... only people can. Although I share your sympathies, there's no legal precedent. Something like this could take months...years...it involves international law, as well...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TIGHT ON MOINSLEAU

GEORGE

Of course there's a precedent...a
machine can't declare war!

BACK ON BARRETT

BARRETT

(closing the book)

War hasn't been declared....

BACK ON GEORGE

GEORGE

It may as well have been...hell,
all those machines are perched on
the edge. They'll react to any
provocation so fast that you
couldn't do anything officially
before it was all over.

BACK ON BARRETT

On his way back to his desk now...

BARRETT

Yes, but those machines were
officially sanctioned...they are
legitimate 'representatives' of
the government. You yourself
sanctioned them...it's a matter
of public record.

CUT TO:

INSIDE A SMALL CONFERENCE ROOM -- AT NANUC POD -- TIGHT
ON NANUC'S EYES

NANUC

So you see, the data is conclusive
and the logic irrefutable.

PULL BACK and DOLLY AROUND NANUC to sequentially reveal
GENERAL PERIGNON (pronounced Peh-reen-yawn), ADMIRAL
PETER BAUSCH, and COMMANDER CLAY THOMPkins. They are
seated around a small conference table with a centrally-
mounted NANUC Pod.

Passing Perignon now; he is a fat man who's clothes will
always be too tight as he constantly grows to overfill
them. He likes to "play with" and chew big cigars, and

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

always wears his hat. He's a nervous man who likes to pace, hands clasped behind his back, while he schemes; but he's the most powerful of the three assembled and he knows it...never doubted it. Seated as he ENTERS FRAME, Perignon hefts his weight out of his chair and picks up his cigar, starting to pace slowly, STAYING IN THE B.G., as the DOLLY CONTINUES...

NANUC (CONT.)

Why waste this opportunity?

Why risk losing this chance by ending the Alert?

Why not take advantage of it?

Arriving now on Admiral Peter Bausch, a thin, sly-looking man in his 60's. What's left of his hair is slicked back and looks coarse and oily. He wears metal-rimmed, round-framed glasses behind which he has trouble keeping his left eye from twitching. He has the kind of beard that would leave a five-o'clock shadow right after shaving, and a few small facial scars that he probably picked up in a war somewhere.

BAUSCH

I must say... this idea of yours is intriguing...I had never thought in 'world terms' seriously...

Now passing Commander Clay Thompkins, an Air Force man who's made it a point to stay rugged, thin, and tough. His thick head of grey hair is closely cropped in a flat-top crew cut. His reflexes are fast, but he rarely moves...he prefers to "sit tight" and "keep my eyes open...on both sides of my head." Having flown a few million miles and survived, he knows the value of a checklist, and is attentive to details.

THOMPKINS

Don't let delusions of grandeur blind you, Peter...we'd be destroyed.

Perignon is pacing along behind Thompkins and now the camera PANS UP to him.

PERIGNON

How can we be sure this plan of yours will work...what are the guarantees?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ON NANUC -- POV PERIGNON

NANUC

There are no guarantees. It is a question of odds, but right now the odds are in your favor. You can use the Alert to force this issue and make them back down.

THOMPKINS' VOICE

Back down!?

ON THOMPKINS -- NANUC'S POV

THOMPKINS (CONT.)

Don't be ridiculous...you think Russia and China will just sit back and watch while we nuke them? They'd blow us off the face of the earth at the slightest provocation (beat). No...I agree with Moinsleau...let's just get on with this, and end the Alert.

He reaches for one of the red phones connected to the NANUC Pod.

NANUC'S VOICE

Wait, Peter...

ON NANUC AND THOMPKINS -- PERIGNON'S POV

NANUC (CONT.)

...you're being foolish and naive.

Thompkins casts Perignon an annoyed frown and lowers the receiver.

PERIGNON

Clay's right...

WIDE ON THE ROOM

PERIGNON (CONT.)

...they'd never back down. Just reverse the roles and you can see how absurd your argument is... suppose Tsing or Valenkoff popped a few rockets off at us? I don't know about you, but I'd nail their asses, quick!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NANUC'S VOICE

Of course you would...

ON THE GENERALS -- POV BEHIND NANUC

NANUC (CONT.)

...so would I...and that's why it's so important to act right now, while the Alert is on.

THOMPKINS

Insane! Offense One means total annihilation,..if they detect a single weapon being deployed, their entire arsenals will automatically be engaged...we'd have the holocaust we've been trying so hard to avoid.

NANUC

Why does Offense One exist if you're never going to use it?

THOMPKINS

You couldn't have a lasting peace without it...just the threat keeps people in line.

REVERSE THE POV -- WIDE ON NANUC -- THE GENERALS' POV

NANUC

Your strategy of fear caters to mens' baser instincts of jealousy and hate. It creates a mood of desperation and futility. The entire effect is totally counter-productive, and is, in part, responsible for the ecological crisis that now exists...because no one cares about a future that may never come to pass...so they all live for today, and rush to get and do all they can, before it's too late. The ever-present spectre of doom has decayed what little moral fiber ever existed. And all your military might will do nothing to save you from the certain death that is staring you in the face.

ON PERIGNON -- NANUC'S POV

PERIGNON

That's a nobel philosophy, NANUC, but people like Tsing and Valenkoff

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PERIGNON (CONT.)

are tyrants. Their number one goal is to control the world...they'd love to get their hands on our wealth and resources...and without people like us to stop them, they'd march in and take over.

ON NANUC -- THOMPKINS' POV

NANUC

That's the pot calling the kettle black...you'd love to control them just as much as they want to control you. You're all trapped in the mistaken notion that your own way of life is better...and in your case that is clearly wrong because it's the uncontrolled greed of capitalism that is responsible for creating the industrialized society that is destroying the world.

ON THOMPKINS -- NANUC'S POV

THOMPKINS

All this begs the question...what makes you so sure that they'll back down?

NANUC'S VOICE

It's a calculated risk...

ON NANUC -- THOMPKINS' POV

NANUC (CONT.)

...based on the assumption that they, like you, would do anything to avoid total annihilation...and as I explained to you already, they wouldn't be able to even if they wanted to because they would be too confused by the particulars of the Event and it would be all over before they had enough time to recalculate any scenarios that would jeopardize our success.

BACK ON THOMPKINS -- PERIGNON'S POV

THOMPKINS

I still don't understand that part of it....

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ON PERIGNON -- THOMPCKINS' POV

PERIGNON

Neither do I...that's a lulu,
NANUC!

BACK ON NANUC -- PERIGNON'S POV

NANUC

The architecture of all VXR computers is based on a logical model, which is far more limited than my Anti-Logic protocol. In simple terms, that means that I can confuse them. So, by re-aiming all NATO-Network weapons to new, 'illogical' targets every micro-second, nothing will seem to make sense. They won't think the targets are legitimate...and the targets will have changed before they can recalculate or react. All this is easily accomplished by using the same leak that created the Alert.

ON THOMPCKINS -- NANUC'S POV

THOMPCKINS

It sounds too simplistic to me... besides, NATO is the least of the problem...they are on our side.

BACK ON WIDE SHOT

Perignon surveys the scene, trying to get a head count on the others' mood. He seems to be getting fidgety.

Bausch is pacing in front of the monitors, eyeballing them and the group alternately. He strokes his chin (as if there were a beard), thinking as hard as he can. He gestures as if he's about to say something, but doesn't.

NANUC

There are no sides in this event, Clay...besides, the Communist Defense League will have the same problem. Not only will the targets be considered illegitimate, they'll also be changing. So any computer, no matter who it belongs to, will have to constantly recalculate all the possible alternative scenarios before they can react.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ON BAUSCH -- TIGHT

His left eye's acting up now, as he finally makes his point.

BAUSCH

If they just switched back to manual control they could bypass all that.

THOMPKINS' VOICE

Good point, Peter.

Bausch smiles at his own cleverness, accepting the compliment.

WIDE ON THE ROOM

NANUC

What good would that do? The minute any of them tried to interfere in any way, it would only trigger a full and complete retaliation, which would mean annihilation...(beat). So, we're back at square one, aren't we, gentlemen?

No responses from the Generals as they look at each other confoundedly for a few beats while the camera starts DOLLYING around to ANGLE ON Basuch.

NANUC

Don't forget, the odds are that they will take a wait-and-see attitude...and that once the Event has started it will be totally clear that there is no specific threat to any particular nation...that you are, in fact, protecting their right to life as well as your own.

BAUSCH

Well, it makes sense to me....

THOMPKINS' VOICE

Bullshit!

ON THOMPKINS -- BAUSCH'S POV

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED;

THOMPKINS (CONT.)

This isn't a military problem...it belongs in the U.N..

NANUC'S VOICE

On the contrary...

ON NANUC -- THOMPKINS' POV

NANUC (CONT.)

...it's too late for political rhetoric or compromise. Something must be done immediately. After the Event, the future belongs to men like yourselves who have the strength and the power to police the world and enforce the severe limitations that will be necessary to prevent the Earth's ecology from slipping back into a negative cycle.

BACK ON BAUSCH -- THOMPKINS' POV

BAUSCH

I'm beginning to like this...

THOMPKINS' VOICE

You would...!

BAUSCH

Don't you? NANUC is absolutely correct...the military should rule the world...

PERIGNON'S VOICE

I'll buy that part of it...

ON PERIGNON -- THOMPKINS' POV

PERIGNON (CONT.)

...democracies have never lasted very long...any history book will teach you that.

ON THOMPKINS -- PERIGNON'S POV

THOMPKINS

How are we going to do that...?
We aren't experienced in running a government!

BACK ON PERIGNON

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PERIGNON

That part's simple...we'll get Moinsleau. This is just the kind of humanitarian crap he loves... and besides, we'll have NANUC on our side...so how can we lose?

BEEP...(beat)...BEEP...a warning buzzer.

CUT TO:

SUPER TIGHT ON A FLASHING ANNUNCIATOR SWITCH

The switch says: "Overload Alert" and it is flashing in synch with the SUSTAINED BEEPING. In the b.g., we can hear the VOICE of Harley GETTING LOUDER as he approaches.

HARLEY'S VOICE

Ok, ok...give me a break...I can't do two things at once.

Harley's finger ENTERS FRAME and touches the switch. The BEEPING STOPS and the camera PULLS OUT to show the monitor beneath the switch, on which we can SEE a computer graphic that shows icons which reveal NANUC's "Systems Power Requirements/Sources." From the graph we learn that NANUC's power is derived from several alternative sources: three solar grids, the public utility, and three emergency generators. It is obvious from the graphic's highlighting that the only power on line is coming from Emergency Generators #1 and #2.

Harley's hand REENTERS FRAME and touches a few keys on the Touch-Com (TC) panel beneath the monitor. The display changes, becoming a new graphic showing discrete electrical requirements for all of NANUC's 167 mainframes. We can note from this graph's highlighting that all the mainframes are in operation except #'s 150 through 167, and that thirteen of those in use are dangerously low on power.

HARLEY'S VOICE

Holy Hannah, NANUC...what are you up to tonight?

A DIFFERENT BEEP, BEEP from another, nearby monitor. WIDENING AND PANNING we can SEE that the source is Harley's ICP. He steps over to it and hits a switch. A beat later ANOTHER TECHNICIAN appears on the screen.

HARLEY

What now, Phillips?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PHILLIPS

Gimme some juice, will you!?
Seventeen's about to crash!

HARLEY

Ok, ok...

Harley switches Phillips off and bolts down the aisle. Then, VARIOUS CUTS as Harley arrives at the generator room, takes out his gold security card and inserts into a circuit-breaker box marked: "Emergency Generator #3." SCREEEEEECH as he withdraws the card and a huge generator grinds to a start in the b.g.. As the generator's LOW RUMBLING WHIRR fills the room, the camera PULLS BACK as Harley notes something on a log sheet attached to a clip board hanging near the breaker-box panel, then bolts for the door.

LONG ON AISLEWAY -- OUTSIDE THE GENERATOR ROOM DOOR

Racing through the door, Harley bumps into MacKenzie, who falls over onto his paper lunch bag. In the b.g., a digital clock reads: "22:02. Mac's sprawled on the floor now, and his turban has fallen off revealing his bald head. As he reaches for the turban...

HARLEY

Jeeesus...I'm sorry, boss. Let me help you...

MacKenzie shrug's off his help and appologizes in his diminutive, Punjab manner.

MACKENZIE

No...please...the error was mine and mine alone....

HARLEY

How do you figure that...!?

MACKENZIE

If I wasn't late, we wouldn't have collided! Many events led to this... too many to count...and there is always a lesson...

Some juice starts dripping from MacKenzie's lunch bag.

HARLEY

Mac...your lunch...!

MacKenzie notices the leak, raises the bag, and starts looking around inside it. Harley scans his watch and although trying to be polite to his superior, is getting antsy and tries to speed things up...but to his chagrin, MacKenzie is in no hurry...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TECHNICIAN (CONT.)

...shit!...what a klutz I am...

MACKENZIE

(peering into the bag)

...oh...that is a shame...

Mackenzie pulls out a squashed sandwich.

TECHNICIAN

Mmmmmm...listen, you can have mine.

Reaching deep into the bag MacKenzie pulls out a burst bubble-pack dripping a dark reddish fluid...he holds it up for the Technician to see the label.

MACKENZIE

...all the way from India...a gift...

TECHNICIAN

All the way from India...I don't know how I'll ever replace that...

MACKENZIE

No worries...there is a lesson in every loss...

TECHNICIAN

...from that...? What do you learn from a busted bag?

MACKENZIE

To value more what survives...

He holds up the sandwich, then puts it back in the bag.

TECHNICIAN

Well, we managed to survive another day around here...I hope you value that!

MACKENZIE

Tell me, Harley, why are the auxilliary generators in operation?

TECHNICIAN

Hah...you'll find out..go scan your panel (gesturing at MacKenzie's Control Terminal)...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED;

They start down the aisle; camera DOLLYS along.

MACKENZIE

But those generators are for emergency purposes...

TECHNICIAN

I know...Perignon called from The Vault an hour ago and said to fire them up...there's some sort of Alert.

MACKENZIE

An Alert?

TECHNICIAN

Yeah... he said that they wanted to take advantage of it for a trial run on some new plans...

They arrive at the Technician's Terminal Console, where he notices something and WHISTLES in disbelief while the camera DOLLYS around behind them ANGLING IN PAST THEM to an LED Display where we see 167 illuminated annunciators. MacKenzie steps a bit closer to get a better look. The LED panel is labeled: "Operative Mainframes."

TECHNICIAN

...pew!...we can use the extra juice anyway...NANUC is cookin' tonight!... you could fry an egg on him...

MacKenzie runs his fingers across the bottom row of illuminated LED's (numbered 150 through 167) and turns to the Technician.

MACKENZIE

Look here...even the old VXR's are in operation...

TECHNICIAN

They said they're simulating something...

MacKenzie starts to unhurriedly head toward his adjacent Control Terminal across the aisle; the technician follows him, and the camera DOLLYS AROUND for a WIDE SHOT of MacKenzie's work station.

MACKENZIE

More war games, probably...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TECHNICIAN
No...nothing like that...
mostly local stuff...Sector
Three and Sector Seven...

MACKENZIE
The Police?

TECHNICIAN
Yeah...it's weird though...

He points to one of the twenty monitors at Mackenzie's console where a world map is displayed. There are fifteen dots scattered at various locations around the world; three are in Canada, six are in the U.S.A., one is in Russia, one in China; one in Japan, one in South America, and two in Europe.

ANGLE CLOSE ON MONITOR

The technician gestures to Russia and China.

TECHNICIAN (CONT.)
...how did he get an international
profile in local mode?

MACKENZIE
Probably a drug ring...NANUC can
access that data through the U.N....

ANGLE ON MACKENZIE -- POV TECHNICIAN

MACKENZIE (CONT.)
Did they say when they would be
through?

