

Re: Solar powered lasers in space

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On 23 Sep, 20:05, Willie.Moo...@xxxxxxxxxx wrote:

New York is where all the action is taking place.

Precisely my point.

That is basically why people are there. In point of fact you could get rid of New York without a fantastic amount of space engineering.

You will always have places like New York. Given human sympathies we may always have a New York! even if its an historic recreation between Wall Street and Park Avenue! lol.

This can also be done by developing terrestrial technology.

When you can fly ballistically at 1 gee to any point on Earth in 20 minutes or less (thrusting outward during the middle of the flight to maintain altitude against centripetal force) – the Earth has in fact become a global village. There is a strong psychological connection between the time it takes to get somewhere and what you consider your hometown. Wherever you can go in 40 minutes or less, you consider your neighborhood. If it takes longer than 40 minutes, then it becomes a bother. Longer than 2 hours and its a different place entirely. So in the days of horse drawn carriages it took 4 hours to go 10 miles. I live in Columbus Ohio. Within 5 miles of 'downtown' which used to be Columbus proper, there is Clintonville, and 5 miles beyond that Worthington. This was the day when average speed of transit in a horse drawn carriage was 2.5 miles per hour. Today average speed of transit by velocipede, automotive preambulator, motorized carriage (which locals call simply 'car') – is 50 mph. So, the same 5 miles that took 2 hours before – can be traversed in 6

Re: Solar powered lasers in space

minutes. The separate towns and villages surrounding Columbus, have merged into a great metropolis, and these villages have become post office boxes known as sub-urban areas – or 'suburbs' to the larger city. In fact in two hour you can span over 100 miles – allowing the City of Columbus to spread across Franklin county forming a single integrated community. At automotive speeds the Cities of Cleveland and Cincinatti, Wheeling and Indianapolis, are the nearby towns today. In an age with high speed subsonic personal VTOL bizjets capable of 500 mph – the Cities of New York, Chicago, St Louis, and so forth, will absorb these towns.. and in an era of 50,000 mph VTOL cruisers – just discussed – the entire Earth will psychologically become one city – and the orbiting colonies and factories will be the suburbs, and the moon will be a small nearby town...

Actually ballistic flight may not be the best solution. The solution may well be to have evacuated tunnels and electromagnetic acceleration.

One small point. You are now implicitly postulating VN machines. If all the work is done by robots the colony is VN. I personally believe O'Neill is only credible in a Von Neumann context.

At some point we will have VN machines. Probably sooner rather than later. The early work of Johnny von Neumann was so successful and suggestive of immediate progress, I wonder if this isn't being suppressed along with some of his other stuff related to secret codes.

I don't think so. There are a great many conspiracies but this is not one of them. I do not think there is any conspiracy in fundamental science/mathematics. I think that the VN machine has not been built because in the time of Von Neumann computers just weren't powerful enough. A similar situation held with regard to language.

http://groups.google.co.uk/group/sci.physics.research/browse_frm/thread/4ec2ce2ba587ed58?hl=en

When we are considering assembling flat packs we are in the situation of "We can build it if we want to and if we have the imagination". As far as codes are concerned we already know a lot. We know about the RSA code the beauty of which is that you can establish it without ever having to transmit anything in plain text. We know too that with any generating function we have a code, but we need RSA to set our generating function up.

Re: Solar powered lasers in space

How long should we wait. Go now for energy – quite right. VN is at the end of the road, it has to be.

But we can do a lot in space in the interim. Beam energy from the sun to provide Earth's energy and provide advanced transportation technology (light-wing VTOL super-ballistic transport in every garage) Survey all the small bodies in the solar system. Use the laser capacity near the sun to capture the richest of these to bring into MEO. Use the same factories and launchers to put remotely controlled robots that are shot into space to operate by remote control within MEO – hire the 1.6 billion unemployed in the world, and pay them with output from the factory, sell the excess, and keep the profit.

I don't think it has to be ballistic.

Ditto on terrestrial possibilities.

But that's not needed! There are 3.4 billion men and 3.4 billion women within 1/7 light second of one another. Its a total waste of energy to build sexual analogues of them when you can go meet them in person! Better to spend money to make food production and distribution more efficient.

Somewhere there is a compromise that suits the majority of people.

This is only by necessity of our limited technology involving primitive forms of communication, transportation and production.

I am not so sure. The question I am asking is why do business executives keep travelling to meetings which are completely unnecessary, even with present day technology.

Re: Solar powered lasers in space

You can meet people in New York easier than you can meet them elsewhere. OK perhaps not New York, but you do need a settlement.

