

ARTICLE

“Domestic in Every Place, Foreign in None”: Corporate Futurism, Multinational Corporations, and the Politics of International Trade in the Early 1970s

Gavin Benke

This article documents how business lobbying groups, corporate leaders, and even some members of the Nixon administration drew on futurist discourse and rhetoric to defeat the Burke-Hartke bill, proposed legislation that would have imposed new taxes on multinational corporations. For several years, self-described futurologists had reconceptualized multinational corporations as ideal institutions for securing world peace and, more broadly, meeting society’s needs, thereby taking over some of the government’s functions. These ideas allowed business interests to invoke a utopian vision of the multinational corporation while working toward the more concrete goal of building a global economy defined by free trade and fending off unwanted regulation.

Keywords: business and culture, business-government relations, multinationals, US 20th

On a cold February day in 1972 at a Sheraton hotel in the nation’s capital, Willis Harman stood at a podium and told a room full of executives, politicians, economists, and business school professors that “the industrialized world may be experiencing the beginning phase of a sociocultural revolution as profound and pervasive as the Industrial Revolution.”¹ Harman was one of many speakers at “The Industrial World Ahead,” a conference focused on the future of the global economy that had been organized by the U.S. Department of Commerce. Everywhere the Stanford Research Institute (SRI) researcher looked, he saw “lead indicators” of “revolutionary change.”² Harman’s statement might have been grandiose, but by 1972, many in the audience were used to it. For the past several years, a number of consultants, executives, politicians, and business writers, many of whom referred to themselves as “futurists,” had been making similar pronouncements. In some ways, it was a sign of the times.

1. Harman, “Key Choices of the Next Two Decades,” 29.
2. *Ibid.*

© The Author(s), 2023. Published by Cambridge University Press on behalf of Business History Conference. This is an Open Access article, distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution licence (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>), which permits unrestricted re-use, distribution and reproduction, provided the original article is properly cited.

Such “futurism” was, as Matthew Connolly has argued, “both an elite and popular phenomenon in the 1970s” that was fueled by a sense that “history seemed to be accelerating.”³ Though it was a widespread trend, producing books like Alvin Toffler’s best-selling *Future Shock*, futuristic thinking captivated business leaders in a particularly powerful way during the late 1960s and early 1970s. During these years, Harman, and others like him, developed a unique brand of business-minded futurism centered on reconceptualizing the proper place of corporations in a world that seemed to be changing at a dizzying rate. They reached some surprising conclusions. By drawing on the work and methodologies used by other futurists, as well as an emerging public discourse of corporate social responsibility, these “corporate futurists” crafted a distinct and utopian vision of the multinational corporation.⁴ It was the right message at the right time. During a period of growing suspicion toward multinational corporations, this business-friendly futurism was politically useful.

Throughout the political and economic upheaval and uncertainty at the start of the 1970s, groups like the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) and the Chamber of Commerce were able to capitalize on this futuristic thinking as a way to advance their own policy and public relations goals. This article considers a subset of these futurists who wrote explicitly about the future of business beginning in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Throughout these years, this specific group read (and referenced) one another’s work, belonged to the same organizations, and appeared at the same events. Through an interrogation of reports, books, articles, and conference presentations, I argue that these futurists developed lasting ideas about the multinational corporation as the perfect institutional form for a more globalized, post-Cold War era and contributed to advancing a trade policy favored by both business lobbyists and the Nixon administration. My argument unfolds in several different parts. First, I describe futurology and its appearance in the postwar era. Second, I explain how these business-minded futurists crafted utopian ideas about multinational corporations. Third, I chart the interactions between some of the most prominent corporate futurists and organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce. Finally, I demonstrate how this futurist utopian rhetoric helped these organizations and the Nixon administration advance a free trade policy at the start of the 1970s.

Futurism and the Cold War

Businesses have long used “the future” as a way to promote their interests and products. General Motors’ *Futurama* exhibit at the 1939 World’s Fair in New York and the House of the Future that Monsanto unveiled at Disneyland in 1957 are just two examples of how U.S. corporations invoked the promise of a sunny future for public relations purposes.⁵ However, the business futurism that blossomed in the early 1970s largely emerged from the

3. Connolly, “Future Shock,” 343.

4. The terms “corporate futurism” and “business futurism” have been used by a wide variety of people for some time now and can refer to any number of ideas. For example, the science fiction writer William Gibson used the term “corporate futurism.” I use the term here as a way to distinguish this group of historical actors from the larger group of futurists who were active during these years.