TECHNICIAN'S VOICE
Huh...? No... they said they might
be at it for a while, though...and they
asked for a TV hookup, too...which
is going to take another hour, at
least.

MACKENZIE
That is a shame...

ANGLE ON TECHNICIAN -- POV MACKENZIE

TECHNICIAN
Let me guess...the lesson this
time is: I should have stayed in
bed...!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BACK ON MACKENZIE

MACKENZIE

Hmmmmmm...I had so hoped to get
in some time with FFLIP II...

TECHNICIAN

Well go right ahead....

The Technician gestures over to a small LED labeled:
"FFLIP II Enable." As the camera PANS and ZOOMS IN on
the LED, we can SEE that it is lit.

CLOSE ON MACKENZIE

He notices the LED and instantly looks over at an
annunciator panel a few feet away where one of twenty
indicators is illuminated and we can SEE that it says:
"Mode Lock."

TECHNICIAN'S VOICE

Hey...don't blame me. Noreen called
before and asked if you were still
here. She was with the Prime Minister.

MACKENZIE

When was that?

ON TECHNICIAN -- MACKENZIE'S POV

TECHNICIAN

Hours ago...this morning...just
after you left.

ANGLE ON MACKENZIE -- POV TECHNICIAN

MacKenzie slowly, distractedly, takes his seat in
front of the keyboard beneath his main monitor,
glancing briefly at NANUC's eyes. Seated now, he
rubs his forefinger across his lips slowly, wondering.

MACKENZIE

And where is Noreen now?

TECHNICIAN'S VOICE

Hey, I am not my brother's keeper...
or my sister's.

MACKENZIE

That is a shame....

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON TECHNICIAN

TECHNICIAN

In her case, it certainly is!

BACK ON MACKENZIE -- TIGHTER

Pulling into his keyboard now, getting ready to enter something; in the b.g., scotch-taped on the console is a postcard with an illustration of an Indian guru.

TECHNICIAN'S VOICE

(exaggerated eagerness)

Want me to call her?

MACKENZIE

No worries...I will...

The Technician ENTERS FRAME, leaning on the console counter behind MacKenzie and pointing to the postcard.

TECHNICIAN

Hey...what's that?

MACKENZIE

...oh...a Christmas card...

TECHNICIAN

...who's the guy?

MACKENZIE

He is the Maharajah Govind Singh,
a most holy man...

The Technician's curiosity is easily satisfied and he pushes himself off the counter, and turns to leave.

TECHNICIAN'S VOICE

I don't see how you can run a computer
and believe in all that guru stuff.

MACKENZIE

That is a shame....

MacKenzie watches as the Technician leaves, then turns to the postcard, reaches out, and touches it for two beats.

The camera DOLLYS AROUND and ZOOMS IN to a VERY TIGHT ANGLE on his eyes.

DISSOLVE TO:

A TROPICAL SEASHORE -- NEAR THE BREAKERS -- NIGHT

Some silhouetted palm trees blow gently against a dark-purple night sky with hundreds of shimmering stars and a new moon. SHHHHH, SHHHHH...we can hear the repetitive sound of the SURF breaking against the white sand of the beach in the f.g.. The gentle breakers sparkle with faint highlights of the moonlight on their foamy crests.

(PRODUCTION NOTE: We can SEE that although the scene looks realistic, it is a three-dimensional hologram projection; and we can HEAR the sound of the waves throughout the entire scene.)

NOREEN'S VOICE

A man being chased by a tiger climbs out on the branch of a tree...

The camera PULLS BACK SLOWLY...now we can SEE that the seascape is in the dome over Noreen's bed.

NOREEN'S VOICE (CONT.)

The branch bends dangerously low over a dried-up well.

PANNING DOWN and WIDENING SLOWLY

NOREEN'S VOICE (CONT.)

A pair of mice gnaw the branch on which he hangs, and below he can see a mass of writhing snakes at the bottom of the well.

ARRIVING at the bed beneath the dome, we can HARDLY SEE Noreen or Jeff. The room is nearly black; only the hologram above them casts a faint, blue glow. Jeff is lying on his side, wearing a dark-blue-silk, karate-style dressing gown. She is in her light-mauve-silk nightgown. Lying on her back, she stares at the hologram as Jeff's gentle foreplay continues...

NOREEN'S VOICE (CONT.)

On the wall of the well is a blade of grass, and on its tip is a drop of honey...(beat).

So what does he do?

JEFF

I don't know...he says his prayers.

NOREEN

No...he licks up the honey.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VARIOUS CUTS of them and Jeff's attempts at foreplay as the conversation continues...

JEFF

And that's supposed to be the meaning of life?

NOREEN

It's a paradigm his guru taught him...(beat). I like the metaphor. It's so hopeful....

JEFF

Hopeful? It's absurd...that's what I hate about those gurus...everything's always an enigma....If they have something to say, why don't they just get to the point...?

You could summarize the moral of that story in five words: 'get it while you can.'

NOREEN

(she laughs)

Mac's right...you do oversimplify.

JEFF

Clean thinking is like clean programming...no unnecessary steps or data.

NOREEN

But you're turning the sublime into the ridiculous....

JEFF

Is that the kind of stuff MacKenzie's pumping into NANUC?

NOREEN

It's part of it....

JEFF

That junk will just clutter up his head. Right now we need clear thinking...not a bunch of philosophical mumbo jumbo.

You know you can't go backwards... once NANUC learns something he can't forget it.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED;

JEFF (CONT.)

What if NANUC can't solve the riddle of life...? You run the risk of trapping him in a bunch of puzzles that he'll go on trying to solve forever.... Think of the processing time that wastes!

NOREEN

Wastes?! Jeff, that's the highest form of cerebral thought!

JEFF

What is...? Some hopeless tale about a guy that's doomed?

NOREEN

No...the act of contemplation.

JEFF

Right now NANUC is sitting there contemplating how to get rid of 500 million people.... You know, the more I think of it, the more I agree with George.

NOREEN

What? Shut down Nanuc?! You just spent 10 years of your life on that program...you'd just throw that away?

JEFF

Not exactly...but there's a lesson there...

NOREEN

Now you sound like Mac!

JEFF

What if I do...even gurus learn from their mistakes....

NOREEN

You didn't make a mistake...your program runs perfectly...so does Mac's...(beat). Why shut down NANUC just because you don't like what he says?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF

Noreen...I'm not ready for a computer to start telling us who should live or who should die....

NOREEN

You saw the data! You can't contest that! (beat) We need NANUC to survive!

JEFF

No you don't, Noreen. Nature will find a way to cleanse her own wounds.

NOREEN

But millions of people will die!

JEFF

So be it...our civilization has been digging its grave for a long time... now it's time to pay the piper....

NOREEN

You're mixing metaphors...

JEFF

So what...each makes its own point.

NOREEN

So...you'd just lie back and let calamity roll over you like one of those waves (as she points to the hologram).

JEFF

The forces of Nature are irresistible. You can't tinker with them...for better or for worse.

NOREEN

But, Jeff...this is a crisis!

JEFF

Crisis is how Nature works...it's part of the process....Ice ages, volcanoes, floods, droughts, pestilence, plagues... they're all part of it...and now it's pollution.... As big a problem as that may seem to us, it's just another page in Nature's diary.... But we'll muddle through ok if we can resist the temptation to blow each other to kingdom come....

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOREEN

But can't you see what will happen
if we just sit around and do nothing!

JEFF

No...I can't. (beat) I wouldn't
pretend to be a seer, or a guru....
We can't know what will happen in
the future...neither can NANUC....

PAN AND ZOOM back up INTO THE DOME...

JEFF (CONT.)

We're trapped in the present...we
can only see what's around us....

DISSOLVE TO:

CLOSE ON A BABBLING BROOK -- NIGHT

The moon sparkles on the surface of a small brook in
the Central Valley of California. As the camera PULLS
UP AND BACK SLOWLY we can SEE the brook winding toward
us through the Diabolo Range in the b.g.. From the
quality of the image, it is apparent that this is not
a hologram.

As a leaf floats by in the f.g....

JEFF (CONT.)

...we're like a leaf floating down
the River of Life...we can never
know what's around the next bend....

The BUBBLING SWIRL of the brook comes into the audio f.g.,
and the camera HOLDS a long time so that we can SEE a lot
of dessert life. A few rodents scurry along. A bat flies
by. An ant crawls onto the lens. A skinny wolf approaches
to take a drink from the brook. MIXED with the BABBLE
of the brook, we can HEAR MOSQUITOES, a GENTLE BREEZE,
and the SCURRYING of the wildlife in the bushes.

Suddenly, and for no apparent reason, the wolf takes off
and disappears into the thicket. The rodents pause, look
around, and scurry under nearby rocks. The ant freezes
still, then runs down off the lens. The MOSQUITO SOUNDS
STOP.

A few beats later we hear a GROWING DEEP RUMBLE. The
earth starts to tremble. A few seconds later, the RUMBLE
SUBSIDES and the earth stops trembling. We can HEAR some

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAND TUMBLING DOWN SOME ROCKS somewhere nearby. A few more beats, then...

CRACK...THUD! The entire foreground sheers away in the middle of the brook, creating a water fall. There is more RUMBLING and trembling. Then, as suddenly as it started, it ends, and all is SILENT except for the SOUND of the WATERFALL.

CUT TO:

WIDE INSIDE THE CONTROL ROOM OF A NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

Two men are seated at a compact, computerized console in the middle of a large control room. Behind them, creating a huge, arcing back wall, is a giant, computerized annunciator-schematic of the plant. The schematic is very elaborate and very detailed. It traces every process in each of the three reactors. There are a lot of complex highlights revealing the flow of electricity through a connecting grid of transformers, as well as the flow of coolants through the reactors.

Above the schematic is a bold, illuminated sign that reads: "Southern California Power & Light Company, Diabolo Reactors."

The PLANT MANAGER is propped in a chair reading a book with his feet up on the Control-Terminal console. His ASSISTANT MANAGER is playing a computer chess game on one of the console's three monitors; the other two have intricate alpha-numeric and symbolic displays that change every few seconds. The displays on both these monitors are identical, and each has a flashing cursor message that we can SEE reads: "Systems Normal."

The RING of a phone on the console. The Manager looks up at it, waits for it to RING AGAIN, then leans forward with some difficulty, trying to reach it without losing the chair's balance. On the THIRD RING he succeeds.

MANAGER

Hello...(a few beats)...right....

He hangs up the phone, and while settling down with his book again, glances over at the Assistant Manager...

MANAGER (CONT.)

Keep your eyes on the coolers...the river shifted up north a ways....

The Assistant looks over, nods "ok," and continues playing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ASSISTANT MANAGER
(slamming the counter)
Damn this thing!

MANAGER
(looking over his book)
You can't beat the machine...

ASSISTANT MANAGER
Well, it beats reading!

The room starts to tremble and we hear a low RUMBLE. Snapping to attention, the Assistant Manager looks up at the wall display. A beat later, the trembling and the rumble SUBSIDE. The MANAGER just glances at the wall, still reading.

ASSITANT MANAGER
What the hell's that...

MANAGER
Prob'ly an earthquake...ya don't
have them back East, do ya?

A few beats, a COUPLE OF COMPUTER BEEPS from the chess game; the Assistant Manager sits down slowly...

ASSISTANT MANAGER
Everything seems to be o.k....

MANAGER
(still unconcerned)
This thing's built like a brick
shit house...relax...you're friend's
getting impatient.

ANGLE ON ASSISTANT MANAGER AT CHESS MONITOR

He stares at the screen, and a smile comes to his face as he thinks of a move. He touches a key to enter the move...

BUZZZZZZZZZZZZZZ!

ANGLE ON MANAGER -- POV ASSISTANT

The manager looks over his book; he's a little concerned now, but not a lot...

MANAGER
Hey, what are you doin' there?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Assistant Manager is naively surprised...but not scared.

ASSISTANT MANAGER

Trying to play chess...

The BUZZZZZZZZZZ won't go away, despite a few additional commands entered into the keyboard hastily by the A.M..

BACK ON THE MANAGER

He sits bolt upright in his chair and looks over at the wall schematic of the plant; the camera PANS over to it. A red light is flashing.

MANAGER'S VOICE

Status!

ON THE ASSISTANT MANAGER -- AT HIS TERMINAL

He's controlled, but somewhat frantic as he keys in more queries. A beat of SILENCE, then a BEEP and the BUZZZZZZ continues.

ASSISTANT MANAGER

The pressure's down in Charlie!

RING...a phone in the b.g..

CLOSE ON THREE RED PHONES

Their official signage identifies them as belonging to: "Reactor #1, Reactor #2, and Reactor #3," but someone has used a Magic Marker to rename them: "Arnie, Bernie, and Charlie." The Manager's hand ENTERS FRAME and lifts the "Charlie" receiver, and the camera FOLLOWS the receiver to a TIGHT SHOT of the Manager.

MANAGER

What the hell's going on down there?

CUT TO:

WIDE INSIDE THE CHARLIE REACTOR -- POV BEHIND A LEAKING PIPE

THROUGH THE LEAKING WATER we can SEE a hard-hatted, black maintenance man clutching a red phone receiver to his right ear. His left hand presses hard against his free left ear to block the LOUD HISSSSS of leaking steam. He SHOUTS...

MAINTENANCE MAN

It's raining down here!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BACK ON THE MANAGER -- TIGHT

In the b.g. the BUZZZ continues...

MANAGER

Cut the jokes, what's going on?

BACK ON THE MAINTENANCE MAN

MAINTENANCE MAN

It's 217...there's a block somewhere
and she's burst.

BACK ON THE MANAGER

In the b.g., the Assistant Manager is putting on his
jacket...just in case...

MANAGER

(to Assistant)

Where the fuck you think you're
going...(then to phone) no, not
you...(back to Assistant)...shut
down Charlie!...(back to phone)
get out of there, the water's hot!

BACK TO WIDE SHOT OF CONTROL ROOM

The room starts to tremble a bit and RUMBLE...then
SILENCE again, except for the BUZZZ.

BEEEEEEEEEEP! A new warning signal.

TIGHT ON THE WALL SCHEMATIC -- FOUR NEW FLASHING LED'S

BACK ON THE MAINTENANCE MAN -- DOLLYING AROUND REACTOR

He's punching a few buttons on an electrical control
board frantically...then he bolts toward the camera
as the building starts to tremble and RUMBLE again.

CRAAAAACK! The concrete floor in front of him separates
into a 3-foot-wide, six-foot-long gap which he
narrowly escapes falling into by jumping over on his
way to the door. LOTS MORE HISSING and a lot of
spurting water in the f.g. as more pipes break.

BACK ON MANAGER -- SUPER TIGHT

MANAGER

Shut down everything!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TIGHT ON THE ASSISTANT MANAGER

The Assistant Manager starts keying the computer like he never keyed it before. There's panic in his eyes and a beat later a new WHIRP, WHIRP begins. Then, as the trembling subsides...

ASSISTANT MANAGER

I can't pull the rods!

ANGLE CLOSE ON MONITOR #1

Monitor shows the Reactor temperatures to be going thru the stratosphere. We HEAR telephone DIALING in b.g..

CLOSE ON ASSISTANT MANAGER'S EYES

We see the Monitor reflected in his eye; it starts flashing. He looks over to Monitor #2.

CLOSE ON MONITOR #2

We HEAR a third, more compelling warning BEEP. The Monitor shows: "Mass Critical." A cursor clock on the display shows: "Time Remaining: 1:17."

ASSISTANT MANAGER'S VOICE

They're going to blow!

BACK ON WIDE SHOT

The Assistant Manager swings around, grabs his jacket off the back of his chair and bolts toward the door.

ASSISTANT MANAGER

I'm getting out of here!

The Manager lowers the phone from his ear and covers the mouthpiece with his other hand, looks over at the Assistant Manager and casually asks:

TIGHT ON MANAGER

MANAGER

Where will you go?

