

Global Forces

A Guide for Enlightened Leaders — what Companies and Individuals can Do Updated March 2003

Bruce Nixon

“What if we discover our present way of life is irreconcilable with our vocation to become fully human?” Paulo Freire

The horror of 11th September, and all that has followed, shocked the world and left many of us reflecting deeply, as we recovered from something imagined, but never expected. It is now more obvious that the world is a living system in which everything is interconnected, vulnerable and unpredictable. It is indeed one world and what happens in other cultures and the less economically developed world affects us all. It is dawning on us that we have to be world citizens if we are to enjoy a sustainable future. Maybe globalisation is really “Americanisation” or “Westernisation”, not working in the best interests of ordinary people throughout the world and not sustainable? If we do not learn willingly, perhaps the Universe forces it on us.

More and more, people are concerned about how globalisation is affecting society, businesses, people all over the world and the Earth. What are the big issues confronting us? What are the implications for organisations and people everywhere? How can leaders at every level grasp the new opportunities, create better and more successful workplaces and contribute to a fair and sustainable world? What can we do?

Bruce gives a graphic account of globalisation, the big issues that face us and how our consciousness is transforming. He presents, in an accessible way, new thinking about organisations and leadership and processes and tools to enable leaders to release creativity in organisations or communities and help people thrive in an uncertain, chaotic transforming world. He has written this book because he believes that increasing awareness and understanding of the issues and seeing the challenges as opportunities will help human beings find ways forward.

The book is in five parts:

- **Part one, Global Forces-a Crazy World** describes globalisation; technological revolution; the way business and society are transforming and the effects on us all - the upside and downside
- **Part two, The Big Issues** focuses on the big issues emerging from globalisation: how they are inter-related; the growing power of transnational corporations; the power and instability of financial markets; the growing gap between rich and poor; the ecological crisis and sustainability; the need for corporate world citizenship; and the long story of difference and diversity. It gives good news about what many organisations and individuals are doing in response to these issues but points out the threats and need for reform of world institutions.
- **Part three, Our Transforming Consciousness** describes how, in a transforming world, the way we think about society, organisations and leadership is changing and a new consciousness is emerging part of which is respect for difference and cultural diversity and the quest for meaning and balance

- **Part four, Tools for the Age of the Global Economy** offers tools to help leaders at every level facilitate transformation and release the creativity and energy in their organisations; it includes two case studies
- **Part five, A New Beginning** describes and guides you through a process to use in developing a new strategy for your organisation or your life or both

The Contents

Foreword

Introduction

PART 1. GLOBAL FORCES - A CRAZY WORLD

- 1. The Age of the Global Economy**
- 2. The Upside of Globalisation**
- 3. The Downside**

PART 2. THE BIG ISSUES

- 4. The Emergence of Global Capitalism and the Transnational Corporation – people before profits?**
- 5. The Power and Instability of Global Financial Markets**
- 6. The Growing Gap Between Rich and Poor**
- 7. The Ecological Crisis – The Sustainability Movement**
- 8. Ethical Business – Corporate World Citizenship**
- 9. The Celebration of Difference and Diversity – a Long and Painful Journey**

PART 3. OUR TRANSFORMING CONSCIOUSNESS

- 10. New Ways of Thinking; New Ways of seeing Organisations**
- 11. Beyond Materialism: a Search for Meaning and Purpose**
- 12. Changing Ways of Leading - liberating the human spirit in organisations**
- 13. New Company within the New Economy**
- 14. The Different Cultures of Capitalism**

PART 4. THE TOOLS FOR THE AGE OF THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

- 15. Getting the Whole System into the Room – involving stakeholders**
- 16. 'When the party's over' – a story about what happens after the whole system has left the room.'**
- 17. Dialogue and Polarity Management**
- 18. Resolving Conflict Constructively – Nonviolent Communication**
- 19. Guiding each other across cultures – the story of some work with a Japanese company**
- 20. Uniting body, mind, heart, and spirit**

PART 5. A NEW BEGINNING

- 21. Discovering and Following your Passion - giving Strategic Leadership**

Appendix. News Bites. A picture of the downside: a rich society out of balance?