Because of our primitive forms of communication. I mean, Bill Deming demonstrated the importance of gathering quality data during the 1940s and integrated into production systems that made weapons and so forth – to solve quality problems with weapons. The Japanese adopted these techniques across their industry – and the resulting improvements in quality, volume, and cost allowed them to make very sophisticated products (automobiles, consumer electronics) very competitively with established manufacturers, by the 1960s they were making inroads in the US and Europe, and around the world, by the 1980s, US and other manufacturers began adopting some of the techniques, it wasn't until 2000 that most manufacturers were ISO 9000 compliant – and this is but ONE detail where science has impacted manufacturing. There a whole host of findings that are gathering dust, vonNeumann didn't just postulate and do work on SR machines, he built prototypes! and its been a dead letter.

Not completely (see above) Von Neumann lived in the era of valves and it was hard to execute his devices. The thing I feel now is that we have computers of fantastic power, in comparison. Somehow though we have lost a certain amount of vision.

Norbert Weiner, Ken Arrow, Wassily Leonteff, have huge bodies of work – just to name a few – with Buckminster Fuller acting as cheerleader. But all these folks worked in the 1950s. With the exception of Eric Drexler, I haven't seen any follow up on any of this. And these fols suggest small steps to improve the efficiency and quality and cost of our productive systems across the board using cybernetics and advanced math.. haha.. but folks haven't adopted it. Or have been slow to adopt it. I will say retailers have adopted retail automation – this is something I had a small part in. But this is just the smallest drop in a rather large bucket that if we tapped into it, we could transform life on Earth today without VN machines – by understanding adopting and adding to the bodies of work that lie dormant in our collective abilities.

We are basically designed for a hunter gatherer existence. Tis is perfectly true. Hunter/gatherer bands were (probably) round about 50–100. With that number of people objectives are fairly well agreed.

Correct. One interesting possibility in the near future, if everyone has access to ballistic transport and the internet, folks can organize along lines that are most productive and complementary – rather than

Re: Solar powered lasers in space

geographically.

You don't need ballistic transport – all you need is a decent system of telepresence. This is achievable in the very near term.

These are all arguments which will be raised by the skeptics. I don't think there will be any skepticism about energy. I don't think colonization will be a stated goal for a long time.

Well you disagree with what Werner vonBraun said in The New Horizons study done for the US in secret following World War 2. VonBraun said we could have begun colonization of the moon in 1948 and urged the US to take the leadership position. The work was classified for a number of years, and his advice ignored until Sputnik.

Fact is, we could start to colonize the inner planets and the moon and cislunar space today if we had the will to do it.

Yes I do. Werner v Braun – like v Neumann in some respects had a vision that could not be realized at the time. You cannot consider space colonies without a drastic reduction in cost. This reduction of cost is so many orders of magnitude below current costs that a lot a technology has to be developed first. We can have a power station as an objective, we can have a VNmaschine. Colonies, they will be objectives when the costs are right.

If you can get onto a downward spiral of costs then things will indeed happen quickly.

Yes. This is achieved by choosing a valid metric of measurement – continually reviewing it – and then investing in improving it. We cannot expect progress in any endeavour until all of these steps are carried out. Once they are we can expect exponential improvements in cost in very short times.

But colonies will still not be an objective.

Consider that between 1948 and 1968 we went from the V2 to Saturn V moonrocket. If our goals were directed a little more rationally, and LBJ hadn't cut back on nuclear propulsion systems, we could easily

Re: Solar powered lasers in space

have had some of Philip Bono's NOVA rocket, a Saturn with a nuclear upper stage, or even Kraft Erikhe's nuclear cruiser to colonize mars.

<http://www.astronautix.com/lvs/heliosa.htm>

Apart from the nuclear dimension, they were basically larger versions of the chemical rocket. The nuclear cruise cancellation stems from a distrust of nuclear power. The beauty of a laser is that you can have what amounts to a Nerva engine in the lower atmosphere without the risk of nuclear accident.

Basically if you take an outsized Atlas type rocket, that burns hydrogen and oxygen, put a nuclear thermal sustainer on it, and two lox/hydrogen engines on the outside, you have a dandy 1 stage rocket that can take off from Earth, the LOX tanks and sustainers form liquid boosters that fall off and glide back to the launch center.

The hydrogen fueled sustainer operating at 1,200 sec Isp – blasts the payload into a Mars trajectory – with sufficient propellant to execute a soft landing on Mars after an aerobrake entry.

I though the Nerva was round about 950 I may be wrong. I am assuming just over 1,000 for LH + carbon particles.

Refueling on Mars from local water found there – and decomposed using a space power version of the nuclear thermal core (built around the nuclear core of aircraft carriers and nuclear sub power plants being built at that time) – the vehicle is refueled and takes off from mars without the boosters (because mars is 1/3 gravity) – and flies back to Earth, aerobraking here to re-enter and then land – to be fully reused.