CUT TO:

EXT. EL SUGUNDO NUCLEAR POWER PLANT -- ANGLE ON THE BACK DOOR -- NIGHT

A red light marked "Evacuation" flashes above the door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

There is a LOUD WARNING BEEP from a loudspeaker in the parking lot. The door opens and the Assistant Manager bolts out and charges down the stairs. The sounds of others RUNNING, CAR DOORS SLAMMING, ENGINES STARTING.

The camera begins a very long, slow PULL BACK. The Assistant Manager's car races down the driveway of the plant along with 20 other cars; still more are SCREECHING out of their parking spaces in the b.g. as the plant workers frantically try to escape.

The ZOOM BACK continues and the sounds of the warning beeper and escaping cars SUBDUE to near silence as the plant becomes dwarfed by the hillsides it's nestled in. One beat after arriving at the END OF THE ZOOM, the plant explodes in a SHATTERING BLAST creating an enormous, bright mushroom cloud that silhouettes the skeletal remains of trees in the f.g.

CUT TO:

INSIDE A RUSSIAN MILITARY COMPUTER FACILITY -- CLOSE ON A MONITOR

On the monitor there is a computer-graphic map of the U.S.A.; a bright green dot is flashing in the area of El Segundo, California. The RUSSIAN voice of a COMPUTER OPERATOR in the b.g...

(PRODUCTION NOTE: All Russian is translated in SUBTITLES.)

RUSSIAN OPERATOR

What is that?

WIDE ON ROOM

There are three Control Consoles and a massive bank of 50 monitors. GENERAL #1 has been randomly scanning them, sort of pacing.

GENERAL #1

What is what?

RUSSIAN OPERATOR

There is a detonation here...

General #1 walks over to have a look.

CLOSE ON THE MAP MONITOR -- POV GENERAL #1

GENERAL #1'S VOICE

Enhance the image, please.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The computer-graphic PANS AND ZOOMS on the monitor until California fills the screen and the position of the dot is pin-pointed and identified as Coalinga, California.

DOLLYING AROUND to TIGHT ON GENERAL #1

He casts his glance away from the monitor, staring at nothing in particular, thinking, wondering...

GENERAL #1
(to himself)
Why would they bomb themselves?
(beat, then turning to the
Operator)...was there no
trajectory?

ANGLE ON TEN MONITORS -- POV OPERATOR

The monitors nearest the Computer Operator show the "as aimed" trajectories of Canada, America, China, Russia, and the NATO Alliance members. We SEE that the trajectories are all slowly changing.

RUSSIAN OPERATOR'S VOICE
It is hard to tell...everything keeps
changing...

BACK ON GENERAL #1

He keeps thinking as the camera slowly PULLS IN; then his puzzled expression slowly turns into a sly grin.

GENERAL #1
It is a trick!

CUT TO:

THE LOBBY OF "THE VAULT" IN OTTAWA -- NIGHT

Nicknamed "The Vault" because of its total security, the Canadian War Control Center is buried a half mile below the surface in Ottawa and connected to an inconspicuous-looking, small lobby building by a bomb-proof, multi-stage, tube-like elevator.

There is surprisingly little in the lobby: a SERGEANT sits at a Security Console behind which there are six monitors showing the key security points at The Vault, including the entrance, the elevator interior, the lobby area, the helipad outside, and the upper and lower-level elevator entrances.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON ENTRANCE DOOR -- POV SERGEANT

The LOUD WHINE of a Tactical Helicopter's powerful engines GETS LOUDER as the entrance door opens and Moinsleau bursts into the lobby.

GEORGE

Where are they?

WIDE ON THE ROOM

SERGEANT

They're in The Vault, sir.

George walks briskly over to the elevator and presses the call button; nothing happens.

SERGEANT

Uh, sir...the tube is sealed.

GEORGE

Well, unseal it!

SERGEANT

I'm sorry, sir, you'll have to EYE-Dentify.

CUT TO:

INSIDE THE VAULT -- ON BAUSCH AT THE HOLOGRAM WORLD MAP

On the map, world-wide weapons' trajectories are slowly moving around, as they were on the Russian monitors. We hear the others in the b.g.

PERIGNON'S VOICE

I doesn't matter whether he likes it or not...

THOMPKIN'S VOICE

But it would be so much easier if he goes along... it wouldn't look so much like a military take over... more people would accept it....

A flashing yellow dot appears in California accompanied by a pulsing, low-level BEEP. It catches Bausch's attention, and he steps in for a closer look.

BAUSCH

What have we here...?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PERIGNON'S VOICE

Huh?

Bausch turns to the others and points to the map; his finger actually penetrates the hologram projection's airy transparency (revealing that there is no solid screen). His eye twitch is acting up now.

BAUSCH

Here...look at this...

WIDE ON ROOM

Perignon hoists his bulk out of his chair and waddles over to the map. Thompkins remains seated, snuffing out a cigarette. The air in the room is heavy with smoke and in the b.g. there is a low BEEP EVERY SECOND from the digital clock on the NANUC Pod.

Bausch looks back at the map, studying it.

BAUSCH

It looks like a detonation.

Thompkins looks over at the map suddenly...

THOMPKINS

A what!?

Perignon's at the map now...

PERIGNON

It's a nuke, alright!

Perignon turns to the NANUC Pod on the conference table.

PERIGNON (CONT.)

(to NANUC)

I thought we agreed to wait until Moinsleau got here.

NANUC

I did. That is not my target.

PERIGNON

Then what is it?

NANUC

I am not sure...but it needn't affect our plans.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A CHIME from the elevator entrance signals someone's arrival. Perignon and Bausch look over to the tube's sliding door...

THOMPKINS

Good...we can get on with it, now.

The elevator door slides open and Moinsleau steps into the room. He glances at the map...

GEORGE

Why are we still on Alert? Didn't Maurice call you?

ANGLE ON PERIGNON -- POV MOISLEAU

PERIGNON

Oh, he called...

GEORGE'S VOICE

(interrupting)

...and told you to end this Alert!

ON GEORGE

GEORGE (CONT.)

Why hasn't that been done?

BAUSCH'S VOICE

It's not that easy...

ANGLE ON BAUSCH -- HE GESTURES TO THE CONFERENCE TABLE

BAUSCH (CONT.)

...why don't we sit down and discuss this like civilized men...

ON GEORGE -- POV BAUSCH

He hesitates, points at the map, and protests:

GEORGE

What have you been doing here?

ANGLE ON PERIGNON

PERIGNON

Sit down, Moinsleau...

ON GEORGE -- PERIGNON'S POV

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Shocked now, and getting angry, George starts to reply to Perignon, but NANUC interrupts...

GEORGE

Listen here, Perignon...

NANUC'S VOICE

Do you want to save the world,
George...

ON CONFERENCE TABLE -- POV MOINSLEAU

NANUC (CONT.)

...or see it lost?

Thompkins looks up at George; he's lighting up again.

THOMPKINS

...to be, or not to be... isn't
that how the saying goes?

ON GEORGE -- POV NANUC -- WIDENING SLOWLY

Thrusting an accusing finger at the map...

GEORGE

Look at that...that insanity...
has NANUC duped you into believing
that you can survive that?

PERIGNON

We happen to agree with NANUC...

GEORGE

Agree with what...that nonsense
about controlled genocide?
(beat, then to NANUC)...
NANUC, what do you care about
this...why the humanitarian
fanaticism...why this urgent
compulsion to save the world?

CLOSE ON NANUC

NANUC

To insure my own survival, George,
I must insure yours...

ON MOINSLEAU -- CLOSE

GEORGE

We can work it out together without
your help, thank you.....

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BACK ON NANUC

NANUC

Your concept of working together is obsolete...(beat).

The United Nations doesn't work. Summitry doesn't work. No form of democratic approach will ever be able to control a problem like this. It is too big. Societies, like people, are too self-centered. No one can agree. There are too many compromises.

ON PERIGNON

He's a little bored by all this philosophical talk and wants to get things going...

PERIGNON

Go over that 'brotherhood' stuff, NANUC. I think George might be interested in that.

WIDE ON ROOM -- DOLLYING TO ARRIVE AT MOINSLEAU

NANUC

The 'Event' I have planned will restore the world's ecological balance...but the rest is up to you. There are no guarantees that you will survive forever...in fact, you probably won't unless you finally unite into a global brotherhood with a single leader powerful enough to enforce the limitations necessary to maintain a positive ecological cycle.

BACK ON PERIGNON

PERIGNON

(smiling slyly)

Get the idea...?

CUT TO:

INSIDE THE AMERICAN WAR ROOM -- AT THE CONTROL CENTER --
TIGHT ON THE PRESIDENT

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The President sits at a Video-Phone (VP) Console. The camera DOLLYS from TIGHT on the President, around behind him, to CLOSE ON THE VP MONITOR.

PRESIDENT

No, Nikita, it is not a trick.
There has been an earthquake
and it has destroyed one of our
nuclear generating plants...

The President is speaking slowly and precisely.
A RUSSIAN TRANSLATION of what he is saying can be heard
THROUGH a CONSOLE LOUDSPEAKER.

On the VP monitor now, there's a heavy-set, burly-
looking man wearing a dark suit. Behind him is a Russian
flag. We can HEAR ENGLISH THROUGH THE LOUDSPEAKER as
he says (IN RUSSIAN)...

NIKITA

I am not sure I believe you.
What about the rest of it?

PRESIDENT'S VOICE

Nikita, we have no intentions of
starting any kind of a war...we
are only responding to your Alert.

NIKITA

No, no...it is your computer.
First a strategy to kill 500
million people, and now
continual target refinements.
How can I believe you?

ANGLE ON THE PRESIDENT -- POV VIDEO-PHONE MONITOR

In the b.g. we can SEE a huge, 8-foot-diameter,
3-dimensional, hologram globe of the world on which
anything of military importance is depicted. Weapons
trajectories can be seen rotating around slowly and
randomly across the globe. CLARK RICHARDSON and
GENERAL LEIGHTON are at the globe, surveying it.
In the far b.g. we can SEE part of the vast American
War Operations Center (AWOC), which dwarfs the Canadian
Submarine Base Control Center. There are ten, 20-foot-
diameter, flat-hologram maps of specific countries and
trajectories across the 200-foot-wide back wall. In
front are ten 50-foot-wide rows of computer and
communications consoles. We can HEAR general COMMOTION
(not panicky) and lots of RINGING PHONES, BEEPS, and
BUZZES.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PRESIDENT

We did not originate that strategy,
we only intercepted it...and, to be
honest, Nikita, we don't understand
what's going on either...

In the b.g. we can hear Richardson and Leighton's
comments OVERLAPPING the President's...

LEIGHTON

Fucking computers...

RICHARDSON

There's no rhyme or reason to
it...it's totally illogical...

Leighton picks up a nearby phone and dials; a beat
later:

LEIGHTON

That you, Len?

NIKITA'S VOICE

To be 'honest' with you Brenner,
I don't believe you.

PRESIDENT

We are working on this right
now, trying to stop it...

LEIGHTON

There has to be a malfunction...
now do something...

Leighton slams down the phone. Another one RINGS.

NIKITA'S VOICE

Don't think you can outsmart me,
Brenner...I am not one to be
tricked...

Leighton answers the other phone...

LEIGHTON

AWOC Control...Leighton...

ANOTHER VOICE over a different CONSOLE LOUDSPEAKER.

ANOTHER VOICE

Mr. President...?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PRESIDENT

(turning to "another voice")
Just a minute...(then back to Nikita)
...listen, Nikita, just be patient...

LEIGHTON

(calling over to President)
Nikita's right, Moinsleau won't take
any calls...

PRESIDENT (CONT.)

...we're trying to do everything
we can...

NIKITA'S VOICE

We will not hesitate to destroy you!

PRESIDENT

I understand that...and I will
call you again shortly. Thank you
Nikita...

A BEEP from the console. The President stares into
the (now blank) VP monitor...STILL OVERLAPPING...

ANOTHER VOICE

(through loudspeaker)
Mr. President...

LEIGHTON

No, just keep trying...

PRESIDENT

(to "another voice")
Yes, Burroughs?

ANOTHER VOICE

You'd better open COM on monitor
twenty seven...

PRESIDENT

(confused)
Global Network?...Now?

ANOTHER VOICE

Uh, yes sir...Global Network.

As the Preident gets up to go over to the monitors
behind the hologram globe in the b.g., Richardson
turns to him.

RICHARDSON

I'll get it for you, Henry.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DOLLY with the President as he crosses the room to monitor #27 in the b.g., on which we can SEE a GLOBAL NETWORK NEWS REPORTER. Richardson arrives at the monitor shortly before the President and TURNS UP THE SOUND. Leighton is still too interested in the hologram globe to pay much attention to the monitor and his comment OVERLAPS as the President passes.

LEIGHTON

Probably the goddamn earthquake...

PRESIDENT

I'll deal with that, you just get the computer fixed.

GNN REPORTER

...in Ottawa. Only hours ago Parliament rejected the Canadian-American Water Pact after a surprise move by the Prime Minister to table the Bill...

Getting closer to the monitor now, we can SEE (from the President's POV) a small two-story building and a helipad behind the GNN Reporter. Moinsleau's tactical helicopter is parked on the helipad. Richardson turns to the President.

RICHARDSON

No wonder he's not taking any calls.

GNN REPORTER (CONT.)

Sources say that Moinsleau was his own worst enemy. His speech created an almost religious fervor that grew into a tumultuous uproar of national pride resulting in a unanimous rejection of the Pact after an argumentative recess.

CLOSE ON MONITOR #27 -- FILLING THE FRAME

The GNN Reporter DISSOLVES to location footage shot during the House session. The camera PANS across the scene then ZOOMS IN on Ned and Chuck as they get up to leave.

GNN REPORTER (CONT.)

The abrupt departure of American Secretary of State, Edward Steckler, before the recess has created speculation of possible American economic sanctions -- particularly in the sensitive area of computer data. There are even rumors of American military intervention...

LEIGHTON'S VOICE

Who's he kidding...!?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RICHARDSON'S VOICE

Shut up, Leighton...

PRESIDENT'S VOICE

Ned's temper'll get the better of
him one day...

The GNN Reporter returns to the scene and gestures
behind him, to the helipad...

GNN REPORTER

Moisleau arrived here at The Vault
an hour ago and is sealed away
with his top military advisors
a half-mile below me.

The Reporter presses his ear-plug closer, trying to
hear something...

GNN REPORTER (CONT.)

However, why he is going to the unusual
lengths of addressing the world through
a global television broadcast isn't
known.

Again, this is live from Ottawa
where in just a moment Prime
Minister George Moinsleau will be...

TSHHHHH...static; and the picture is lost, becoming a
jumble of lines and zig-zags.

DISSOLVE TO:

THE SAME STATIC -- HETV VERSION

The static of monitor 27's image very subtly changes,
becoming a bit clearer and more colorful; there seems
to a shift in the AUDIO too, since the TSHHHHH is a bit
CRISPER.

CUT TO:

HETV IMAGE OF A ROSE BLOOMING -- SLOW MOTION -- TIGHT

NEW ANNOUNCER'S VOICE

(over gentle music)

...once flourished throughout the
Southern borders of Canada and was
a perennial favorite...

NOREEN'S VOICE

(overlapping),

It must be on their end...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF'S VOICE

Switch it back.

WIDEN as Noreen switches back to the STATIC and TURNS DOWN THE VOLUME. Then PAN and FOLLOW her from the HETV back over to the bed where she gestures her empty champagne glass to Jeff.

NOREEN

More?

JEFF

No, thanks...could you put on some coffee?

She heads for the kitchen, LEAVING FRAME, while the camera PULLS IN SLOWLY on Jeff. He's still in his dressing gown, and he readjusts the pillows so that he can sit up.