Index

Reviews, Endorsements and Readers comments

“Brilliant - I can't remember the last time that I found a business book to be such a riveting read. I was constantly saying "yes" to myself as Bruce pointed out in an accessible and refreshing way what should be obvious to all of us. I would recommend this book to anyone who wants to build up a successful business and stay way ahead of the competition. Bruce provides the insight necessary to create a company that can really make a difference. Businesses that recognise the importance of attracting and keeping good people, will not only provide an environment in which the best people want to work, they will also achieve great and sustained profitability.” **Lin Arigho, MD of Aricot Vert Design, Fleet, Hampshire and winner of Best Boss Award, year 2000, sponsored by Parents at Work and /Lloyds TSB, UK**

"This is a book that can teach us to think more broadly about the systems that inform our decisions, affect our lives and increasingly determine our future. Bruce Nixon reminds us that we, whoever we are, play an important role in shaping these systems, for better or worse. It is, above all, a guide to playing our part in creating a fairer and more sustainable global system." **Barry Coates, former Director World Development Movement, London; now Director, Oxfam, New Zealand.**

“Bruce Nixon provides us with a unique resource to think about how to deal with organisations’ increasing power to run global businesses for optimal profit with the growing concern about the natural and biological environment, and the balance in the distribution of wealth and well being for the global population. His book is particularly good on contemporary details and summarising the views of a wide range of thinkers who have addressed these issues. He does a splendid job in bringing out the seriousness of the issues in an understandable way, maintaining an optimistic tone that things that can be done about them, and giving an empowering message that we can all contribute to this.” **Professor John G Burgoyne, Policy Research Consultant, Council for Excellence in Management and Leadership, London**

“Bruce Nixon in his new book “Global Forces - a Guide for Enlightened Leaders” discusses some of the big issues that are being thrown up by change and are challenging us as individuals and in our organisations to work out new ways of working. I agree with his belief that it is important to identify the inter-relationship between them and the need for holistic solutions. He cites the growing search for meaning and balance and identifies the importance of leadership in espousing the values so essential for encouraging sustainable culture change and the development of trust, creativity and commitment. All this rings strong bells for me and confirms the findings following the work I have been doing on Integrated Leadership with the 70 organisations who collaborated as part of the National Work Life Forum looking at culture change and sustainable culture change programmes.” **Joanna Foster, Chair, The Industrial Society's Work-Life Forum, UK**

*Bruce manages to convey leading edge ideas and complex theory in a breathtakingly simple and inspiring way. His vision of sustainable lives and ethical global transformation bring hope and provide a snapshot of what our future can bring. “I thoroughly enjoyed this book and found it very helpful for my own thinking. **Global Forces** highlights the necessity and wisdom of reconciling those external and internal polarities currently causing conflict in our complex world. It makes a strong case for global citizenship, sustainability, meaning and purpose, widespread*

participation, dialogue, polarity management, diversity, conflict resolution, and a holistic sensibility. Really helpful for my own thinking! If your aim is to thrive, personally and professionally, in the 21st century, I highly recommend this book!" **Glory Ressler, B.A., Dip.GIT, Director, Avalon Consulting & Associates, Ontario, Canada.**

I thoroughly enjoyed reading Global Forces. I don't think I have ever come across a work like this, so broad in scope, or so ambitious. **Charles Orton - Jones, Managing Editor, EuroBusiness Magazine.**

"His book is quite a compelling read. If you or your organisation want to be better equipped to meet the challenges of globalisation, then check it out." **Review in the Professional Manager, by Ann Kelly, FCMI, Management Consultant.**

All too often we feel powerless in the face of global forces. It doesn't have to be like that. The author's ideas and experience, coupled with his irrepressible optimism, give us all good grounds for hope. **Review in the Organic Way, Alan Gear, Director, Henry Doubleday Research Association, Ryton Gardens, UK.**