This mars cruiser was designed and could have been built at the same time the SR-71 was designed and built – 1957. WE CHOSE NOT TO. Using the same nuclear technology that gave us the nuclear jet cruise missile (secret) the nuclear sub, the nuclear powered aircraft carrier and the nuclear airplane.

It would have been very expensive. I doubt seriously whether it could have been done at that time.

In terms of politics I think that one significant factor may well be "What is the smallest quantum of money which will

Re: Solar powered lasers in space

start the ball rolling.. You can get significant amounts of solar energy with a fairly large collection area fairly simply. To have a cheap space launch based on lasers requires another stage.

Well, I've designed very low cost solar panels. And I've incorporated them into solar synfuel process to create tremendous value. Once that value is realized, additional facilities will be built. Additional profits will be earned. And there will exist many large central solar collector sites that can be improved by simple space laser. So, I can see things moving rather easily from where I am today, to where things can be tomorrow.

This is indeed one of the attractions. The smallest quantum of money will buy you a 1km collection circle. If you can concentrate to 1m from GEO you need an aperture of $40 \times 1.22m$ or about 60m diameter. You need at least 60m to think in terms of a specific impulse of 1,000. Probably won't cost that much. You will need quite a lot of experimentation. Would be a far better goal than "back to the Moon".

N Korea is a rogue, but is not rich. I will agree some of the Middle Eastern rogues are rich.

Is the average Libyan rich? the average Iraqi? the average Iranian? I don't think so. They have oil and that's it. By not trading with them that oil is placed in storage – and the remaining oil is overdeveloped to take up the slack. When the produced oil runs out, the oil in storage can be brought on line – and overdeveloped as well. This is a way of producing an extended period of stable prices for the US. The US can afford to pay high prices more so than any other nation. This policy creates an extended period of stable moderately high price oil that is very beneficial to the US.

I am not at all sure.

I would like references to this. The problem I have always had with linking US foreign policy to oil is that spending money on defense is simply not a cost effective way of obtaining oil.

We obtain the oil by buying it always. Taking it off the market and putting it on the market adjusts supplies, which given the demand,

Re: Solar powered lasers in space

adjusts the price. It takes very little or no money at all to say – hey, we're not going to trade with these guys – and don't you trade with them either. How much did it cost to find out that Libya was a rogue state? Nothing.

It takes a lot of money to attack someone. Iraq is a major contributor to the budget deficit.

look at figure 2 in this report

http://www.eia.doe.gov/pub/oil_gas/petroleum/feature_articles/2004/wo...

Look at the exponential increase through 1970... that's greater than 5% growth btw. It was this strong global economic growth since the 1950s that led to so many rosy scenarios about a wonderful future! haha.. anyway (sigh) continue that 7% annual growth rate forward – on top of 1973 – and you'll see you'll reach the peak that is coming now in 2026 – by 1986 –

Without the oil crisis we would already be in secondary production. And what moderate that output? Why did we meander along the horizontal and not have strong growth for 30 years? Because SUPPLY was removed from the market.

Far better to spend
your money on nuclear power (peaceful), terrestrial solar power, more exploration if not space lasers.

Agreed. If you don't step on the toes of special interests who have invested heavily in acquiring control of reserves. They want to make sure that the reserves are fully used, and of course get as much profit as possible from those reserves. This was the view of the business community in 1950s. Soon science would make nuclear power too cheap to meter and the age of oil would be gone. This was derailed at that time. Very similar to the tension between the electric light and gas lamp in the 1880s. But instead of the new technology winning out. The old technology won out. Then, in 1964 LBJ aske Brookhaven National Labs to conduct a study to resolve the looming energy shortages. We KNEW that by 1970 the US would be entering secondary oil production. BNL came back with a plan. Direct thermochemical decomposition of water into hydrogen and use the hydrogen directly or in synfuels by upgrading low grade carbons. LBJ got bogged down in Vietnam, did not run for re–election and his Great Society program along with this little piece, was scrapped by Nixon. The shortages came, the economy went in the dumper, the US went off the gold standard, OPEC flexed its muscle. There was increased unrest in the Middle East. The US stop trading with half the reserves and

Re: Solar powered lasers in space

got everyone else to stop trading too. This created a period of no growth – but a period where US was in charge of everything. No major money was spent. People wanted the growth back, and wanted things like they were in 1960s. Carter came to office – a nuclear engineer – promising to do something about energy. Before he could turn around TMI happened and he was urged to drop all references to nuclear power in his plan. The US spent more money on energy research than in going to the moon and never produced one damn thing that challenged big oil. This despite all the expert opinion and all the studies done up to that time. NONE of the programs that were suggested by the nuclear industry were adopted. Nothing nuclear came out of the research. Which brings us to our present situation. Now the hard stop – or real end of oil on a global scale – will happen in 2026 – and the DOE has rediscovered the 1964 BNL study and proposed a GEN 4 nuclear program which is basically that program – to start in 2030. Why 2030? That's when oil prices will start to falter due to economic depression. The oil companies have successfully executed their end game – at great cost to everyone else. .