5. For more on Monsanto’s “House of the Future,” see Meikle, *American Plastic*, 205–215.

U.S. Cold War defense effort. In the mid-1940s, a torrent of federal defense dollars flowed into California. Two organizations that benefited from this government largesse would prove to be critical for business futurism's development.⁶ The first of these organizations was the Santa Monica-based RAND Corporation, which the U.S. Air Force created in 1946.⁷ As the historian Jenny Andersson observes, think tanks like RAND were part of a broader transnational political and intellectual response to the "growing unease and fear in a period in which the future became laden with connotations of looming disasters."⁸ Writ large, such postwar futurism was "a field of struggle between different conceptions of how to control, or, radically transform, the Cold War world."⁹ At RAND, researchers and analysts from a range of fields were tasked with developing methods for "gaming" and imagining possible scenarios for events like nuclear war.¹⁰ By 1948, the think tank was operating as an independent nonprofit and provided an open intellectual atmosphere that allowed its researchers to develop some of futurology's signature methodologies, such as scenario writing and Delphi projections (a process in which a group of experts answered successive rounds of questionnaires to arrive at plausible future developments).

The second West Coast organization that would be pivotal to business futurism's development was the Stanford Research Institute (SRI), a firm housed on Stanford University's campus focused on "research activities in the physical and biological sciences, engineering," and "industrial economics."¹¹ Under the leadership of Weldon Gibson, SRI became an important institutional home for corporate futurists, including Willis Harman and Roy Amara. Although SRI depended on military contracts during its first few years, it had initially been established to provide research for businesses.¹² By the early 1960s, SRI had introduced its Long Range Planning Service. Likewise, its marketing literature advised, businesses were going to have to navigate "a future of accelerating change." For \$8000, clients could access published reports as well as consult with SRI researchers.¹³ Beginning in the late 1950s, the organization partnered with the National Industrial Conference Board (NICB) to co-host the International Industrial Conference in San Francisco, which was billed as a "meeting of world business and industrial leaders."¹⁴ In language that was complementary to that of the Long Range Planning

6. O'Mara, *The Code*, 36–37.

7. Ghamari-Tabrizi, *The Worlds of Herman Kahn*, 52.

8. Andersson argues that this midcentury futurism is best understood as a transnational political and intellectual project that is deeply connected to the Cold War. "Between the immediate post-WWII period and the mid-1970s," she argues, "the future came to be understood as posing distinct challenges to the functioning of societies" requiring "intervention," which she understands as "foresight, organization, and rationalization." Andersson, "The Great Future Debate and the Struggle for the World," 1415.

9. Anderson, *The Future of the World*, 2.

10. Ghamari-Tabrizi, *The Worlds of Herman Kahn*, 52.

11. O'Mara, *The Code*, 125.

12. Gibson, *SRI: The Take-Off Days*, 4–5.

13. "A Description of the Long Range Planning Report Service," 1961, Stanford Research Institute Records (SC0801), box 2, folder 7, SRI—Minutes and Reports—1960—61 (2 of 4), Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, CA.

14. Promotional brochure, "International Industrial Conference," 1961, Stanford Research Institute Records (SC0801), box 2, folder 9, SRI—Minutes and Reports—1960—61 (4 of 4), Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, CA. This conference was the second such event (the first being held in 1957). This second conference, though, represented a decisive turn toward the role that businesses might play in the future.

Service, the marketing literature for the 1961 conference counseled that in a “rapidly changing world,” the decisions made by those in both the public and private sectors would “greatly affect the course of world affairs.”¹⁵ Such statements were emblematic of the sort of corporate futurist thinking at SRI. Over the next few years, SRI futurists would develop complex, sophisticated ideas about the future.

By 1961, Herman Kahn, one of RAND’s most famous and flamboyant futurists, had left California to establish the Hudson Institute, north of New York City.¹⁶ Later in the decade, Kahn also participated in the Commission on the Year 2000, an effort headed by the sociologist Daniel Bell. Though Bell’s project fell short of his hopes, it was through this endeavor that Kahn and his Hudson Institute colleague, Anthony Wiener, wrote the book *The Year 2000* in 1967.