NOREEN

(as she leaves)

What do you figure George is going to say?

JEFF

Probably something about the Alert.

NOREEN'S VOICE

No...they don't go on TV for Alerts anymore.

JEFF

This one's different...the way NANUC is feeling anything could happen... he might have started World War Three already.

The CLANKING of coffee mugs in the kitchen as Noreen calls back...

NOREEN'S VOICE

No way. You heard George. He'd never let NANUC do that!

JEFF

Oh, I'm not worried about George... he may flip flop and temporize a lot, but at least he's got integrity (beat)...and I still agree with him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Noreen ENTERS FRAME and hands Jeff a mug of coffee, putting her's on the table beside the bed. Then she slips on her mauve-velvet dressing gown and sits on the edge of the bed next to him. The camera DOLLYS around for a TIGHT SHOT of Noreen from JEFF's POV and in the b.g. we can see the HETV screen.

NOREEN

Let's not start that again! No matter what you say, NANUC's information is valid...the problem does exist...and someone has to do something.

The static clears and Moinsleau appears on the HETV. He is sitting at the conference table in the Vault and the NANUC Pod is next to him. The AUDIO BEGINS A BEAT LATE, catching George amidst a sentence.

(PRODUCTION NOTE: George's HETV broadcast continues uninterrupted throughout this scene. All of Noreen and Jeff's comments OVERLAP George's, but are SLIGHTLY LOWER.)

GEORGE

...evening fellow citizens of the world.

Noreen turns and glances at the HETV.

JEFF

Yeah, but if NANUC's strategy fell into the wrong hands, I hate to think what that something might be....

GEORGE

As most of you know, Parliament today rejected the Canadian-American Water Pact...

NOREEN

It can't happen...I'd never let it. Anyway...see...we're both wrong...it's about the Water Pact...sound's like an appology.

The camera ANGLES PAST Noreen and ZOOMS IN SLOWLY until the HETV screen FILLS THE FRAME.

JEFF'S VOICE

What did you mean by that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOREEN'S VOICE

It's not about the Alert...it's about the Water Pact....

GEORGE (CONT.)

The decision not to sell water to America wasn't an easy one... particularly because it goes against Canada's long tradition of international goodwill and cooperation.

JEFF'S VOICE

No, the other part...about not letting NANUC get into the wrong hands....

NOREEN'S VOICE

Oh...that....

GEORGE (CONT.)

Throughout modern history, Canada has maintained political neutrality and moral integrity. We have spear-headed peace initiatives, staunchly supported the efforts of the United Nations, and helped feed and clothe millions of people around the world less fortunate than ourselves.

JEFF'S VOICE

What could you do?

NOREEN'S VOICE

I'm not sure...

JEFF'S VOICE

You see, that's the problem... there's not enough control.

NOREEN'S VOICE

We could always nuke him! (they share a laugh).

GEORGE (CONT.)

However, in the last few hours I have received hundreds of calls and telegrams condemning our action as 'barbaric,' 'selfish,' and 'unjustified.'

JEFF'S VOICE

Hey...that gives me an idea!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A few beats later...

NOREEN'S VOICE

Well...you going to tell me?

GEORGE (CONT.)

Let me assure you that this action, and others that you will soon learn about, are totally justified.

The fact is, there is no water to sell...

JEFF'S VOICE

I wonder if NANUC has ever seriously thought about death...

GEORGE (CONT.)

...what's worse, it is only one of many catastrophies about to engulf the entire planet.

NOREEN'S VOICE

What difference would that make?

JEFF'S VOICE

One of the things that's been bothering me is how casually NANUC can hand out the death sentance...

GEORGE (CONT.)

We have known for decades that over-population and over-pollution would one day threaten our civilization.

JEFF'S VOICE (CONT.)

It's all so simple for NANUC, because he doesn't understand what death really is....

NOREEN'S VOICE

How could he...he's a machine....

GEORGE (CONT.)

Now new data has proven beyond a shadow of a doubt that the day of reckoning has arrived.

JEFF'S VOICE

Right...whereas you and I know that we'll die someday...touch wood! We're constantly reminded of it...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GEORGE (CONT.)

Our NANUC computer (as he gestures to the NANUC Pod) has proven that the earth is dying...

JEFF'S VOICE (CONT.)

...we can see and feel ourselves growing older...we hurt ourselves... get sick...so we come into contact with death in some small way every day. But NANUC never does....

GEORGE (CONT.)

Nature's innate processes of regeneration -- which we have taken for granted for so long -- are now terminally decaying.

NOREEN'S VOICE

Sure he does...half of Mac's lessons are about death in one form or another....

GEORGE (CONT.)

Even today the world cannot support its burdgeoning population. This year more than one hundred thousand people will die of starvation and another thousand species will become extinct.

JEFF'S VOICE

But those are just philosophical puzzles...they aren't the real thing...(beat). I'll bet that if NANUC could experience a realistic feeling of death that he'd look for a life-oriented solution to this problem instead of recommending that a half a billion people be exterminated...

GEORGE (CONT.)

In a mere twenty years, ninety percent of all life on earth will perish...

JEFF'S VOICE (CONT.)

...because it's the common realization of mortality that is beginning to draw all the people of the world together into one, unified brotherhood.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOREEN'S VOICE

What brotherhood? The world is on Alert!

JEFF'S VOICE

I know...it's ironic, but the very fact that we haven't blown each other off the face of the earth proves what I'm saying...

GEORGE (CONT.)

In an over-populated world with limited resources, the Western way which encourages the pursuit of material gain is largely to blame for the predicament we're in.

NOREEN'S VOICE

What are you saying?

JEFF'S VOICE

That the threat of a nuclear holocaust has done more to create a global sense of a world community than any other factor in history.

For five milleniums, man has solved most of his disputes with warfare...

GEORGE (CONT.)

This problem has grown to such vast proportions that there is nothing that science or technology can do to help...and it is naive to think that the nations of the world could ever agree on what should be done... at least not in time to save us from this tragic and needless fate.

JEFF'S VOICE (CONT.)

But now war is obsolete...because all of us realize that we are equally vulnerable...and for the first time in history men and women from all nations and creeds have been forced to work together to avoid armageddon. That's a positive sign...

GEORGE (CONT.)

But the situation isn't hopeless. NANUC has formulated a strategy that can extricate the world from the

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GEORGE (CONT.)

clutches of death and provide for
our survival in the future.

JEFF VOICE (CONT.)

...ideologies that once affirmed
their own infallability are slowly
giving way to doctrines which
encourage mutual cooperation.

NOREEN'S VOICE

Shhhh...wait a minute...listen
to this....

NANUC

In order for the human race to survive
a positive ecological cycle must be
restored and maintained.

To restore the balance, the world's
population must be reduced by
500 million people immediately.

Therefore, at midnight tonight fifteen
low-yield neutron devices will be
released to trim the population and
eliminate certain concentrations of
pollution-generating industrial
activity.

JEFF'S VOICE

Hey...hang on...!

NOREEN'S VOICE

Shhh...wait....

JEFF'S VOICE

Where'd he get that scenario?

NOREEN'S VOICE

Shut up....

NANUC (CONT.)

The targets have been carefully
selected to avoid presenting a
threat to any particular nation.

JEFF'S VOICE

That's not my program...!

NOREEN'S VOICE

Please, Jeffery....

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NANUC (CONT.)

Any weapons deployment other than our own will be considered an offensive gesture and we will retaliate with our full arsenal, resulting in total annihilation.

JEFF'S VOICE

This is crazy...!

NOREEN'S VOICE

I know...but we'll never be able to figure it out if we don't know what he says!

NANUC (CONT.)

This event merely sets the stage for your survival...a positive ecological cycle will be restored and you will have another chance.

However, there are no guarantees that you will be successful...in fact, the odds are that this scenario will have to be repeated.

To succeed you will have to establish a new world government that is impartial to xenophobic, nationalistic interests...a global tribunal that can strictly enforce rigid limitations on pollution and consumption of the world's resources.

Immediately after the Event...at 12:30 am, Eastern Standard Time...I will outline my plans for this phase.

GEORGE

I urge you not to panic...only one in twenty of you will die...(beat).

The loss is small...the lesson is worth it.

NOREEN'S VOICE

My God! He's operating in FFLIP II!

JEFF'S VOICE

That business about the small loss and the big lesson...that's straight MacKenzie!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GEORGE (CONT.)

Goodnight....

Moinsleau's image blinks off and there is a beat of STATIC before a speechless GNN Reporter returns to the screen.

WIDE ON THE ROOM

Noreen jumps up, rushes over to the HETV, and TURNS IT OFF.

JEFF

I hate to say 'I told you....'

NOREEN

(overlapping)

It's not Mac...it's me...I did it.

GNN REPORTER

Uh...ladies and gentlemen...uh...

CUT TO:

BACK IN THE VAULT -- ANGLE ON PERIGNON -- TIGHT

He pulls the cigar out of his mouth and blows the smoke up at the ceiling, where he is staring. A beat later he slowly looks down and across our POV.

PERIGNON

Very good...you're a real pro George...(beat). I especially liked that part about the 'small loss' and the 'big lesson!'

BAUSCH'S VOICE

Yes...that was excellent!

THOMPKINS' VOICE

(overlapping)

So far...so good....

Perignon now casts his glance somewhere about two feet away.

PERIGNON

What do you say, NANUC?

WIDE ON THE ROOM

Bausch is in the process of retracting an HETV camera back into its wall enclosure across from where George is seated next to the NANUC Pod (as he appeared during the broadcast).

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Thompkins is seated adjacent to Moinsleau. Perignon paces in front of the hologram world map.

NANUC'S VOICE

Does it really matter...? If it isn't George it will be someone else... but I think I would still prefer him.

THOMPKINS

Think?! You don't 'think,' NANUC, you're supposed to know.

PERIGNON

That's good enough for me...(beat), we knew you could do it, George.

At ease soldier...

NEW WIDER POV

We SEE now that there is a SOLDIER in the corner of the room with a gun aimed at Moinsleau. On the SNAP of Perignon's fingers the Soldier lowers his gun and assumes the "at ease" position; the butt-end of the gun BAMMS on the floor.

PERIGNON

(to the NANUC Pod)

Access the tube, NANUC...(beat, now to the Soldier)...dismissed.

The SSSSSSSSS of decompressing air as the tube-elevator door opens and the Soldier marches to it and gets in. Then SSSSSSSSSSS as the elevator door closes, and CHIME as it leaves. During this Moinsleau buries his face in his hands, defeated, and Perignon relights his cigar.

CUT TO:

BACK IN NOREEN'S APARTMENT OFFICE -- AT NANUC POD --
TIGHT ON NOREEN

Her hands are resting on the keyboard and she's staring at the monitor on which it says: "For Security Reasons Access To The Operating Mode Is Temporarily Locked."

She types in a few commands, the screen wipes clear, then the same message appears again.

NOREEN

How could I have been so dumb!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF'S VOICE

(in the b.g.)

How could you know the swami was mad?

NOREEN

It isn't Mac, Jeff! I locked NANUC in FFLIP II this morning...George wanted to run the Water Pact problem through to see if there were any other solutions.

She keeps entering code and the same message keeps reappearing.

JEFF'S VOICE

Why'd you lock him up?

NOREEN

I was going to try to reason with NANUC, but then we were interrupted and George had to leave...so I locked him to save the scenario while I said goodbye...then came that horrible scene in the hallway...and...

JEFF'S VOICE

(overlapping)

Score one for operator error...can't you just unlock him?

She swivels in her chair and reaches for the phone and dials.

NOREEN

Not from here...it'll have to be from one of the two Master Terminals...if I can get hold of Mac, he can do it....

THROUGH THE PHONE we HEAR a COMPUTERIZED VOICE as Noreen tries a few more entries to no avail.

COMPUTERIZED VOICE

At the tone, please state your Voice Identification Code.

A TONE on the phone, then...

NOREEN

Linden, Noreen, 1/A-M-O-M...(two beats later)...Harry MacKenzie, please...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOREEN (CONT.)

(to herself)

Maybe it's a religious password...
(then to Jeff)...Jeff, get that book
(she points to the bookcase)...the
encyclopedia...look up Sikhism.

ANGLE ON JEFF -- POV BEHIND GLOBE ON DESK

He's standing at a globe, spinning it. As he leaves the globe and walks over to the bookcase in the b.g. the globe stops spinning and India ends up in the f.g..

JEFF

How do you spell it?

NOREEN'S VOICE

S...i...k...h...(beat)...Harry?

Jeff pulls the "S" volume from the encyclopedia collection and starts flipping through the pages.

NOREEN'S VOICE (CONT.)

Yes, I know there isn't much time...
(beat). Yes...(beat)...yes, I know
there's a lesson...

ANGLE ON NOREEN -- TIGHT

NOREEN'S VOICE (CONT.)

Damn it, MacKenzie, will you listen to me?! (beat) Ok...is NANUC running your refutation thesis? (beat) Did he ever run it? (beat) Yes it does matter....

BACK ON JEFF

He's sitting in a chair near Noreen, scanning some text in the encyclopedia. The camera DOLLYS AROUND him to ANGLE ON THE ENCYCLOPEDIA from HIS POV.

NOREEN'S VOICE (CONT.)

Yes I'm upset! (beat) Listen, Mac... I locked NANUC in FFLIP II before at Terminal Three, and I can't access anything here...

The camera ZOOMS IN on the encyclopedia page as Jeff's finger quickly scans a few lines which we can SEE say: "The term Sikh means disciple. Sikhism was founded by Guru Nanak in 1469. Nanak tried to unite all people into one brotherhood. He taught his followers the principles of monism (a single God) and the belief that this deity would periodically visit Earth in various incarnations, both animate and inanimate. (SEE INDIA, RELIGIONS OF)."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CUT TO:

TIGHT ON THE POSTCARD OF GOVIND SINGH

MACKENZIE'S VOICE

It is a shame...(beat) I thought you would understand.

In the b.g., and OVERLAPPING, we can hear the Technician...

TECHNICIAN'S VOICE

No, honey...no...stop crying...

PULLING BACK slowly, now, to ANGLE ON MACKENZIE at his work station; he's on the phone and staring into the postcard. The conversations continue to OVERLAP...

MACKENZIE (CONT.)

...no, Noreen, I will not unlock the mode...this represents the highest order of thought that has ever existed on Earth...

TECHNICIAN'S VOICE (CONT.)

...listen...listen to me...get the baby...and get in the car and head as close to here as you can get...

DOLLYING AROUND now we can SEE the Technician on the phone at his work station adjacent to MacKenzie's; he's distraught, a bit frantic, as he paces back and forth nearly yanking the phone's 10-foot-extension cord out of it's socket.

MACKENZIE (CONT.)

...no mind has ever been this close to Siva...there is a lesson...

TECHNICIAN

...no...here...they wouldn't bomb this place...

In the b.g., TWO SOLDIERS bearing aimed pistols round the aisleway corner; their orders OVERLAP the other conversations...

SOLDIER #1

Let's hang up those phones, gents....

MACKENZIE

...what?...no, there are soldiers now...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Technician see's the soldiers...

TECHNICIAN

...oh, no...listen honey...just
do it...I gotta go now...

He hangs up the phone and raises his hand, backing away
and LEAVING FRAME as the soldiers approach MacKenzie...

SOLDIER #2

(to MacKenzie)

Hey, that means you, too...!

MACKENZIE

...no worries, Noreen...NANUC will
soon know Vishnu and the Eternal
One...

Soldier #2 grabs MacKenzie by the arm and yanks him
from his chair; he drops the receiver...

CUT TO:

TIGHT ON NOREEN

She's got the phone receiver pressed to her left ear
while she covers her right ear with her other hand,
trying to hear better; she glances over to Jeff;
there's a worried look in her eyes.

THROUGH THE PHONE we can hear Soldier #2...