Capitalism is a flexible system that will produce at a price. The basic reason why the US is in Iraq is sheer goddam stupidity. Nothing else. No oil, capitalist oilmen would go nuclear, even solar, even put lasers into space. They would NEVER have gone into Iraq.

I got very cross when Fred McCall said I should listen to the people who knew what they were talking about. Clearly they don't.

Did we use up all the stones before we ended the stone age? no. Did we burn all the trees before we switched to coal? no. Did we burn all the coal before we switched to oil? no. Did we burn all the oil before we switched to space power or nuclear power? yes.

I don't think we will. I think once off the ground space will have a momentum of its own. There is lack of technology and lack of imagination.

One quite interesting point. Obsidian knives are used in operations at the present time. They are in actual fact sharper than metal knives! This is very much in the nature of a BTW.

Its not a matter of technology. Its a matter of politics and lack of true concerned leadership.

Clearly this long term policy was planned – there are even papers available from US state department and others. Plainly it was a way

Re: Solar powered lasers in space

to moderate the supply of oil in a way the benefitted the US relative to all other players in the market. Obviously this is our primary motivation. Just compare our attitudes of WMD in Iraq and need to invade Iran because of a nuclear power program versus our continuing lack of interest in Pakistani nuclear weapons – which already exist, and the nuclear program of North Korea (which was of no real interest until the North shot off a rocket capable of reaching US homeland)

The one reason for attacking Iran is failure in Iraq.

You are looking at the tactical situation we face today and ignoring the strategic discussion I am trying to have with you.

You cannot advance strategically without tactical victories. There is one basic point about oil companies that you should never forget. They HAVE made a considerable investment in alternative technologies. The strategic aims of a company are to diversify into areas of future growth. In fact if you want money you should look at people like Shell.

Shell is dedicated to making money, it is not dedicated to oil. It looks at the technological and political scene in deciding where to invest and what to research. There is also quite a lot a kudos in an oil company diversifying.

Oil, like other companies have to present themselves as being attractive to young people. Image is vital to them. Any oil company executive, believe me, would far sooner be in space, or in a terrestrial desert rather than Iraq.

The fact is that when the US withdraws Iran will take over the country, either in terms of a more of less client state (which I think they would prefer) or as an organic part of a united Persia.

So what? Iran was trying to take over the country when Saddam ran it? Syria won't sit still and neither will Saudi Arabia. Turkey and the Kurds will have a say too. So what? That oil means nothing if

Re: Solar powered lasers in space

we switch to another source. And that only matters to the oil companies. That's all I'm saying.

Saddam was there stopping them.

Pick up a book on the Ottoman Empire and read it. You might also want to read the first chapter of THE COMING WAR WITH JAPAN by Merideth and Lebar I think. Great stuff. Talks about what the US has done to maintain its strategic position in the world, and suggests what it might do in the future. Which is not to put the US down. If the US weren't number one – someone else would be, and things would likely be far worse than they are.

I think it is possible to envisage a collection of states having a common policy. I see what you mean. The immediate alternative to a US world is a Sino Russian world. Al Qaeda has tried to make certain that the US is defeated. The irony is that they got entangled with a far more ruthless enemy than the US. The Shiites/Iranians responded to terror, not with security measures as the US would have done, but with ethnic cleansing and extermination.

But at some point, the US has to have an end game. At some point the entire Earth will be politically integrated and peaceful. JFK wanted to start down that path in 1960. Switch to nuclear power from oil. Switch from a nuclear competition of the cold war to a space race. Use our intelligence community to inspire peace and cooperation rather than seek advantage in pointless competition. JFK lost. Nixon/Eisenhower won. The economic collapse of the United States in 1975 – including our failure in Vietnam is the result.

It will have to be.

BTW – The current plans for Iran include "letting the anthill sort itself out at the end of the strikes". Quite clearly nothing to the US liking will emerge. There is even the possibility of an intervention by a third country. Possibly Putin under the unberella of the Central Asian Federation.

Yes. The chinese are already building an oil pipeline into the region. This is bad for the US, but not bad for the oil companies that supply the US. China will have access to low cost energy. The US will have access to low cost chinese labor. The US will pay more to the oil companies for the reserves they DO control (they just signed some deals with Libya) – and they'll get top dollar for those

Re: Solar powered lasers in space

by the time the US does what it should have done 45 years ago.

The Sino Russian world. Of course a pipeline will enable the Straights of Hormuz to be closed, while still preserving Iranian exports.