Corporate futurism also developed outside Cold War defense research on the West Coast. For instance, throughout the 1960s, Max Ways, an editor at *Fortune*, published a series of articles in the magazine about the future of business. The first of these pieces, “The Era of Radical Change,” appeared in the May 1964 issue. In language that echoed SRI’s Long Range Planning Service and the International Industrial Conference, Ways wrote that American businesses would have to confront a “world of accelerating change and ever widening choices.”¹⁷ “The movement is so swift” and the pace so fast, he wrote, “that an imaginative leap into the future cannot find a point of rest.”¹⁸ Navigating the future depended on organizations that comprised a “middle tier” between individuals and government, including businesses.¹⁹

There was a high degree of continuity among the analysis coming out of SRI and RAND and journalists like Ways. Even if these different futurists did not work directly with one another on concrete policy agendas, they all shared the belief that long-range planning could be a vital tool for both government and business in navigating an increasingly complex world.²⁰ A significant part of this emerging discourse suggested a new and vital role for business to play. By the end of the 1960s, corporate planners had begun to adopt such futurist ideas. The line between corporate futurism and corporate planning was almost never clear. In an effort to promote the World Future Society (established in 1966), for instance, Ed Cornish, the organization’s founder, “looked through directories of corporations and made a list of executives whose job titles suggested they should have an interest in the future, such as ‘Manager of Corporate Planning.’”²¹ Cornish then mailed these corporate planners complimentary copies of the first issue of *The Futurist*, a magazine the society published. The strategy worked. Though the World Future Society did not exclusively cater to corporate planners, Cornish

15. Ibid.

16. Kahn had made a name for himself at RAND when he published *On Thermonuclear War*.

17. Ways, “The Era of Radical Change,” 113.

18. Ibid., 114.

19. Ibid.

20. In general, it can sometimes be difficult to determine the precise number of futurists. Some people called themselves futurists, while others did not (even as they published in futurist outlets and attended futurist conferences). Likewise, membership in futurist societies fluctuated throughout these years.

21. Cornish, “The Search for Foresight: How *The Futurist* Was Born (Part 1).” In 2019, the World Future Society posted a series of articles that Cornish had originally published in in *The Futurist* in 2007 recounting the organization’s early history.

later recalled that alongside university faculty members, government employees, engineers, and science fiction authors, "business people involved in long-range planning, marketing, or product development" soon found their way to the organization.²² In fact, as one futurist remembered, corporate consultants made up a sizable number of the society's membership in the 1960s and 1970s.²³ Likewise, some self-described futurists, like General Electric's Ian Wilson (who was also a World Future Society member), found employment in corporate planning departments.

In 1968, a Wilson-led team produced a report titled *Our Future Business Environment* that drew heavily from futurist discourse, including Kahn and Wiener's *The Year 2000* and Ways's *Fortune* articles. The scope of the report was ambitious. Considering "the future in a systemic way" would allow GE to "make conscious, timely decisions about the direction" the company should take.²⁴ Despite confident assumptions of continued economic growth and the disappearance of the business cycle, Wilson's report warned of disruptive change both at home and abroad. "Accelerating change," the report noted, along with "growing economic interdependence" would wipe out "some of the old political boundaries and ideological divisions."²⁵ There were very few social, political, and economic issues that could be "excluded from a company president's thinking."²⁶ Increasingly, the report suggested, the lines separating public and private institutions would "blur" as the government began to intervene in the private sector and businesses would start to enter "fields traditionally associated with governmental activity."²⁷

Wilson's report was not the only instance of the interchange between futurists and corporate planners. In 1971, for example, the National Planning Association's Business Advisory Council commissioned Carl Madden, the Chamber of Commerce's chief economist, to write a study, because "business must play an active role in 'inventing the future.'"²⁸ In the wide-ranging report, Madden argued that "a new philosophy of capitalism" that provided "a positive vision of the future" was necessary.²⁹ Corporations, he continued, would be critical in this endeavor and should "become performance-oriented instruments for achieving social good."³⁰ Crucially, Madden was specifically thinking about what he termed "the world corporation," which he regarded as a significant development in recent history.³¹ As the title of Madden's report *Clash of Culture* suggests, corporate futurists were becoming increasingly fond of grandiose statements. In fact, organizations like the World Future Society were encouraging similarly lofty ideas about business.

Although the society's monthly magazine, *The Futurist*, had published corporate futurists in previous years, the February 1971 issue was entirely dedicated to business. Strikingly, a

22. Cornish, "The Search for Foresight: The World Future Society's Emergence from Dream to Reality (Part 2)."

23. Hazel Henderson, in discussion with the author, July 3, 2020.

24. General Electric Company, *Our Future Business Environment*, 1.

25. *Ibid.*, 7.

26. *Ibid.*, 38.

27. *Ibid.*, 22.