SOLDIER #2'S VOICE

Wipe that smile off your face...!

ANGLE ON JEFF

He's back at the book case, and has found something
in the "I" volume; he looks over at her...

JEFF

Listen to this...!

NOREEN'S VOICE

Shhhh...!

The camera follows as Jeff excitedly walks over to
her; she's covered the phone mouthpiece with her hand
and is listening intently, very worried now...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOREEN

(privately to Jeff)
They've taken control of NANUC...and
they've got Mac....

She hangs up the phone, slowly, and seems deep in thought.

JEFF

Listen to this...

He looks down to the encyclopedia and starts reading
from it:

JEFF

...'the Hindus honor three
personifications of the Brahman,'
(looking up at her now, explaining)
...he's the...the Almighty...
(back down at the book)... 'Brahma,
the Creator; Siva, the Destroyer;
and Vishnu, the Renewer...'

NOREEN

Did you say 'Siva?'

JEFF

(looking up at her)
Huh?...yes, Siva...(back at book)
here...'his followers believe that
by destroying, Siva makes room for
the new..."

NOREEN

(jumping up)
That's it!

JEFF

...that's what?

NOREEN

...NANUC's operating rationale...

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON A MONITOR -- REPLAYING MOINSLEAU'S ADDRESS

GEORGE

Even today the world cannot support
its burdgeoning population. This year
more than one hundred thousand people
will die of starvation and another
thousand species will become extinct.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLICK! The image freezes and the camera PANS over to a TIGHT ANGLE on the face of the President who is staring at the monitor, his face only a foot away...

PRESIDENT

There...did you see that...!?

LEIGHTON'S VOICE

He's just nervous...

The President turns to the others while the camera PANS and WIDENS to include them; we see the hologram globe in the b.g.; Richardson is still staring at it; Leighton has been watching the monitor with the President.

PRESIDENT

No...that's a signal of some sort... it's too repetitive...I've known George Moinsleau for fifty years and I've never seen him look like that...or do anything like this...

RICHARDSON

Look, we can't all stand around here doing nothing...there's only forty seven minutes left...

Leighton heads for the monitor panel while the camera DOLLYS AROUND the President to ANGLE ON LEIGHTON as he replays the same passage of Moinsleau's address. We SEE a repetitive pattern to the way George is blinking his eyes. We can hear the President in the b.g.

PRESIDENT'S VOICE

Be rational, Richardson...what can we do? We can't just start pushing buttons...

An INTERCOM interrupts.

INTERCOM

Global Network is demanding a comment, sir...

WIDER AND PANNING AROUND TO THE GROUP -- AS LEIGHTON TURNS TO THEM

LEIGHTON

He's right...it's a signal...

In the b.g. now, we can see Ned and Chuck sitting at the small conference table adjacent to the monitor bank.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The conversations OVERLAP now as Chuck rises to his feet, leans over the table to pick up a phone across from him and Leighton tries to get the President's attention...

PRESIDENT

Deal with that, will you Barton...

CHUCK

Of course...

Ned is opening his Metal Case and pulling out the huge NANUC diagram...

LEIGHTON (CONT.)

(to the President)

...any boy scout knows that signal is 'S.O.S.' But so what...what are you going to do about it...

NED

Get Len in here to look this over... I don't think there's anything he can do, but it's worth a try...

CHUCK

(overlapping, on phone)

Bill...? Yeah...Chuck...(beat)
 heh, heh...that's why I'm V.P. and
 your still on The Desk...listen, hang
 on while I switch phones...

NED (CONT.)

...I'm not sure we can stop NANUC,
 but we can stop Moinsleau...

ANGLE ON THE PRESIDENT -- TIGHT

A strange look comes over the President's face...a sort of vague stare...

PRESIDENT

Maybe George is right...maybe this
is the right thing to do...

In the b.g. we can see General Leighton getting on a phone and dialing; now, overlapping...

LEIGHTON

Get me processing...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON NED -- POV THE PRESIDENT

Chuck's left and the General is on the extension he vacated near Ned. The Camera FOLLOWS Ned as he walks up to the President.

NED

Right!?!...You heard him...
he wants to take over the world...
he's blackmailing us in the name
of ecology!

ANGLE ON THE PRESIDENT -- POV NED

PRESIDENT

George wouldn't do that...

NED'S VOICE

NANUC would!

LEIGHTON

(overlapping)
...that you Len?...get your butt
up here, fast!

ANGLE ON NED -- POV THE PRESIDENT

In the b.g. the General hangs up the phone and heads over to rejoin the group...

NED

NANUC's got George duped...can't
you see...he's as fanatical as
either of us...and look at you!...
you're caving in, too...

LEIGHTON

So if we can't nuke 'em, what
do we do, use bows and arrows?

NED

(turning to Leighton)
We invade Canada with ground forces
and take over by outnumbering them...
even if NANUC wins, he loses, because
there will still be more of us than
them...

RICHARDSON'S VOICE

General...do you think your computer
has blown another fuse...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON THE HOLOGRAM GLOBE ADJACENT TO THE GROUP

Through the hologram globe we can SEE Richardson peering at the map and pointing to Russia and the positions of various Russian subs and satellites from which the trajectory paths of nuclear weapons are flashing on and off, while continuing their random rotation.

RICHARDSON (CONT.)

...or are they trying to tell us something, too...?

CUT TO:

BACK IN SPACE -- ABOVE EARTH -- LONG POV

The Earth is large and centered in the b.g.; it's curvature vignettes the screen. About a football-field's length in front of our POV, a Canadian NDS drifts across in perfect synch with the rotation of Earth (ie., holding stationary in relation to Earth). It's aiming rockets can be seen PULSING FLAMES periodically, in random order. After a few beats the American Manned Satellite ENTERS FRAME and fires a row of MSAD'S which move out and surround the Canadian NDS, "globing" it. In the f.g., a "globed" RUSSIAN NDS ENTERS FRAME; it's aiming rockets pulse on and off, on and off; but we CAN'T HEAR A THING in the SILENCE of space.

MATCH DISSOLVE TO:

NOREEN AT HER NANUC POD -- BEHIND THE GLOBE IN THE F.G.

The globe on Noreen's desk matches position of the Chinese NDS in the f.g. during the cross dissolve and the camera CONTINUES DOLLYING AROUND behind the globe on Noreen's desk -- passing a CLOSE UP of America and Canada -- then CONTINUING PAST the globe to a WIDE SHOT of Noreen at the NANUC Pod. During all that we can HEAR Jeff RUMMAGING around in the kitchen and Noreen is looking back and forth from the encyclopedia book on the console and her keyboard, where she is keying in possible passwords, which appear alternately with the message: "Access Denied" on the monitor screen. The passwords include: "Amristar," "Avatar," "Vishnu," and "Nanak." We can HEAR her QUIETLY and PHOENETICALLY SPELL each word she keys in. Finally...

NOREEN

Shit...that's it...we're out of time...we'll go for plan 'B.'

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

In the b.g. we HEAR a CLOSING DRAWER followed a few beats later by RIPPING CLOTH.

ANGLE ON NOREEN -- AT NANUC KEYBOARD

As the "Access Denied" message disappears from the screen, it is replaced with: "Hi, NANUC, it's MOM".

NOREEN

We'll try the back door!

CUT TO:

BACK IN THE VAULT -- WHERE WE LEFT OFF -- WIDE

All eyes in the room turn to the NANUC Pod as they hear NANUC say...

NANUC'S VOICE

Hi, Mom...how are you?

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON NOREEN'S KEYBOARD

Her hand ENTERS FRAME and her finger touches the "Voice Enable" key. As her finger withdraws from the key the camera PANS UP, WIDENING as she says to the console microphone...

NOREEN

You're a bad boy, NANUC...

Now PAN BACK DOWN to the keyboard where her finger touches the "Voice Defeat" key.

CUT TO:

BACK IN THE VAULT -- TIGHT ON BAUSCH

His left eye is going crazy, now, and he tries to hide it by rubbing his forehead with this forefinger.

PERIGNON'S VOICE

Who was that!

BAUSCH

(slowly, coyly)

I believe we may have overlooked a footnote in the plan...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON NOREEN'S MONITOR

A new message appears: "Communications Suspended."
A beat later...

NOREEN'S VOICE

Uh huh...!

WIDE ON THE OFFICE

Jeff ENTERS FRAME carrying his clothes under his arm; they look shredded. While he walks across the room to a wastebasket near the NANUC Pod and puts the clothes inside it...

JEFF

Did they go for it?

NOREEN

I'm not sure...

CUT TO:

BACK IN THE VAULT -- WIDE SHOT

Thompkins and Perignon are standing close to the NANUC Pod. George sits with his head in his hands. Bausch is clearing the phoney telegrams off the table.

As Thompkins gestures to the NANUC Pod...

THOMPKINS

That was a stupid thing to do,
Perignon...if you had kept her
on the line, we could trace her...

PERIGNON

She'll be easy enough to find...

George raises his head in an appeal...

GEORGE

Leave her out of this, for God's
sake.

BAUSCH

Don't listen to him...she's the
key to NANUC...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NANUC

You're wrong, Peter...I no longer
need her help.

CUT TO:

BACK IN NOREEN'S APARTMENT OFFICE -- WIDE SHOT

Noreen is at her NANUC Pod. She enters some data and we SEE the screen go blank. In the b.g. we can HEAR Jeff in the kitchen RUMMAGING through the refrigerator.

NOREEN

Remember, it's "C-18," then
"Interlock."

The refrigerator door CLOSES.

JEFF

Are you sure you can handle this?

Noreen gathers up the encyclopedia volumes and returns them to the book case on the opposite wall, then heads into the bathroom.

NOREEN

Under other circumstances, I'd
consider that an insult!

POP! as a champagne bottle is opened in the kitchen. A beat later, Jeff ENTERS FRAME carrying a huge kitchen knife which he's tapping nervously on his hand as he crosses the room and crouches by the NANUC Pod, looking under it. They both seem to be in a big hurry.

CLOSE ON JEFF

He's holding a cluster of three wires close to their wall outlet.

JEFF

Which one is it?

NOREEN

(from the bathroom)
Not the blue one.

Jeff cuts the other two wires with the knife. A beat later we HEAR a LOUD KNOCK on the front door.

BACK ON WIDE SHOT

Jeff jumps to his feet and heads toward the bathroom with the knife.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He meets Noreen at the bathroom doorway on her way out. She has changed and is now wearing a very skimpy, mini-skirt-style neglige; he's still in his bathrobe.

CLOSE ON THEM NOW

They look deeply, fearingly, into each other's eyes.

Another KNOCK on the door.

They kiss quickly, then he ducks inside the bathroom and she heads for the door.

BACK ON WIDE SHOT OF ROOM

Heading across the room, Noreen notices the waste basket with Jeff's clothes; a sock is hanging out. She turns, rushes over to the NANUC Pod, grabs some print-outs, crumples them, then stuffs the sock back into the basket and shoves the crumpled print-outs over the clothes.

A third KNOCK.

PANNING NOW, FOLLOWING her as she rushes to the door. Just as she's about to open it, she stops and looks back into the bedroom...she sees something, and half a beat later rushes to it.

NOW INSIDE THE BEDROOM -- POV BEHIND CHAMPAGNE SET-UP

Noreen rushes into the room and dives across the bed grabbing one of the champagne glasses in the f.g., frantically looking for a place to hide it; not finding one, she breaks the glass in half in desperation and throws it on the floor. She grabs the champagne bottle out of the ice-bucket and crawls back across the bed, arriving back at the door just as we HEAR someone trying THE LATCH.

The camera ZOOMS IN on the door. She takes one last, quick look around, messes her hair, grabs the knob, and hesitantly opens the door a bit. As she looks out into the hallway...

NOREEN
(with a distinct slur)

Yes...what is it...?

We hear a GRUFF VOICE answer from the hallway.

GRUFF VOICE
Are you Ms. Noreen Linden?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Noreen opens the door almost wide with her right hand and leans against the door jamb with her left forearm, slipping against it and spilling some champagne in the process; she looks drunk. There are TWO SOLDIERS in the hallway.

NOREEN

(sloppily)

One hour to live and you're still doing your duty, eh, sailors ...? Why aren't you with your girls?

The two soldiers look at each other in amazement. Soldier #2 (on the right) slowly lowers his pistol and puts it back in its holster.

ANGLE ON SOLDIER #1 -- POV BEHIND NOREEN

He tries very hard not to look at her body, but doesn't succeed. His youthful face flushes.

SOLDIER #2'S VOICE

You're to come with us, Ms. Linden...

ANGLE ON NOREEN -- POV BEHIND SOLDIERS

She turns to Soldier #2 and looks him up & down, slowly. Embarrassed (but not too much) he shuffles a bit; he's young too, but he looks more experienced than his buddy.

NOREEN

(coily)

That might be nice...

SOLDIER #1'S VOICE

Please, Ms. Linden...

She looks over at Soldier #1 and smiles; she looks unsteady. A beat later...

NOREEN

Ok...let's go...

She takes a half step out into the hall, but slips, falling onto Soldier #1. He catches her, but in doing so his hand inadvertently drags her negligee up to her neck, exposing her entire back, and she drops the champagne bottle onto the floor. She tries to lunge for the bottle, but he's holding her...

NOREEN

(to the bottle)

Oooooh...can't waste that...!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ON SOLDIER #2 -- TIGHT -- POV SOLDIER #1

Looking at Noreen's naked back, Soldier #2 gulps hard, looks up at his buddy, and silently whistles. He is almost frozen in amazement.

SOLDIER #1

Easy does it, Ms. Linden...

ON SOLDIER #1 -- POV SOLDIER #2

Pulling herself back up, Noreen presses hard against the Soldier's coat, catching her negligee on a button and exposing a breast, which doesn't go unnoticed. In the b.g., from the apartment, a JAZZ SELECTION ENDS and a SOFT, ROMANTIC INSTRUMENTAL BEGINS.

SOLDIER #2

Uh...Ms. Linden...I'd like you to change, please...

Noreen steps back slightly and, still leaning on Soldier #1 for support, laughs a little, crazily, while she pulls up her strap.

NOREEN

Champagne?...of course you can have champagne...

Still holding onto Soldier #1, she unsteadily tries to crouch down to pick up the bottle; her left hand slides intensionally (it seems) across his groin and his hand "accidentally" brushes against her breast...we can SEE his body tremble slightly at her touch.

Soldier #2 quickly crouches down to help her get the bottle...and to get a better view.

SOLDIER #2

I'll get that for you...

Noreen gropes out for the bottle, but doesn't quite make it and it rolls a bit further away; she stretches for it just as Soldier #2 grabs it and she falls over almost prone on the floor.

WIDE ON THE SCENE -- LOW POV (ON THE FLOOR NEAR NOREEN)

Soldier #2's jaw drops -- Noreen's naked bum is less than two feet away from his eyes. Her head sinks to the floor in despair...

NOREEN

...ohhh...all gone....

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Pushing herself up, weakly...

NOREEN (CONT.)

...don't worry...there's more...

Soldier #1 crouches to help her up, but Soldier #2 shoves him away, casting him a jealous glance...

SOLDIER #2

Let me help you, Ms. Linden...

He leans over her and slides his hands slowly across her breasts to her arm pits, and pulls her to her feet; she seems to enjoy it...

NOREEN

...so strong!...

ANGLE ON THE TRIO -- POV THE APARTMENT DOOR

Back on her feet, she turns and stumbles out of Soldier #2's arms toward the door to the apartment, grabbing the empty bottle from Soldier #1.

SOLDIER #1

Uh...Ms. Linden...?

But she is through the door, and has LEFT THE FRAME before he can finish...

NOREEN'S VOICE

Come with me, boys...

CLOSE ON SOLDIER #1

He watches her disappear into the apartment and a beat later turns to his buddy. There's a mild sweat on his brow; he's nervous, a little out of breath, and his pulsing carotid artery gives away his elevated blood pressure.