History is what actually happened, not what might have happened.

That's a ludicrously stupid statement. History isn't just what's written in the press releases of the White House. It's what's written in the secret documents, private agreements, and actions of others as well.

True. What I was saying is that you can't say if this or that had happened history would be different.

Knowing WHY history happened the way it did is important – and to understand that, you need to look at the strategic thinking that informed those decisions and what opportunities they had at that time. Why don't we do all we can to stop heroin production in Afghanistan? No one has an answer for that. Why doesn't anyone in the news media Fox or CNN ask this question? No one has an answer for that either.

One thing that someone looking into America from the outside, I am in fact British, finds hard to appreciate is the fact that America wins large numbers of Nobel prizes, but has repeated intelligence failures in the area of public policy. The official CIA report on 9/11 shows almost criminal negligence – not to mention of course the initial error of supporting OBL in the first place (that is when he was fighting Soviet forces).

Agreed. And what's more, Americans for a New Century met in DC in 2000 and concluded that they needed a Pearl Harbor type event to galvanize public opinion behind their goals of US dominance through direct military intervention. Also, the folks that were responsible for the FIRST attack on the WTC were largely apprehended, but some got away. And those that did were being tracked and monitored by the FBI. But, when they came back into the US, the US lost track of them. No explanation. And those guys were on the flights that crashed into the WTC.

Re: Solar powered lasers in space

Meanwhile, rather than address these serious questions, you have crazy folks marginalizing this whole avenue of discussion by saying bombs were put in the WTC by US intelligence community and so forth.

Bombs in the WTC is very easy to disprove. No debris (except for engines) was left because aircraft are made out of aluminium which melts at a low temperature. I sometimes wonder whether the bombs in the WTC was a story put out by the CIA to cover up the questions that really should have been asked.

Conspiracy theories do however show a lack of trust in the government. On whether the Apollo Moon landings really took place, Buzz Aldrin has said that he believes there should be freedom of speech but people should be aware of the impression they are giving young people.

My thoughts are different. Dictatorship arises when democracy fails to answer the problems of a society.

Dictatorships arises for the same reason religions arise and for the same reason any form of government arises – people have an irrational relationship to their own power and irrationally give power to father figures. This has been discussed at length by Freud and Miller.

Islamic society contains one major contradiction.

Just one? haha.. All religions have multiple contradictions stemming from poor child rearing. Emotional needs that are not addressed in childhood, continue buried in the conscious of the adult. Sort of like a mental club foot arising from poorly fitted shoes. So they have a mental limp! Its easy for bullies to push them over. Same here. The forms of government that humans adopt have far more similarities than differences. Those similarities stem not from any rational cybernetic need – but from irrational emotional needs. Those needs are not present in properly raise children, or adults who have successfully completed a valid course of therapy. Those sane individuals are by far a very minute minority in the population.

Islam sees the spiritual and secular rulers to be one and the same.

If God exists then every individual is created by God and has a capacity for direct personal revelation and direct contact with their

Re: Solar powered lasers in space

creator. According to those who have had such revelations such contact is natural and a source of great joy and great wisdom and peace that surpasses understanding.

If that were true you would not need religious leaders. Ayatollahs tell you what God's will is. You don't discover it for yourself.

Religions exist to extract temporal power from people by removing the individual from his or her natural connection with the divine and substituting a connection with the religious institution. This is the worst form of blasphemy. Religions are successful at this with people who as children suffered certain types of mental and physical abuse as outlined by Miller and others. Religions also promote rules related to free sexual expression and child rearing that promote the very abuse that makes it easy for them to retain their power through the generations. Religions also align themselves with other temporal powers to maintain their power and control as well.

The Islamic religion is not unique. It shares many features with all other powerful religions in the world.

Islam is more prone than most. Christ, the Buddha, Lao Tse etc. were religious leaders/philosophers. Mohammad was a tribal leader who led his tribe into war.

Islam also shares one feature with Protestantism and that is that secular prosperity and religion go hand in hand. Nasser was a secular ruler who did not say his prayers properly and was defeated. We say our prayers properly have got the faith to suicide bomb – and we are being defeated too.

Hearts and minds have not been won in the Iraq war either.

They could have up to about 2 days after the statues were pulled down. But asking the man who lost New Orleans to plan for the post invasion strategy is asking a bit much. But like I said, this oil is going to China, and Libyan oil is going to the US, and by 2026 – the oil companies will have played their end game.

All oil eventually ends up in Rotterdam. Sellers have to sell it, buyers have to buy it. This is so whatever the political color.

Re: Solar powered lasers in space

This last paragraph is a little bit contradictory. The military has tried to win hearts and minds, but has failed.