28. Madden, *Clash of Culture*, v.

29. *Ibid.*, 64.

30. *Ibid.*, 64.

31. *Ibid.*, 72.

utopian vision of multinational corporations ran through many of the articles. For instance, Madden (one of the society's most prominent members) wrote the lead article, which was characterized with a prophetic fervor. He heralded the rise of "Cosmopolitan Man" who could transcend the era's "virulent nationalism."³² This new figure "would use his courage and imagination to multiply" such virtues as "understanding and good will in mankind's affairs."³³ Through the use of new technologies, this heroic type would "reform [society's] anachronistic institutions" and provide the world with opportunities to "participate in the great consumer markets," ushering in a new, more enlightened age.³⁴

Many of the issue's contributors were excited by the promise of transcending national boundaries. In an article titled "The World Corporation," Roy Ash, president of Litton Industries, predicted that businesses would eventually be chartered by a "supra-national chartering agency," producing institutions that would be "domestic in every place, foreign in none—a true corporate citizen of the world." The headquarters for such companies might as well be "the moon," he declared. Much like Madden suggested that Cosmopolitan Man signaled the coming of a new global era, Ash described the World Corporation as a "transcendental unity."³⁵ After "centuries of nationalistic thinking," Ash hoped, world corporations would prove to be the precursor to "political unity."³⁶ In fact, the multinational corporation was the ideal incubator for a new "global 'mentality,' or culture."³⁷ Through "the integration of diverse nationalities from the board of directors level down through the corporate officers and operating management," the multinational corporation represented a significant step toward the "ultimate unity of the earth's peoples."³⁸ Madden's and Ash's articles were emblematic of the entire issue. "We have no choice but to try to make the world of the future into the kind of world we want," another contributor declared.³⁹

Trade Associations Discover Futurism

Significantly, this corporate futurism found a welcome reception in trade and business organizations, including the NCIB, the NAM, and the Chamber of Commerce. In 1966, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce even established a futurist working group called the Council on Trends and Perspectives to help the chamber's leadership spot emerging business developments.⁴⁰ Both Carl Madden and Max Ways were members. By the end of the decade, the Council on Trends and Perspectives had begun issuing its own futurist-tinged reports, which often drew on the work of other corporate futurists. For instance, the Council on Trends and

32. Madden, "The Long-Range Future of Business," 8.

33. Ibid.

34. Ibid.

35. Ash, "The World Corporation," 13. Ash made similar claims in a 1969 speech that *The Futurist* reprinted in an earlier issue.

36. Ibid.

37. Ibid.

38. Ibid.

39. Michaelis, "The Management of Change," 9.

40. The group was established in 1966 by Arch Booth.

Perspectives' 1969 report *Business and the Consumer* referenced both Kahn's work and the GE report. Much as Wilson's report concluded, *Business and the Consumer* described a fundamentally new environment for corporations. "Changes in cultural attitudes and social values," the report cautioned, "have produced a new awareness of these problems and of the need to solve them."⁴¹ Additionally, industry needed to develop "early warning" mechanisms to anticipate or prepare for "the public's changing value systems."⁴² Amid what the report's authors termed a "national discontent," the corporation would have to "go beyond its traditional role of business enterprise and seek to anticipate and meet, rather than simply react to others' proposed solutions to social problems."⁴³

NAM was also becoming interested in what these futurists had to say. When Herman Kahn gave a talk to the lobbying group in the same year that Wilson produced the GE report, he declared that "American industries [were] going to be asked to behave less in a profit-oriented fashion."⁴⁴ When it came to matters such as the environment, Kahn told his audience, "You can no longer act in what may have been a traditional manner." Executives should welcome these changes, the argument went. Kahn believed "democracy ha[d] much better prospects" if American business took an active role in public affairs. Because it was a "big bureaucracy," government no longer seemed an adequate mechanism for an increasingly complex society. "I feel very strongly," he confessed, "that there are many positive values associated with having a good deal of the country run by private business."⁴⁵

Kahn expanded on this message the following year, at NAM's annual meeting, Congress of American Industry, which was titled "Priorities for the 70s." In describing the emergence of a "post-industrial culture," the speaker started off by mildly ribbing his audience. "We use the term 'revolution' for the most trivial thing, as when somebody changes the shade of a toothpaste," he joked, before insisting that he was about to describe a "real revolution" and "a break with the past." Kahn predicted that businesses would increasingly take over at least some of the functions of government.⁴⁶ Here, Kahn was not being particularly original. Similar ideas had appeared in Ways's *Fortune* articles and Wilson's GE report. Now, though, futurists like Kahn were broadcasting their ideas to a larger audience.