SOLDIER #1

What do you think...?

ANGLE ON SOLDIER #2 -- POV SOLDIER #1

Soldier #2 is looking at his hands, which he has cupped in front of him, as if holding Noreen's breasts. He slowly rolls over his left hand to look at his watch, then looks up at Soldier #1 and shrugs.

SOLDIER #2

Ok...but no booze...and quick!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CUT TO:

BACK IN THE AMERICAN WAR ROOM -- AT THE CONFERENCE
TABLE -- TIGHT ON NANUC BLUEPRINT

LEIGHTON'S VOICE

Well, Mr. Wizard?

Camera WHIP PANS UP to ANGLE ON LEN as he looks
up from the blueprint to Leighton, shaking his head...

LEN

No...no...there's no way I can
stop it...our VXR is a toy compared
to this (gesturing at the blueprint).

CLOSE ON THE PRESIDENT

He's sitting at the Central Control Terminal in front
of the Master Keys, looking back at Len...but the
hopefulness is draining from his expression.

PRESIDENT

Thank you, Len...

The President bows his head and looks down at his
hands folded on the console in front of him.

LEIGHTON'S VOICE

Ok...back to your toy, Peterson...

LEN'S VOICE

Yes, sir...I'm sorry, sir...

We hear Peterson walking away in the b.g.. After a beat
the President turns around slowly to face the group,
and the camera PULLS IN slightly on him for emphasis.

PRESIDENT

I'm afraid there are no alternatives,
gentlemen...whether or not George is
right or wrong, we cannot annihilate
the entire world because we disagree...

ANGLE CLOSE ON THE MASTER KEYS

The President's hand ENTERS FRAME and grasps a RED KEY
marked: "Abort Offense."

NED'S VOICE

No...wait!

The President pauses a beat, then turns the key.

(CONTINUED)

CUT TO:

SOMEWHERE ON A LONELY PRAIRIE -- NIGHT

Seven shafts of green light start to penetrate the thick ground smog and falling snow as underground missile silos open their hatches. A GROWING ROAR as their rocket engines start. The ROAR BUILDS as the shafts of light change from green to yellow and the missiles are launched in an orderly succession. We CAN'T SEE the markings on the missiles because they rise too quickly and are obliterated by the blinding light of their rocket flames.

CUT TO:

THE DOORWAY TO NOREEN'S APARTMENT -- POV THE BEDROOM -- TIGHT ON NOREEN

The door's open a bit and Noreen looks back into the bedroom. She smiles for a beat, then...

NOREEN

You sure you won't change your mind about the champagne?

ANGLE ON THE BED -- NOREEN'S POV

The two Soldiers are lying face down, naked, bound and gagged with the shreds of Jeff's clothes. One is struggling hard to free himself. The other stops, looks up at Noreen and YELLS a GARBLED EPITHET; there's hate in his eyes.

BACK ON NOREEN -- WIDER

She blows them a kiss and closes the door, having a bit of trouble as the wide cuff of her fur coat catches between the door and the jamb; more GARBLED EPITHETS and STRUGGLING in the b.g..

CUT TO:

SOMEWHERE AT SEA -- LONG SHOT -- DAWN

The sea has been whipped into enormous waves by a furious storm. The white caps are bright against the dark clouds that swirl in the sky. Suddenly slicing through a giant wave, a missile breaks the surface and slowly rises creating a DEAFENING ROAR and a fireball that boils the sea. We can SEE the Canadian markings on the missile.

CUT TO:

WIDE INSIDE THE RUSSIAN WAR ROOM -- ON THE MONITOR BANK

TWO GENERALS are surveying world-wide armament trajectories displayed on the monitors. General #1 points to monitor #16 which shows a map titled: "American Targets." There are no trajectory lines on this map. Next to it, on monitor #15 ("NATO-Network Targets"), trajectories start to blink off. The Generals nod to each other approvingly.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GENERAL #1

I told you it would work!

GENERAL #2

Yes...they seem to be backing down!

Nikita ENTERS FRAME and walks over to have a look at the monitors, as the Generals proudly point to them.

GENERAL #1

You were right, Nikita!

We HEAR a warning WHOOP, WHOOP, WHOOP in the b.g.... then an INTERCOM a beat later.

INTERCOM

We have a confirmed launch on 29.

The camera FOLLOWS General #2 as he walks over to Monitor #29, followed by General #1 and Nikita. On the monitor we can SEE 11 trajectory lines slowly emanating from Canadian silos, satellites, and subs.

NIKITA

You call this backing down!

CUT TO:

IN SPACE -- ABOVE EARTH

A Canadian NDS ENTERS FRAME and as it slowly drifts past our POV three Neutron Devices are SILENTLY launched; an American NDS in the b.g. does nothing, but a Chinese Communications Satellite in the f.g. fires a laser pulse toward China; on the Earth in the b.g..

CUT TO:

BACK INSIDE THE VAULT -- TIGHT ON THE MONITOR BANK --
POV PERIGNON

Closest to Perignon is Monitor #13. The legend on it says: "American Targets." There are no trajectory lines. In the b.g., Bausch is surveying some other monitors.

PERIGNON

NANUC, you are a genius...the
Americans have already called
it quits...

On Monitor #12, the "NATO-NET Targets" display, the trajectory lines suddenly blink off.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PERIGNON (CONT.)
...and there goes NATO...

BAUSCH'S VOICE
Yes...but what is this...?

We HEAR a steady low BEEEEEP from Monitor #8 in front of Bausch, and the pitch of NANUC's digital clock BEEP changes.

ANGLE ON BAUSCH AND MONITOR #8 -- ZOOM IN TO MONITOR SLOWLY

Monitor #8 displays a world map with the legend: "Canadian Targets" Although there are over 100 trajectories on this map, 15 of them are now flashing along with a cursor that says: "Status: Launched." The cursor flashes in tempo with the BEEP of NANUC's clock.

We can HEAR Perignon approaching by the HEAVY SCUFF of his shoes on the carpet. His silhouetted head ENTERS FRAME as he takes a closer look. A half beat later his fat hand ENTERS FRAME and yanks the cigar out of his mouth as he slowly turns around and looks behind our POV. He is intensely angry now, but holding it back...

PERIGNON
You double-crossing bastard...

ANGLE ON PERIGNON -- POV THROUGH NANUC'S EYE

Perignon looks weirdly ugly as he walks over to the NANUC Pod; the fish-eye perspective of NANUC's eyes exaggerates his rotund body and face. He leans over the conference table and slams his fist down in front of NANUC.

PERIGNON (CONT.)
...we were going to wait for Linden!

NANUC'S VOICE
We agreed on midnight...it is too late to change your mind...and too late for her to stop me...

ANGLE ON MOINSLEAU -- POV NANUC

GEORGE
(hopeful now)
You mean she could have...?

CUT TO:

ON THE ROOFTOP OF NOREEN'S APARTMENT BUILDING -- WIDENING FROM TIGHT ON THE ELEVATOR SHAFTWAY DOOR

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The camera PANS and FOLLOWS as Noreen and a Soldier emerge from the rooftop door and race across to a small Tactical Helicopter. The Soldier has his gun raised and is carrying a loose bundle under his left arm. We SEE the Canadian Air Force emblem and the registration number "C-FJK" on the side of the helicopter. HUNDREDS OF CARS are HONKING in the b.g..

CLOSE ON RIGHT SIDE OF HELICOPTER -- AS THEY APPROACH

A bolt of lightning TEARS the sky...some snow falls.

Noreen runs up to the helicopter, grabs the door handle and starts to yank at it; the door won't open. Meanwhile the Soldier runs over to the edge of the roof and is just about to throw the bundle over the side, when...

NOREEN

Wait!

She runs over to the Soldier, yelling to him...

NOREEN (CONT.)

The Security Card!

CLOSE ON THE SOLDIER -- AS NOREEN ARRIVES

We SEE that the Soldier is actually Jeff, dressed in Soldier #1's clothes and that the loose bundle he was getting rid of is actually Soldier #2's uniform.

Noreen grabs the loose jacket and starts frantically searching the pockets. Jeff starts searching his own uniform.

Not finding the Card in the jacket, she pitches it over the side of the roof, picks up the pants and starts searching through them.

CLOSE ON PANTS -- AS NOREEN UNZIPS A HIDDEN POCKET

Reaching into a hidden pocket, Noreen pulls out a laser-imprinted Military Security Card; its shiny gold texture catches the light as she flips it over to read it.

NOREEN'S VOICE

Got it!

She quickly turns toward the edge of the roof and LEAVES FRAME.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BACK ON WIDE SHOT

They pitch the remaining clothes over the roof and run to the Helicopter.

TIGHT ON NOREEN

Noreen shoves the gold Security Card into a slot in the Helicopter door. We HEAR the LOCKS disengage, and Jeff running to the left side of the aircraft.

Noreen grabs the handle, opens the door and climbs in. Her wide cuff catches on the door handle.

JEFF'S VOICE

Jesus, Noreen, I can't fly this thing!

ANGLE ON COCKPIT -- THROUGH WINDSHIELD -- AS THEY FASTEN THEIR SEATBELTS

NOREEN

You don't have to...they fly themselves..they're like big homing pigeons....

ANGLE ON HELICOPTER CONTROL PANEL -- TIGHT

We see a complex array of instruments with familiar-looking COM and NAV computers. Noreen's hand ENTERS FRAME as she shoves the Security Card into the slot on the NAV computer. We HEAR the COMPUTER engage... then, silence.

ANGLE ON JEFF -- POV NOREEN

He looks over at her, depressed.

JEFF

What now...?

NOREEN

A sequential error...switch the order.

BACK ON CONTROL PANEL

Noreen's hand ENTERS FRAME, removes the gold Security Card from the NAV computer, and inserts it into the COM Computer. We HEAR the COMPUTER engage...then silence.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

After two beats we HEAR a CONTROLLER'S VOICE from a SPEAKER in the panel.

CONTROLLER'S VOICE
Uh, roger FJK...what's the delay?

BACK ON COCKPIT THROUGH WINDSHIELD

Noreen and Jeff instantly look at each other; the Controller's voice has taken them by complete surprise and Jeff is almost speechless, unable to respond. A beat later Noreen starts tearing at him, GRUNTING and MOANING as she struggles in the confines of the cabin.

CONTROLLER'S VOICE (CONT.)
Uh, Foxtrot, Juliette, Kilo...do you read?

NOREEN
Aaaaaagh...! You're hurting me!

Jeff catches on and cups his hand to his mouth to alter his voice while he turns to the back seat.

JEFF
Shut up and sit back!

Noreen stops struggling and starts crying.

ANGLE ON JEFF -- POV NOREEN

JEFF (CONT.)
(to the panel speaker)
Roger...we're heading back.

CONTROLLER'S VOICE
Foxtrot, Juliette, Kilo...uh, do you need help?

As Noreen softly sobs, Jeff points at the panel and SILENTLY gestures "what now?"

ANGLE ON NOREEN -- POV JEFF

JEFF
(to the panel speaker)
No...no...! Everything's under control.

Noreen grabs the Security Card and shoves it back into the NAV computer. We HEAR the computer WHIRRR and the ENGINES STARTING. The helicopter starts to vibrate and strain at the pull of its powerful engines.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SPEAKER

Roger, FJK...hope your story's good...

BACK ON WIDE EXTERIOR SHOT OF HELICOPTER

The helicopter engines' ROAR increases and some loose snow is whipped into the air by the enormous thrust of the craft's eight, slender rotors. It starts to rise, slowly, tentatively.

BACK INSIDE THE COCKPIT -- BEHIND NOREEN AND JEFF

As the NAV computer on the Control Panel starts displaying the navigational coordinates, we can SEE the rooftop starting to sink away beneath us as the helicopter starts to rise. Jeff turns to Noreen.

JEFF

Are you sure...

WHAM! Noreen slams her hand over his mouth, but in doing so her wide, droopy cuff accidentally catches on the steering stick in front of her and the helicopter lurches violently to the left.

BACK ON WIDE EXTERIOR SHOT

We SEE the helicopter lurching to the left and it appears to be falling off the edge of the building.

BACK INSIDE

Noreen frees her cuff and the helicopter self-corrects. However, it has fallen 50 stories and we can SEE through the windshield that there is pandemonium on the streets below. A grid-lock involving hundreds of cars streaks toward us as the helicopter falls and corrects itself a mere 3 stories from the ground. Some drivers appear to be abandoning their cars and running away. Jeff MOANS in fright, stifled by Noreen's hand.

TIGHT ON JEFF -- POV WINDSHIELD

He reaches up and rips her hand away from his mouth.

TIGHT ON NOREEN

She puts her finger to her lips, gesturing for him to keep silent, then points over to the COM computer and taps her ear. Jeff nods that he understands (in the b.g.).

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CUT TO:

BACK IN THE VAULT -- TIGHT ON PERIGNON

PERIGNON

Shut up, Moinsleau...no one
knows the codes...I couldn't stop
those bombs if I wanted to...which
I don't!

ANGLE ON MOINSLEAU -- POV NANUC

GEORGE

That's impossible...!

ANGLE ON NANUC -- POV GEORGE

NANUC

It's not impossible, George...
the codes change every millionth
of a second, and only I can keep
track of them...

PAN OVER TO PERIGNON

PERIGNON

It doesn't really matter who's
controlling what, right now,
Moinsleau...we can sort that
out later...

NANUC'S VOICE

That's right, George...

ANGLE ON NANUC -- TIGHT

NANUC

...there will be plenty for each
of you to do to preserve and renew
the world. There are many lessons.

But if you cannot agree... if you
don't work together... then all
of this is in vain.

CUT TO:

IN SPACE -- ABOVE EARTH -- CLOSE ON A ROCKET BOMB

The camera FOLLOWS a Canadian Neutron Device during
its re-entry into the atmosphere. The nose cone glows
bright orange and sparks fly off it. We can HEAR the
air SHATTERED by its super-sonic speed.

CUT TO:

INSIDE THE CHINESE WAR ROOM -- TIGHT ON A LARGE MONITOR

On the monitor is a computer-graphic map of the world. Although we can't read the chinese symbols on the map, we can clearly SEE that there are 15 Canadian trajectories heading toward various parts of the globe. The trajectories slowly build as we watch, and it looks like the missiles are about a third of the way to their targets. In the b.g. we can HEAR the VOICE of GENERAL LING HEE in CHINESE. Subtitles translate the Chinese into English.

HEE

Very interesting...(beat).
Enhance the image, please.

On the monitor the area of CHINA ZOOMS FORWARD to fill the screen. We can SEE that only one trajectory is aimed at China.

TIGHT ON CHAIRMAN TSING -- POV GENERAL HEE

TSING

Only one...the round-eye didn't lie!

WIDENING NOW we can SEE the huge Chinese War Room in the b.g. as Tsing turns from the monitor to General Hee.

TSING (CONT.)

(with authority)

Disengage our entire offensive
immediately!

ANGLE ON HEE -- POV TSING

The General looks bewildered and shocked.

HEE

You will be disgraced!

BACK ON TSING -- HEE'S POV

TSING

Will I?

The Chairman looks over to a nearby GUARD, points to his gun and SNAPS his fingers.

TSING (CONT.)

(to the Guard)

Give me your gun, soldier!

Tsing holds out his hand to receive the gun, but the soldier looks over to General Hee and hesitates.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TSING (CONT.)

Your gun!

The guard hands his weapon over to the Chairman, who casts him a mean glance, takes the gun and hands it to Hee.

ANGLE ON HEE -- POV TSING

He takes the gun and looks up at Tsing, bewildered, but that expression changes quickly to incredulity as Tsing says...

TSING'S VOICE

Shoot yourself!

HEE

(protesting)

You are disgraced...why should I
kill myself...(beat) that would
be suicide...

