summmum bonum

21st century goodness

Our problems are not like those of past generations because we have power. This power is to create or destroy depending on our intelligence and our will.

Let me tell you the problem. It's taken me a good few years to find these words for it: *we are predators with technology.* Our willingness to kill, actively or passively, has been amplified by technology to the point where we threaten the entire planet that birthed us. And it falls to our generation to change our hearts.

Genetic engineering, nanotechnology and other biotechnology are going to tip the global balance of power so far towards destruction, accidental, deliberate and political that the relatively stable equilibrium we have built around nuclear weapons stands no chance of survival. The clock is ticking and our political will to find a better future for all is weak.

Our lives are at stake. We have until the basement bioweapons revolution to *remove the reasons to use these devices.* There is no hope of containing self-replicating weaponry in the hands of the nation state. The first small group to solve the admittedly real problems of *operationalizing* basement bio will spread its example all over the world, as the Tamil Tigers did suicide bombing.

I am not kidding here. We're certainly less than a generation away from some kid in medical school deciding *enough*.

The only hope of containing this risk is to become *a benign species.* The fear of not having enough food, or access to medical care, or the right to stay on the land our ancestors farmed gives rise to the violent impulse to defend ourselves. These violent impulses are pointed, one at another, all over the world creating a deadlock: a traffic jam of hatred and fear which we cannot move beyond. As the technological ramp up of destructive capability accelerates, that traffic jam may be set on fire. We have only two choices: recontain the technology, or find peace. I believe that the nature of basement bio makes recontainment impossible, so *peace is our only option.*

Right now we are in the middle of an *economic genocide*. The simplest example of it is that Americans are dying of being fat while people all over the world are dying of being thin. The US spends 50% of its tax dollar on weapons while 20 million a year die of poverty. We, in the west, with our riches, are *good Germans* who politely ignore the slums and the villages and the camps as economic forces push entire nations off the cliff into starvation. The world is one country, and our countrymen starve: it is we who are responsible. But there is hope, a chance to intervene.

The internet can teach the poor to free themselves from poverty. Simple organic farming techniques can double the production of food on one acre farms all over the world. Many global problems would melt away in cheap, abundant food. Farming can be taught and learned online, from videos and from software. The same is true for the basic engineering knowledge that would save most those 20 million lives. It is within our power, so we are responsible. *We can cut the fear and hate by solving poverty.*