"It is truly a book of our time, a riveting read. It could change the way you think, feel and act about the galloping globalisation of our planet." **Business Executive, Spring 2001**

"Could not be more topical. Global Forces presents a unique perspective on the global scene. The book's value lies in the connections it makes between ideas and information from a wide range of sources that are not often juxtaposed. **Effective Consulting, Judith Wainright, Management Consultant, London**

"Global Forces is not a book that should be read either quickly or by people who are uncomfortable with the idea of change. If you are serious about examining how to change both yourself and your organization, then this book is well worth reading. If, however, you are looking for a "how-to" manual that can be applied in all situations, then you would be better off looking elsewhere." **Leadership and Organisation Development Journal, Marc W.D. Tyrrell, Carleton University, Canada**

"Civilization is what prevents young men taking over the world and destroying us all. We need more of it. Keep your wisdom flowing." **David Megginson, Professor of HRD, Business School, Sheffield Hallam University and Chairman of European Mentoring Centre.**

"A book of our time! If you want to change the way you think, feel and act read this book now. It will make a difference to you, your organisation and the communities to which you contribute – indeed the World. It understands broadly yet attends closely to the details that matter. Stimulating, resourceful and accessible." **Roger Pitfield, Managing Director, NEW ERA Consulting, Milton Keynes.**

"A very useful and use-able compilation of business strategy background, as well as, some effective tools for increasing awareness. An easily readable dialogue has been created which directly addresses those issues which we face each day in a global environment. Bruce Nixon has brought to us the challenge of increasing our awareness on many levels in our professional and personal lives. Balance and understanding allow us to lead fuller, more effective and productive lives. "Global Forces" provides some tools, as well as, food for thought. Well rounded, timely

subject matter and a truly innovative approach.” **Susanne Schneider, Pan-European Projects Manager with Bovis Lend Lease Ltd., London.**

”Now this is unusual! A business management book that takes the environment seriously and shows how businesses need to adapt if mankind is to make the necessary transition to a sustainable society. I like to think that it is because the author is an HDRA member that this is such a readable, and practical, book that will be of interest to anyone involved in managing business or institutions. The author is able to demonstrate what is possible at individual and workplace level.

” In an increasingly complex world it is a constant challenge to keep the whole system in view and deal with the demands of the moment — this book provides useful reminders of how we have got to where we are and is a real endorsement of the need for leaders to lead 'heads, hearts and minds'.” **Jean Tomlin, HR Director, M&S, London.**

“In this exciting and topical book Bruce Nixon provides a broad overview of the pressures and issues confronting British society and the new tools becoming available to help us tackle them. This is a book for leaders at all levels seeking a more sustainable and sustaining future. Comprehensive references allow the reader to become familiar with the huge range of ideas and issues raised . It is a very interesting book.” **Jim Hopwood, Safety, Health and Environment Planning and Special Programs Manager, ExxonMobil Chemical Europe, Middle East and Africa, Southampton, UK .**

“An easy read and a breath of fresh air....a work full of optimism. It draws together so many highly impressive day-to-day examples and practices from business and commercial life that only the terminally depressed will fail to recognise that there is a healthy and growing trend towards a collaborative, inclusive approach to the world. This approach can be seen working within the business and other spheres, and Bruce is most persuasive when he advocates that it can help us achieve the kind of sustainable way of life sought by so many. By definition, if you don't use the right means, you don't achieve the right result. Sustainability necessitates new ways of behaving inside companies, families, social groups, and beyond. The author provides useful techniques to help individuals and organisations change by adopting new attitudes to the things that matter. That we cannot hope to continue in the old way becomes increasingly evident as one turns the pages of this book. So does the conclusion that Bruce's approach offers the only real alternative for business, society, and the individuals who make up that society.” **Steve Lytton, Network Coordinator, Central Logistics Association for Supply Chain Partnerships, Northamptonshire, UK.**

“I loved it! “Global Forces” is a wonderful balance between the engaging and the enduring; a good read and an indispensable addition to the reference section of anyone's library. I never dreamed that I could read a book on the global economy that would have me at the edge of my seat, nor one in which I would find such a weight of statistics so relevant and enlightening. I really enjoy the way the global economy is placed in such a clear and understandable historical context. The book illustrates very well the compelling interrelationship and interdependence of the interests of the "first" world and what should perhaps be more accurately described as the "two-thirds" world. And all of it clearly written and immediately accessible. UK examples makes this a particularly valuable addition to the growing wealth of material written on the subject of new - or

should it more accurately be old - leadership.