The military must rely on their commander and chief to create a strategy with the expertise he can draw on, central intelligence, state, others who advise the White House – to come up with a workable strategy. To throw it on the field commanders or generals even, and then say they failed is to do them a disservice.

He can call on lots of people. America does win Nobel Prizes.

Its knowledge is clearly incomplete, its control of the sources of information incomplete.

Yes. What is reported on CNN is self-consistent. But is incomplete. Fact is, there is a lot more opportunity for action than you recount here. Fact is, these were ignored. Fact is, Bush had no idea how to handle post invasion.. Fact is he had no idea because he gave it no thought – had he given it some thought and authorized action on it – he would have had a workable plan. But that didn't happen. Fact is, the President is responsible for this failure and he has not stood up and taken full responsibility for it.

I ask the question again. How come America can win Nobel Prizes but can't get a strategy for Iraq right.

You know my perennial hobbyhorse AI. Now in the future television programs are going to be sent to us via the Internet. Google is going to control our hearts and minds.

This proceeds from the false assumption that people are merely robots that respond to inputs. Fact is, we have the capacity to create our own ideas and follow through on them – stemming from deep seated desires.

Now Google is in fact international. I have talked about Radio Reloj (which in fact is the name of a radio station in Cuba) in the context of SETI. Sync pulses can be observed tens of parsecs away.

You are making non-sequitor statements.. this makes no sense in the

Re: Solar powered lasers in space

context of what we were discussing.

We are made by our experience and sources of knowledge. Television is one of the major sources of knowledge we have. If an AI system is creating our experience it seems clear that it would have enormous power.

Quite clearly the demise of Radio Reloj will have a lot to say about how we perceive the word. We have to be certain that AI provides a neutral picture. So far Google seems to be doing.

You are not making any sense at all. I thought you meant AI = Artificial Intelligence. I know what Google is. I don't know what Radio Reloj is. But if you think that by listening to a media source you can change life experience in any tangible way you are mistaken.

No, television has been a major part of our culture since it was invented. Our views are formed by the sources of information we have – And it won't just be television, it will also influence the way we are educated.

I think we should distinguish between religion and belief in God.

I think you need to distinguish between belief in something and the direct experience of that thing.

Religious leaders cannot therefore have had any direct experience.

Science is neutral about belief in God as such.

Science is a greek word for knowledge. The scientific method arose around the 13th century when a group of priests had an argument over the meaning of the Word of God as passed down to them through Text. They hit on the idea that God create nature and if there was a reliable way to read Nature, then we could understand God that way, without worrying about the truth or untruth of this or that word. To distinguish this form of knowledge, derived directly from the natural world, these folks called the results of their method after the Greek word for knowledge, Science – and the method the Scientific Method.

Re: Solar powered lasers in space

From that time to this Science has accumulated in its power and its

capacity in human affairs. Religions based on interpretations of ancient texts have not. No system of government has accumulated power except by abrogating to itself the results of Science. An approach to examining the human mind has only been developed in the last century by Freud. In the past decade a few brain chemistry researchers and therapists have suggested using DMT in a controlled setting to bring about religious insights to people who seek them and have prepared themselves for them.

As far as organized religion is concerned the difficulty I have with it is the intolerance it shows.

Any temporal power must explain its shortcomings to the faithful. Since religious organizations exist only to perpetuate their temporal power, they create stories that explain their shortcomings in a way that expands their power. This leads naturally to stories where they and the faithful are blameless, while others who are not part of the faithful are to blame for any and all shortcomings.

Islam is unashamedly temporal. The others are in differing degrees.

There are a lot of religions saying contradictory things.

Because things are said to take advantage of the irrational feelings people have and need not be logical or consistent – the only requirement is that the faithful are filled with shame remorse and self-loathing, and at the same time hope for the future, by surrendering themselves to the authorities and through promises to come to understand and adhere more closely to authorities in the future.

Now, this is distinctly different than surrender to God, or to the joy and hope within that sees shame remorse and self hatred as a form of madness.

Surrender to God (Islam) or surrender to his self appointed spokespersons.

They can't all be right.

Re: Solar powered lasers in space

None of them are,

Either one of them is right or they are all wrong.

They are all mad. Various individuals certainly had a direct revelation of the divine at some time in the past. And some of them were able to organize followers and some sort of institution to pass on the wisdom of the individual. Those institutions responding to the pressures that temporal power exerts, chose temporal power over the divine message. In fact, the message was edited and reformed many times to meet the needs of this or that dictator. Look at what Constantine did to the Gnostics! It happens in all religions. So, I feel quite confident in saying they are all mad. When you have churches urging young men to go to war in the US, or when you have mosques recruiting young women to blow themselves up in crowded places – is one very different from another? no. they're all mad and have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

Organized religion claims to have a red phone – dial "A" for Allah. He does not seem to have taught them how to live in peace.