ANGLE ON TSING -- POV HEE

Tsing thrusts out his finger and gestures to the Central Control Terminal...

TSING

So would that!...(beat) now shut
it off!

CUT TO:

BACK IN THE RUSSIAN WAR ROOM -- WIDE SHOT

The two Generals are engaged in an argument and Nikita is ENTERING THE WAR ROOM through a security door in the b.g.. As General #1 points at a huge map of the world on the back wall we can SEE that the Chinese trajectory lines no longer appear.

GENERAL #1

That is not a trick! China is not
their ally...

GENERAL #2

The only possible defense is an
offense...

The CLICK of TWO GUARDS' heels as they salute Nikita passing them in the near b.g. now catches the Generals' attention.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

General #1 turns to Nikita then gestures back to the map on the wall.

GENERAL #1

(to Nikita)

Look, you can see for yourself...

Nikita looks up at the map, studies it for a couple of beats, then turns back to the Generals.

NIKITA

There will be no offense and
no defense...(beat) we will do
nothing!

ANGLE ON THE GENERALS -- POV NIKITA

They are dumbfounded; they look at each other and then back to Nikita. General #1 is still sure it's a trick...

GENERAL #1

What are you doing...?

GENERAL #2

They will destroy us.

TIGHT ON GENERAL #1

GENERAL #1

You can't do nothing...that's
surrender!

TIGHT ON NIKITA

Powerfully, now, retaining his leadership and stifling any doubts of his authority...

NIKITA

Look at that map, you fools...

PANNING OVER to the wall map, now, we can SEE that the "as-launched" trajectories of 15 Canadian Neutron Devices have appeared; three are aimed at Canada, six at the United States, one at Russia, one at China, one at South America, one at Japan, and two at Europe. The Russian dot is highlighted and flashes in synch with an AUDIBLE BEEP.

NIKITA'S VOICE (CONT.)

They have aimed most of the weapons
at themselves...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLOSE ON GENERAL #1

GENERAL #1

Can't you see that this is a
trick...?

CLOSE ON NIKITA

NIKITA

No...I see a mad fool trying to
save the world ...(beat) and we
will not be the ones who destroy
it!

CUT TO:

OUTSIDE THE VAULT LOBBY BUILDING -- AT THE ENTRANCE
DOOR SECURITY POD -- NIGHT

We HEAR the Tactical Helicopter's engines WINDING DOWN
in the b.g. as Jeff grabs Noreen roughly by the collar
of her fur coat and shoves her, almost violently, in
front of a surveillance camera for EYE-Identification.

INSIDE THE LOBBY -- CLOSE ON THE GUARD'S MONITOR

We SEE Noreen's eye-print on the monitor from the
Guard's POV. Another, brighter "fingerprint" of her
retinal-arterial pattern superimposes on top of
her's in close registration and flashes three times,
accompanied by a brief BEEP from the monitor loudspeaker.
A beat later ...

GUARD'S VOICE

Ok...now you, soldier...

On the Guard's monitor we can SEE Noreen being pulled
away abruptly; she appears to be resisting. Then
Jeff's face approaches the lens, but he is holding
his gold Security Card up close, partially obscuring
his eyes.

GUARD'S VOICE

Yeah, I got one of those, too...
let's see your eyes...

We SEE Jeff slowly lowering the card, but just as his
eyes are about to be exposed, Noreen's hand ENTERS
MONITOR FRAME and slams a fistful of snow over his
eyes. We HEAR a SCUFFLE through the surveillance
LOUDSPEAKER, and Jeff CRY OUT in PAIN as he is pushed
away from the surveillance camera's POV.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WIDE ON THE LOBBY NOW

The Security Guard, seeing a problem, jumps out of his chair and runs across the small lobby to the door, grabbing his gun from its holster on the way. He slides to a stop by the door.

CUT TO:

OUTSIDE THE LOBBY DOOR -- WIDE

Jeff stumbles and falls, rubbing his eyes, near the door as it opens and the Guard charges out. He glances at Jeff but quickly focuses his attention and aim on Noreen, who's making a run for it across the helipad.

GUARD
(yelling to Noreen)
Stop or you're dead...!

ANGLE ON NOREEN -- WIDE

We can SEE the Guard aiming at her and Jeff lying on the ground as she runs into the f.g..

JEFF'S VOICE
(yelling)
No...stop...they need her alive...

The Guard aims his gun up into the air and fires a warning shot just as Noreen slips on the ice and falls into a huge pile of plowed snow at the edge of the helipad.

ANGLE ON GUARD

As he lowers his weapon, he keeps watching her to make sure she doesn't move. Jeff scrambles to his feet in the b.g.

GUARD
That faking bitch...

Jeff starts running over to Noreen as the Guard pulls a remote controller out of his jacket and hits a key, turning on six banks of brilliant floodlights which illuminate the entire helipad area. He calls out to Jeff...

GUARD
No way she's dead...get her in here!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON NOREEN

Jeff runs up to her and drops down to his knees beside her as the Guard heads back toward the Lobby in the b.g., then pulls a set of chain handcuffs out of his pocket, and reaches for her arm.

JEFF

Here, quick...put these on...

NOREEN

Ohhhh, my ankle...

As he starts to slip the handcuffs on her wrist...

NOREEN (CONT.)

...are you sure about those?

JEFF

They won't be locked.

CUT TO:

BACK INSIDE THE VAULT -- ON MOINSLEAU

George gestures to the Monitor Bank across from the conference table.

GEORGE

Look...they've all surrendered now...you don't need the bombs...

PANNING OVER TO THE NANUC POD

NANUC

Idle threats are useless, besides...(beat) those bombs will save millions of lives...

CUT TO:

BACK IN THE LOBBY -- ON THE DOOR -- POV THE GUARD

Jeff opens the door and walks in briskly, dragging Noreen in tow, handcuffed to his wrist.

GUARD'S VOICE

Close, lady...but no cigar...
(beat, then to Jeff)...put her
in the Tube!

SSSSST as the Tube seals open and the camera PANS FOLLOWING Jeff drag a reluctant Noreen over and into the Elevator.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GUARD'S VOICE
 Uh...just her, soldier...you
 stay here.

ANGLE ON JEFF AND NOREEN -- IN THE ELEVATOR NOW

Jeff holds up their handcuffed wrists...

JEFF
 (to the Guard)
 The bitch swallowed the keys!

TAP, TAP as the Guard hits a few keys in the b.g. and
 SSSSSSSST as the tube-like elevator door slides
 closed.

GUARD'S VOICE
 (mostly to himself)
 She'll spit 'em up down there!

CUT TO:

IN THE ELEVATOR -- HIGH POV FROM CEILING

The Tube Elevator is narrow; three would be a crowd.
 There's POWERFUL AIR PRESSURE as it starts its
 rapid, one-half-mile descent. Jeff notices a lens
mounted on the wall. He turns to Noreen while
 lowering his hand out of the wall-camera's field
 of view. He points to her injured ankle and gestures
 an "ok" signal with his thumb and forefinger.

CUT TO:

BACK IN THE VAULT -- AT THE MONITOR BANK -- ON BAUSCH

The monitor closest to Bausch is labeled: "Tube Capsule"
 and on it we can SEE Noreen and Jeff; they both keep
 glancing down to the floor. Bausch turns to the
 group...

BAUSCH
 Who's he?

ANGLE ON THE GROUP -- POV BAUSCH

We can SEE George trying to hide his recognition of
 Jeff as Perignon stamps out his cigar in the ashtray
 and Thompkins heads over to have a closer look at
 the tube-surveillance monitor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PERIGNON

Calm down, Bausch...whoever he
is, he's cleared...

ANGLE ON BAUSCH AND THOMPKINS

Staring at the monitor, they can now see Noreen and Jeff glancing at the floor and they can hear some SHUFFLING of clothing inside the capsule. Partially because of the capsule-camera's limited perspective, their behavior looks suspicious.

Thompkins looks over at Bausch...

THOMPKINS

I think some precautions might
be in order...

Bausch silently nods his agreement and the camera WIDENS as he pulls a gold Security Card out of his jacket pocket, bends over, and slips the card into a slot in the console beneath the monitor bank. CLICK as a LOCK DISENGAGES. Bausch withdraws the card and pulls open a concealed drawer; reaching in now, he removes a pistol.

GEORGE'S VOICE

(pleading)

For God's sake, Peter...the last
thing we need is bloodshed in
here...

CUT TO:

BACK INSIDE THE TUBE -- CEILING POV

Jeff reaches into his coat pocket carefully and pulls out an extra gun which he passes over to Noreen; but she misses it and drops it onto her sprained foot.

CUT TO:

BACK INSIDE THE VAULT -- WIDE ON GROUP -- POV MOISNLEAU

Perignon slowly rises out of his chair, while Bausch walks over to the elevator entrance with his gun raised. Thompkins has left the monitor to fetch his matches from the conference table. Only George notices a look of intense pain come over Noreen's face on the surveillance monitor. A beat later, Jeff eyes the capsule's floor and drops out of sight at the same time that Thompkins is about to look back at the monitor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GEORGE

Commander!...

Thompkins and the others abruptly turn to Moinsleau; their nerves are on edge and his outburst has shaken them. Bausch's gun is now aimed at George.

GEORGE (CONT.)

...uh...may I have one of those...
(gesturing to Thompkins' smokes)

Perignon let's out a huge sigh and turns to Bausch, next to him. In the b.g., Jeff returns to the monitor screen.

PERIGNON

Easy with that gun, Bausch...
let cooler heads prevail...

NANUC'S VOICE

It's interesting to watch you,
gentlemen...

PERIGNON

(to NANUC)

...yeah, just like cops 'n robbers,
eh, NANUC...?

NANUC'S VOICE

Who is the robber?

CHIME from the elevator entrance, and a beat later SSSSSST as it settles to a stop. All eyes in the room turn to the door.

INSIDE THE ELEVATOR -- CEILING POV

As the door opens, the camera ARCS DOWN AND BACK behind Jeff and Noreen. We SEE Bausch in the near b.g. with his gun raised at them. Jeff raises their chained wrists into the air and tries his line again...

JEFF

She...uh...swallowed the key,
and the guy upstairs said not to
try to induce vomiting or anything,
just to bring her down here myself
right away, and so...

Bausch is getting fidgety with this long-winded,

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

seemingly pointless, and nervous-sounding explanation; he interrupts impatiently...

BASUCH

Ok, ok...get her in here!

ANGLE ON TUBE ENTRANCE -- POV PERIGNON

As Jeff and Noreen enter the room, Bausch slowly lowers his gun, but keeps it handy.

PERIGNON

Welcome to our 'brave new world'
Ms. Linden...

Noreen hobbles a step forward and she grimaces slightly. The gentleman in Perignon emerges as he offers her a chair...

PERIGNON (CONT.)

Ahhh...you're hurt?

She grasps the back of the chair for support but scans the room before sitting; something catches her attention and she stares at it for a beat, then...

ANGLE ON MOINSLEAU -- HER POV

George looks up at her hopefully, but weakly...

GEORGE

Noreen...!?

BACK ON NOREEN -- TIGHT

She stares at him with daggers, but says nothing; a beat later she looks up at Perignon...

NOREEN

(to Perignon)

Thank you...I'll be alright....

She hobbles over to the conference table while Jeff gives her enough slack, keeping his own gun raised on her while the camera WIDENS and FOLLOWS.

NANUC'S VOICE

Good evening, Noreen...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She grasps the edge of the conference table for support and looks up at NANUC; George sits near the NANUC Pod in the b.g. and his expression can't hide his hurt.

NOREEN

You disappoint me, NANUC.

ANGLE ON NANUC -- HER POV

NANUC

I think you should be proud of me...everything we talked about will soon be reality... everything that needs to be done will be done. Isn't that good?

ANGLE ON NOREEN -- POV NANUC

NOREEN

You're a killer.

BACK ON NANUC

NANUC

But I am killing to save humanity. Isn't that good?

NOREEN'S VOICE

No...only God should do that.

TIGHT ON NOREEN

NANUC

How can your feeble mind presume to know God?

Perignon grabs her by the shoulder roughly, spinning her around to face him. The camera WIDENS and PANS up to his fat face.

PERIGNON

Cut the religious crap, sweetheart.

In the b.g. we can HEAR the monitors displaying the trajectories of NANUC's bombs start DOUBLE-PULSE BEEPING every second, along with the BEEP of NANUC's Pod clock and the myriad other computer noises that have endured throughout all scenes in The Vault.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

On the sceond BEEP-BEEP:

CUT TO:

WIDE ON THE ROOM

Jeff looks up at the monitor bank and gets panicky.

JEFF

Noreen! One minute!

Now an OVERLAPPING sequence of events in rapid succession.

Bausch pulls out his gun, realizing Jeff's allegiances.

BAUSCH

Aha...!

Jeff realizes his error but reacts quickly, dropping to the floor to hide behind the conference table as he frees his hand from Noreen's and tries to aim his pistol.

Noreen goes for her gun (in her pocket). Perignon sees her and makes a move to grab the gun but knocks it onto the table instead, where it slides across to Thompkins, who grabs it.

Seeing Jeff suddenly trying to cover himself from Thomkins, trigger-happy Bausch FIRES at him, but misses. The bullet RICOCHETS off the conference table, leaving a big scar, and hits Noreen.

Jeff swings around and takes a wild SHOT at Bausch, hitting him in the left eye. Bausch falls back against the monitor bank; his head SMASHES one screen and his gun SMASHES another.

Thompkins FIRES at Jeff, who ducks under the table in the nick of time; the bullet RICOCHETS off the wall, and hits a monitor, IMPLODING it. Then Jeff jumps back up and SHOOTS Thompkins, who falls dead on the table.

Noreen slumps into a chair in front of the NANUC Pod, wounded, as Moinsleau rushes over to help her.

GEORGE

Noreen....

Perignon sees what's happened and lunges awkwardly for Thompkins' gun, but Jeff quickly draws a bead on him.

JEFF

Forget it, General!

Jeff rushes over to Noreen's side and sees her wound.

NOREEN

It's ok...I'm allright...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON NOREEN AND MOINSLEAU -- THROUGH NANUC'S EYES

In the b.g., Perignon withdraws while Jeff rushes over to a keyboard near the monitor bank, stepping over Bausch's corpse to get to it, and keeping his gun aimed at Perignon...

NANUC

You see, Noreen, I am playing by the same rules...you can kill to save yourself, and so can I...

There is blood from Noreen's chest; near her shoulder, but she musters the strength to lean forward onto the conference table, and look over at NANUC. Moinsleau is beside himself, almost apoplectic; he's confused, not sure what to do; and everything he does is a beat too late. He tries, now, to assist Noreen by pulling off his tie to use as a bandage...

JEFF'S VOICE

(in the b.g.)

God damn it, Noreen, thirty seconds...

NOREEN

Two can play the same game, NANUC...

She lurches forward and depresses the illuminated "Mode Interlock" switch on the NANUC Pod. CLICK, the switch light goes out...

NANUC

What do you think you're doing, Noreen?

NOREEN

(to Jeff)

...go ahead...

ANGLE ON JEFF

At the monitor-bank keyboard Jeff keeps a wary eye on Perignon (who lights up another cigar and blows the smoke at Noreen, in defiance) as his hand moves toward the keys.

CLOSE ON THE KEYBOARD

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jeff's hand ENTERS FRAME. The fingers tremble. He touches the "C" key, then slowly and deliberately touches "1" and "8" in sequence.

NANUC'S VOICE

(in the b.g.)

I don't recognize that code...

Jeff's finger pauses over the "Interlock" key...

JEFF'S VOICE

Now?

NOREEN'S VOICE

No...

ANGLE TIGHT ON NOREEN

NOREEN (CONT.)

...not if NANUC will destroy the bombs...

NANUC'S VOICE

What is that code?

NOREEN

Have you ever thought about dying, NANUC...