I found myself through all the sections of the book poised with a pencil and writing again and again in the margin things like "great quote", "interesting statistic", "good angle", "must use this" and, simply, "Yes!"

*And finally, I got into the routine of reading the book on the train going home after work each day and perhaps the strongest recommendation I can give to "Global Forces" is the number of occasions I deliberately missed my station so that I didn't have to stop reading! It's an important book." **John Noble, Director of the Greenleaf Centre for Servant-Leadership-UK; Personnel Co-ordinator, Britain, Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), London.***

*"Very stimulating and positive. It demonstrates well the need for new and inclusive thinking and for participative decision-making by all actors in the age of globalisation. Furthermore, it offers the tools with which to do it." **John Bunzl, the Simultaneous Policy Organisation, London.***

*"Global Forces is not a book that should be read either quickly or by people who are uncomfortable with the idea of change. If you are serious about examining how to change both yourself and your organization, then this book is well worth reading. If, however, you are looking for a "how-to" manual that can be applied in all situations, then you would be better off looking elsewhere." **Leadership and Organisation Development Journal, November 2001, Marc W.D. Tyrrell Carleton University, Canada***

*Having read Global Forces I am more hopeful of being able to do values-based culture change work with commercial organisations. I set up my own organisation, Transitions to achieve such goals. This book is an important stepping stone along the road to achieving my own personal strategic goals. There are so many sign posts included in it: people, organisations, web sites, books. I heartily recommend it. **Nick Owen, Management Consultant, Transitions.***

*"Global Forces" provides a fascinating commentary on the many issues confronting today's world. Refreshingly free of jargon the book flows effortlessly over the complex and diverse, though also connected, forces at work in both our global and local societies. It is as though the author is inviting us to travel along with him as he reflects on these and points to both the upside and the downside in each. This is not a book defining solutions. But a guided tour of the issues by Bruce Nixon does much to help our understanding and to provide us with a vision of hope that a sustainable and fairer world is there to be created. If the book is for leaders, then maybe we are all in some sense leaders. The book has a message for each one of us, whether our level of responsibility be managing the global economy, guiding a teenage daughter or somewhere in between. **John Field, MA (Cantab), FRSA, Chartered Engineer, convener of the RSA's Living Systems Group, one time Deputy Director of BAA and MD of an engineering consultancy.***

"The emphasis on quality leadership in today's world and the need for reflective thinking to achieve this is inescapable. Most successful organisations are built on good relationships. A leader in today's world, whether it be the leader of a small company or of a large multi-national, must be able to model those relationships. As an educational leader striving to balance the external changes and the pressures with the maintenance of personal values and integrity, I found

the breadth of information and the wide context given in this book provided me with much food for thought.” **Julia Trueman, Head Teacher, Tring School, Hertfordshire.**

The author Before becoming an independent management consultant, Bruce spent 30 years in HR management in: Peek Frean, Birds Eye, Alcan (Jamaica and UK), Reed Paper and Royal and Sun Alliance. Clients, past and present, include Digital Equipment, Marconi, W H Smith, Dacorum Borough Council, Parker Hannifin, Sanyo, Middlesex Probation Service, PricewaterhouseCoopers, BUPA Health Services, ExxonMobil, SmithKline Beecham, Sun Banking Corporation, Middlesex University Business School and Bovis Lend Lease. His companion book, *Making a Difference – Strategies and Tools for Transforming your Organisation*, paperback July 2001, receives much appreciation from business and professional readers alike.

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