Peace can only come about by loving yourself and honoring the voice within and knowing that nothing at all can threaten what is and that what is is perfect. Religions seek to undermine this 'oceanic feeling' and create generation after generation of people that die bitter and frustrated.

Agreed

A genuine religious experience?

It doesn't take much. Given that God created you and is still in contact with you. But religions would have you think its the most difficult thing. Or make you feel guilty if you think you had one. Or demonize you if you stuck to your guns. Otherwise, they'd lose all authority relatively quickly.

Possibly, but organized religion is not about religious experience.

Re: Solar powered lasers in space

Interesting that you say that. That's the problem.

On the personal level. People are drawn to religions because they are seeking something that is missing in their lives. Maybe they suffered a loss of a loved one. Maybe a financial reversal. Maybe they're battling alcohol or drug addiction. Maybe they're doing well in every part of their life, but feel empty anyway. They are seeking a connection with the divine. they are seeking a religious experience. And the religion is telling them they have the answer. they know the way. they know the truth. And people surrender to the religion and adopt its precepts and they're stuck since the religion doesn't offer the experience they seek – merely exploits their need for it.

On the theoretical level. Religions have a book, writings of holy men and women. These people are holy because they have been transformed by their religious experience. These people started out quite modestly. They had an insight an experience. They shared it. It got recorded. And a religion began.

They have genuine insights mixed up with other things. I think in fact Mohammad did have insights (he believed in more rights for women) not all of which were shared with his followers. Being a war leader he had to compromise.

It is about in groups and out groups.
I will kill you if you don't say your prayers as I say them.

It depends what sort of stresses exist within the religious community. Certainly, if the religion feels threatened by the faithful blaming them for their discontents, they crack down on the faithful and cast blame on to the non-faithful. If the religion feels powerful and discontent doesn't exist among the faithful, then the religion can take responsibility for the good feeling and generally they laugh at others misfortunes blaming their lack of faith for that.

Religious
experience on the other hand tends to be "Buddhist" in a very broad sense, and spans the different traditions.

Buddha said talking about religious experiences is like a finger pointing at the moon. If you have a dog, and you point at something, the dog looks at your finger. Because dogs aren't that abstract in their thinking. haha.. But a religious experience is not based on words, or logic even. So, this is where the religions get into trouble right at the outset. Words can only point at what is

Re: Solar powered lasers in space

important – what is important cannot be expressed in a word. So they're only approximations to the truth. They're never the whole truth. But there are Christian retreats designed to invoke a direct connection through Christ. There are Muslim activities directed toward having a direct revelation. These are highly controlled and anyone not following the party line can quickly get into trouble. For example, there was a Muslim leader who organized the destruction of a Buddhist icon in Afghanistan about 10 years ago. They got together and prayed and then went about destroying one of the largest buddah's in existence. As he clambered to the top of the statue and started breaking it apart with a sledge hammer – he had a revelation. He realized that a thousand years ago he was a Buddhist who invaded this region and erected this statue. That was what he thought. He stood up and looked around and started telling people to stop. They thought him mad but out of respect stopped. He went to the Mullah and explained what had happened. He sent him to a mental hospital and extracted a recanting from him using modern medical techniques of torture. As it stands, the guy went bonkers and his story is of no account. But that's only the history the way it was written by those there. The reality is that the guy had a direct revelation – which he believed to be very personally powerful to him and answered questions for him that he personally had asked.

And it was an experience that did not exclude other experience.

This may be true. I think though in a very real sense the type of framework provided by Organized Religion may in fact stop one thinking in this sort of way.

Religions exist to perpetuate the power of the religions. If thinking a certain way undermines a religion then the religion is against it. If thinking a certain way empowers the religion then the religion is for it.

The Pilgrim Fathers did not go because they were awaestruck with America. They went because James I wanted rid of them.

That's right. But don't underestimate that. In today's world James I would have no place to send them, and so would be forced to a final solution of some sort.

And he would be scared of giving them a VN machine.

Re: Solar powered lasers in space

Yes indeed, but I want governments to be elected that attempt to better the lot of Mankind. This is one factor that will influence me in my decision of who to vote for.

But Ken Arrow showed in 1950 that voting doesn't work the way we think it does, so its all a sham. His data has been used to increase the power of the specialists at great cost to the public. So your vote is meaningless.

It is when we do not fully understand the issues.

It is also possible that AI will influence the course of government. Asimov talked about the laws of robotics.

This was just a part of a sci-fi story. It was only later that folks wondered about it. As a practical matter it has yet to have any impact on human affairs – except as an idea.

With the rise of digital feeds Isaac Asimov immediately springs to mind.