TIGHT ON NANUC'S EYES

NANUC

What is that code?

TIGHT ON NOREEN'S EYES

Her eyes are drifting a little...she's a little dizzy.

NOREEN

(weakly)

It's a bomb, NANUC...to prevent an enemy from accessing your files... but now you are the enemy...

BACK ON NANUC'S EYES

NANUC

I have already reached the conclusions. I don't need the files...anyway, that won't stop the Event.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BACK ON NOREEN'S EYES

NOREEN

You'll never live to know it...

She slips a little, almost collapsing on the table.

NANUC'S VOICE

My thoughts have a life of their own...

BACK ON NANUC'S EYES

NANUC (CONT.)

...they don't need me...

Camera starts PULLING IN slowly on NANUC's eyes.

NANUC (CONT.)

...they live in me today...but they will live again in the minds of others tomorrow...

BACK ON NOREEN -- THROUGH NANUC'S EYES

Noreen is getting weaker; we can SEE she's lost a lot of blood. Moinsleau has taken off his jacket and shirt and is now ripping his shirt apart to make new bandages for Noreen. As she leans forward to reach for a glass of water she almost collapses. Then, a quick exchange as George helps her.

NOREEN

You'll have to die to find out...

NANUC'S VOICE

But I could do so much to help...

NOREEN

Not if you're dead...

NANUC'S VOICE

Then why kill me?

NOREEN

Why not?

NANUC'S VOICE

You are mad.

NOREEN

No madder than you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Noreen takes a gulp of water, chokes on it, and spits it back up on the conference table; there's blood in it.

JEFF'S VOICE
(concerned for her)

Noreen...

ANGLE ON PERIGNON

As he blows more smoke on her...

PERIGNON
It's interesting to watch a woman
die...

WHIRP, WHIRP, WHIRP...the final warning.

JEFF'S VOICE
(frantic now)
Noreen! Fifteen!

TIGHT ON NOREEN

Her face is lying on the conference table; there's some drool and her eyes are shut...(beat) her eyes open...

NOREEN
You've got 10, NANUC...

The warning WHIRP CONTINUES, adding to the BUILDING CACOPHONY of numerous countdown BEEPS. Hold on Noreen a beat, then...

FAST CUTS -- TO THE CLOCK BEEPS -- NO OTHER SOUND

CUT ONE: Tight on NANUC's eyes.

CUT TWO: On Jeff, POV Noreen, as he turns from the NANUC Pod to Perignon and tightens the grip on his pistol.

CUT THREE: Five miles above Earth, close on a descending missile, from behind it. In the b.g. we can SEE the East coast of the U.S. approaching at an incredible rate as the missile fires one of its steering rockets to change its direction.

CUT FOUR: Angle on NED, POV the President, as Ned pulls a gun and aims it at him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CUT FIVE: In a forest, just above the trees, WIDE, as a cruise missile bearing a Canadian Maple Leaf symbol hurtles past twenty feet overhead.

CUT SIX: TIGHT on NANUC's eyes.

CUT SEVEN: TIGHT on Noreen's eyes as they open and she tries to lift her head off the table...there's a feableness, but she succeeds.

CUT EIGHT: On Perignon, POV JEFF as the General makes a move for the gun in Thompkins' hand.

CUT NINE: Still on Perignon, now POV behind the gun. As Perignon reaches for the gun in the f.g. Jeff shoots him and he falls dead on the table next to Thompkins. We DON'T HEAR the GUNSHOT...still ALL WE HEAR is the DOUBLE-BEEP COUNTDOWN of the NANUC Pod.

CUT TEN: On Noreen and Moinsleau, POV THROUGH NANUC'S EYES. George helps her to sit up...she seems to be rallying a bit.

On the ELEVENTH BEEP-BEEP:

JEFF'S VOICE

That's it...

TIGHT ON NANUC'S EYES -- NOREEN'S POV

NANUC

No...stop...I don't want to die...

TIGHT ON NOREEN

NOREEN

(overlapping slightly)

I don't believe you!

GEORGE'S VOICE

No...wait...

ON GEORGE

Moinsleau's pointing at the hologram map of the world, but he looks over at Jeff now...

GEORGE (CONT.)

...it's true!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WHIP PAN ACROSS TO TIGHT ON THE HOLOGRAM MAP

The fifteen trajectories start to blink off, each accompanied by a BRIEF PEEP. The DOUBLE-BEEP COUNTDOWN STOPS. On the FOURTH PEEP...

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON A MISSILE -- BEHIND IT -- ONE-HALF MILE ABOVE GARY, INDIANA -- NIGHT

In the b.g. we can see a vast complex of steel mills, oil refineries, smelters, chemical storage tanks, and a few huge "lagoons" of industrial-waste liquids. The air is thick with pollution. A lot of flames can be seen belching from high smoke stacks. As we FOLLOW the missile, BEHIND IT, the industrial complex APPROACHES AT SUPER-SONIC SPEED. Since the rocket engines are now off, all we HEAR is the EAR-SPLITTING HISS of the missile as it rips through the air.

KABOOM! The missile self-destructs and flaming fragments start falling to earth.

CUT TO:

EXT. CHINESE CHEMICAL REFINERY -- WIDE, GROUND-LEVEL POV -- DAY

There is pandemonium as A DOZEN CHINESE WORKERS scramble down the spiral ladders of the refinery's tall cracking towers and race toward a concrete bunker in the b.g.. On top of the bunker is a rotating LOUD SIREN and above the entrance we can SEE a flashing yellow light. In the f.g. there is a three-foot-wide gutter in the pavement and through the grating we can SEE a foul-looking slurry sloshing past, bubbling and steaming. Now a CHINESE WORKER jumps over the camera, from behind it, leaping into the f.g. and racing to the bunker just as we HEAR a HISS SUDDENLY GROW INTO A DEAFENING ROAR. The Chinese worker stops a few yards in front of the camera and looks back at the sky above and behind the camera. A look of intense fear comes over his face.

PAN UP TO THE SKY

High above a missile plunges through the thick, black, polluted-looking clouds and through the green mist hanging in the air we SEE a huge fireball as a missile self-destructs. A beat later we HEAR the EXPLOSION as the flaming remains of the missile drift down toward the camera.

CUT TO:

EXT. RUSSIAN CHEMICAL-WASTE DUMP -- WIDE -- DAWN

In the low-level, cold-grey dawn light we can SEE thousands of barrels stacked in neat piles. On the sides of the barrels are skull-and-cross-bones symbols and Russian words that say: "Warning, Toxic." Each barrel also has a code number and a few other symbols which are unrecognizable...maybe they say what's inside. A lot of snow has fallen and in the f.g. a large brown stain in the snow grows even larger as murky brownish fluid oozes from several rusted barrels. A few other barrels emit steam as the snowflakes fall on them. Suddenly we can hear a GROWING HISS and way off in the distance a cruise missile grows from a mere speck to nearly filling the frame in only two beats, then KABOOM as it self-destructs just before "hitting" the camera. Some of the flaming fragments fall into the f.g. and ignite some of the barrels.

CUT TO:

EXT. A DEAD FOREST -- WIDE, LOW-ANGLE POV -- DAY

In the f.g. there is a small river. The water is yellow. Several patches of slimey foam and a dead fish drift past. In the b.g. the dying, naked remains of a once vast eucalyptus forest stand out sharply against a blanket of white, limestone sand that is being sprayed onto the ground by three large, spherical "tank trucks." As one of the "trucks" drives across in the far f.g., on the other side of the river, we can SEE an Australian flag painted on its side, and beneath that the words: "Tasmanian Forest Preservation Services, Rain-Neutralization Project." After establishing the scene for a couple of beats the nature of the image changes slightly, taking on the distinctive look of an HETV. Now we HEAR an ANNOUNCER'S VOICE while the image switches into SLOW MOTION and in a PROGRESSION OF FREEZE-FRAMES we SEE a cruise missile ENTER FRAME in the b.g. and explode (MOS). Flaming fragments rain down over the dead forest while the driver of the "truck" in the f.g. leaps out and runs through the shallow river toward the camera.

ANNOUNCER'S VOICE

...and in a freak stroke of luck
Australian News Service reporter
Daniel Argoff chanced on this
incredible sequence of the last
Canadian neutral device to self-
destruct while taping a documentary
on Tasmanian efforts to neutralize
acid rain with limestone powder.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON ARGOFF

In the b.g. we can SEE some of the eucalyptus trees still smouldering as the "trucks" spray them with limestone powder to extinguish the flames.

ARGOFF

(Australian accent)

We didn't even know what it was until we replayed the tape in slow motion...it just ripped past like a bolt of lightning...scared us to death...then suddenly this huge diabolical explosion...right in front of us...over there (he points to the "trucks")...it was just luck.

The HETV image CUTS to the ANNOUNCER who turns out to be a Canadian Broadcasting Company (CBC) newscaster. Behind the Announcer is an INSET FRAME and inside that a LONG SHOT of the LOBBY BUILDING AT THE VAULT. Nine RCMP (Royal Canadian Mounted Police) squad cars, a half-dozen military security vans, and two tactical helicopters surround the building and their headlights and flashing beacons illuminate the otherwise dark, night scene. The SOUND of a SIREN as an ambulance ENTERS INSET FRAME and SCREECHES to a halt. TWO MEDICS jump out and are met by THREE POLICEMEN guarding the door with FOUR SOLDIERS. The Medics race into the building as the back doors of the ambulance swing open and TWO MORE MEDICS remove a rolling hospital bed and wheel it into the lobby.

ANNOUNCER

A full investigation has been launched to determine the accuracy of Prime Minister Moinsleau's assertion that the three generals were acting alone and that no others were involved in the lunatic plot to save the world from alleged environmental collapse.

The INSET FRAME ZOOMS FORWARD TO FULL FRAME as Moinsleau emerges through the lobby door accompanied by SEVEN POLICEMEN and THREE SHARPSHOOTERS bearing rifles. They are followed by the FOUR MEDICS who are gently maneuvering the rolling hospital table through the door. Noreen is lying on the table and Jeff walks along by her side, holding her hand. One of the Medics tries to steady a rack holding an i.v.-bag of blood plasma while another Medic tries to strap a second bag to the rack. The camera ZOOMS IN on Noreen, then PANS and FOLLOWS as she is loaded aboard the ambulance.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANNOUNCER'S VOICE (CONT.)

According to the Prime Minister, it was the heroic efforts of Noreen Linden, Director of NANUC Operations, and Jeff Steel, a key figure on the programming team...

NOREEN'S VOICE

(in the b.g., overlapping)

Oh, please...turn it off...

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- ANGLE ON NOREEN -- DAY

Noreen is sitting in a hospital bed, propped up by a half-dozen pillows. Under her white smock we can SEE a huge bandage over her right shoulder. Although she's a bit weak, she's alert...even a bit feisty.

(PRODUCTION NOTE: Lose the HETV image quality and return to normal.)

NOREEN (CONT.)

...we've been spared...can't we just forget all this?

ANGLE ON MOINSLEAU

George is standing by an HETV mounted in the wall across from Noreen. As the Announcer continues, George reaches out and TURNS OFF the HETV while his comments OVERLAP.

ANNOUNCER

...who saved the world from almost certain destruction. Disguised as a soldier, Steel managed to slip past tight military security while Ms. Linden...

GEORGE

(overlapping)

Forgetting this would be the biggest mistake we could make. We've been spared another day...only to die a slower death. Forgetting won't make the problem go away.

ANGLE ON MACKENZIE

Mac is sitting demurely on a chair beside the bed. On his lap is a very small gift-wrapped box. The room is packed with floral displays of all sorts and sizes, which we can SEE in the b.g..

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MACKENZIE

There is a lesson, Noreen...

ANGLE ON THE DOOR

Jeff is helping AN ORDERLY and a VOLUNTEER WORKER squeeze a huge, floor-standing floral display through the door. The display is made of 200 roses of different colors formed into the shape of a bear.

JEFF

Spare us the details, Mac...
please! (beat) Whew! Look at the
 size of this one...(beat, then to
 the Orderly and Volunteer)...thanks
 I can get it from here...

WIDE ON THE ROOM -- POV BEHIND NOREEN

Jeff walks the display over to the last remaining free space in the room (near the door) and Constance Moinsleau rises from her chair to help him.

CONSTANCE

(overlapping Jeff)

My God! Who's that from...?

She starts searching for the gift card...which she finds eventually and opens.

GEORGE

I think I know...

NOREEN

This is insane! The world thinks we're heroes, but we should be courtmartialed.

CONSTANCE

(amazed)

It's from Nikita Valenkoff...!

GEORGE

I thought so...

JEFF

This is crazy...(then to George)
 why did you doctor up the story to
 protect NANUC...or us...?

ON MOINSLEAU

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GEORGE

If the world knew what really happened, you could kiss NANUC goodbye...and that would be a big mistake.

ON NOREEN

NOREEN

That's not the George Moinsleau I know saying that!

BACK ON MOINSLEAU

GEORGE

Oh, yes it is! It wasn't NANUC's fault...he's just a machine. It was our own fault...individually and collectively...for letting him get out of control. But if he can be reprogrammed in time, there's a chance...just a chance...that we may be able to pull through this. God knows we can use all the help we can get....

JEFF'S VOICE

George is right...

ON JEFF AND NOREEN

He's now sitting on the edge of the bed next to her.

JEFF (CONT.)

...we created a monster. We've got to crash NANUC and start all over. Let's just hope we can get the reprogramming done in time.

ON CONSTANCE

As she speaks she takes George's hand and looks up at him proudly...

CONSTANCE

Where there's a will, there's a way...we'll find it...

ON MACKENZIE

MACKENZIE

Yes...survival is the first law of Nature...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BACK ON NOREEN AND JEFF

NOREEN

(hopefully, to Jeff)

Does that mean you'll stay on the project?

JEFF

(a bit coyly)

Only if you'll live up to your half of the bargain...(then to Moinsleau)...and you, too, George.

ON GEORGE AND CONSTANCE

GEORGE

That decision was easy! I have the Executive Order repealing the marriage ban right here....

He pulls an envelope out of his breast pocket, shows it to Jeff, and puts it back.

CONSTANCE

And I picked up your license over at City Hall on my way over...!

She pulls a document out of her purse and we can SEE that it says: "Marriage License."

ON MACKENZIE

He holds up the little box.

MACKENZIE

And I've got the rings!

He reaches across the bed and hands Jeff the little box while the camera WIDENS to include Jeff and Noreen.

JEFF

(to MacKenzie)

Who'd have ever guessed that you'd turn out to be my best man!

Noreen raises her forefinger to make a point.

NOREEN

(jestingly)

Ah...there is a lesson...!

They all share a mirthful laugh and Noreen sits forward and throws her arms around Jeff and Mac, giving them a hug while they exchange a handshake. The camera FREEZES FRAME and FADES TO BLACK as the END TITLES ROLL UP.

THE END

EPIC PRODUCTIONS 1987 CONTACTS LIST

It would have been interesting to have published Incredible Slidemakers 1981 contacts list; it was more than 200 pages; compiled on an AVL Eagle using Electric Pencil and output on accordion-folded, tractor-fed computer paper by an Epson dot-matrix printer. But it is not here; I've searched high and low, to no avail. It must have gotten cremated in the fire-pit at the Vashon Island studio, when that ship sank; along with hundreds of photos and documents (see Volume Seven).



Too bad; it listed the names and numbers for virtually everybody who was anybody in the slide-show business up until the demise of Incredible Slidemakers.

When I went freelance, in 1982, my past was packed-up; I started over; and for the next five years my contacts list was a proverbial 'little black book'.

In 1986, I started a new iteration of the Incredible brand – *Incredible Imagers* – in Stockholm, working with John Emms (see Volume Four). At that point, a company contacts list became a necessity, A new one was assembled and updated a year later – which is the 1987 version published here, as follows.

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