But there are no Asimov laws in any software or hardware around today. So, its weird to hear you speak as if Asimov's 3 laws actually exist in some real sense. haha.. People talk about Santa Claus, but they seldom talk as if Santa actually exists. Same here. The idea exists certainly. The thing itself does not.

Content should be provided and indexed impartially.

Should be? How?

Asimov I believe would have wanted his robots to combat antsemitism.

Are you the person who said history is what really happened? Just checking. haha.. Asimov was a science fiction writer and a popular writer of science – a science journalist. He had a background in biology. Wasn't very good at math. He never built any robots.

Re: Solar powered lasers in space

Robots of the type he imagined in his stories never existed and may never exist. So his robots were incapable of doing anything being ideas in Asimov's head. Asimov knew this, so I doubt Asimov wanted them to do anything except be interesting characters in a story that would sell.

As far as anti-semitism is concerne, Asimov was a Jewish emigre to the United States –

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isaac_Asimov

and the worlds he imagined for his robots did not involve anti-semitism at all. Although his robots did have a sort of predilection toward isolating humans from one another when they outnumbered humans creating some interesting outcomes – IN FICTION!!!

No I was commenting on the logic of his 3 laws, not rewriting history. I am saying that we must work to insure nothing like that ever happens again. Producing a just world is very much a part of what AI should be about. This is what I am saying.

Today we do not feel as much threatened by other nations as by individuals who want to kill us and are often not too worried if they kill themselves too.

I thought you said you were British? hmm.. Look, people surrender power to those they think can help them accomplish what they feel needs accomplished but cannot do it themselves. The modern nation-state has exploited this process to maintain control over its people using all the knowledge at its command.

We should be attempting to go to a supranational world. We should and I think must ensure that technology in general and AI in particular is used to this end. I want to see technology srerving humanity not the current status quo.

All nations do this. In a world where the Soviet Union collapsed and was no longer a credible threat, the US neede another enemy. So, we turned a blind eye and let the second attack on the WTC happen.

But terrorism isn't new. We've had suicidal terrorists since Thomas Rainsborough! (1647) haha.. and the powers that be have used them, or any enemy they could impress the public with to raise taxes and exercise ever more power over their subjects.

The thing is, we need to change the paradigm under which we operate if

Re: Solar powered lasers in space

we want to change our condition – and this takes a change in the way we raise our kids and the way we deal with our emotions in adulthood.

Agreed. AI is I believe capable of changing the paradym.

Nation states have a monopoly of force. I believe that a world without nations would be an ideal to strive for.

No one has power over you unless you give it to them. The more people that take their power back for themselves the weaker nations and religions become. In the end, they will collapse as people find a better way for themselves.

How will they find a better way? Information is needed.

Quite clearly it is also an idea that no one wants.

People who do not own their own power feel naked and threatened by the idea of there being no nations and religions. People who own their own power – are not beholden to anyone, and the nations will fall of their own accord once a tipping point is reached.

Looking at the situation from Britain we have the EU. Now governments, including Gordon Brown want to bring about a common European sovereignty. Quite laudable you might say.

Depends on the details. None of this gets us past Arrows impossibility theorem. So, its really quite mad to try to do anything within a system that doesn't work.

Governments have negotiated an EU treaty which the voters are throwing out. Gordon Brown is not going to face a referendum here, he will get the treaty ratified by Parliament. Governments are persuing what might be termed rational policies as far as they can. They are definitely in advance of their populations.

Nonsense.

The British people are Eurosceptic and would vote the treaty out. It

Re: Solar powered lasers in space

Re: Solar powered lasers in space

is not a big deal but a treaty is better than no treaty.

I think you misunderstand, conflict is part of the game.

There is no game. Conflict between Shiites and Sunnis stem from the need for each to project blame outside their own circle to solidify control over their faithful. This is madness – and leads to madness – and has nothing at all to do with the insights that the religion was originally set up to spread and honor.

The Sunnis and Shiites each chose an outcome which led to 4 million refugees.

It's all madness – and it's not a rational choice – and it cannot be sustained.

The Sunnis and Shiites have a matrix of results, this is the essence of a game. If they cooperate there is one outcome. If they don't there is another. The Sunnis/Al-Qaeda blew up the mosque at Karbala. I don't think they knew what the outcome would be for them.

It is true that mutual cooperation will provide the highest score but they continue not to.

Let us look at the outcome of a stag hunt. The Tigris and Euphrates are powerful rivers. In the time of the old Babylonian kings 3 crops a year were produced. That is before oil comes into consideration. Nobody would have had to have left their homes there would be electric power 24/7 and the country would be on the road to prosperity. However How basically do you get people to look after their own interests.

By empowering them as children and teaching them to trust their own inner voice.

I think there are other things too,