What is more, the futurists' message resonated with business leaders. An interoffice memo at NAM noted that because of its "high intellectual content," Kahn's talk had been the "sleeper" hit at the organization's 1969 conference. "I have heard more favorable comments about it than any other" part of the event, the memo's author reported.⁴⁷ The previous year, Helge Holst, the head of American Tool & Machine Company, sent a review of Kahn and Wiener's *The Year 2000* to Ray Bennett at NAM. After finishing the tome, it was clear to Holst

41. *Business and the Consumer: A Program for the 70s*, 1969, 14, box 91, Chamber of Commerce of the United States records (accession 1960), Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, DE.

42. *Ibid.*

43. *Ibid.*

44. Herman Kahn, "What's in Store for Us?," in *NAM Reports* V.13, n. 20, May 13, 1968, box 31, National Association of Manufacturers records (accession 1411), Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, DE.

45. *Ibid.*

46. *Ibid.* Emphasis in original.

47. Memorandum, William H. McCaughey to Ray Bennett, December 11, 1969, box 31, National Association of Manufacturers records (accession 1411), Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, DE.

that “responsible business has come to realize that, for its own preservation, if not from good corporate citizenship, business must participate in government” and take on new “responsibilities to achieve social and civic goals through active citizen participation.”⁴⁸ Much like the Chamber of Commerce’s Council on Trends and Perspectives, the Senior Executives’ Advisory Council established by the NCIB in the late 1960s was supportive of futurology. As Roger Blough, a director (and recent former chairman and CEO) at U.S. Steel, put it, futurology represented a welcome “attempt to spend some time probing the future.”⁴⁹ The NCIB also commissioned an extensive study in 1970, *Perspectives for the '70s and '80s: Tomorrow's Problems Confronting Today's Management*, which relied on the participation of corporate futurists like SRI’s Willis Harman and RAND researchers, as well as experts in a range of fields and forecasters.⁵⁰ Perhaps in part because groups like NAM, NCIB, and the Chamber of Commerce were so supportive of futurology, the futurists often took pains to flatter their patrons by suggesting that business executives were important members of society. Traditional business boosters had found high-minded, intellectual-sounding advocates in the corporate futurists.

The Politics of Multinational Corporations

These utopian ideals about multinational corporations appeared during a particularly fraught moment for such institutions. Though Geoffrey Jones points out that firms were engaging in cross-border activities well before the twentieth century, the multinational corporation as a distinct concept would not emerge until after 1950.⁵¹ By the early 1970s, multinationals had become a source of concern in several different respects. U.S. labor unions worried about the loss of jobs to overseas operations.⁵² Likewise, throughout the 1960s, presidential administrations worried that foreign direct investment (FDI) could contribute to the growing balance-of-payments issue.⁵³ Most prominently, the Harvard economist and former government official Raymond Vernon’s 1971 book *Sovereignty at Bay* took up the issue of the complications and challenges these companies posed to the authority of states around the world. Given the hostile environment for multinational corporations, it should be little wonder that legislation aimed at these organizations soon appeared.

In 1971, two Democrats, Representative James Burke of Massachusetts and the Senator from Indiana, Vance Hartke, introduced a bill titled the Foreign Trade and Reinvestment Act that “sought to trim imports into the United States, stem the export of jobs and technology, and

48. Helge Holst, “Herman Kahn and Anthony Wiener’s *The Year 2000*, a comment by Helge Holst,” c. 1968, box 31, National Association of Manufacturers records (accession 1411), Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, DE.

49. Roger Blough, “Opening Statement by Roger M. Blough.” (speech, September 15, 1969, San Francisco, CA, International Industrial Conference), Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, DE.

50. *Perspectives for the '70s and '80s*.

51. Jones, *Multinationals and Global Capitalism*, 4.

52. Lustig, *Veiled Power*, 197.

53. Delton, *The Industrialists*, 245.

remove tax incentives for investment abroad."⁵⁴ The bill was an early effort to address some of the issues that had accompanied the rise of multinational corporations. Without question, the Burke-Hartke bill (as it quickly became known) was protectionist in its intent. Should it become law, businesses would be facing a "double tax" on overseas income for U.S. companies, as well as restrictions on FDI, technology transfer, and some imports. One provision promised the creation of a new trade commission that included members of both trade unions and the general public, which would have removed some of the president's authority over trade policy. Still other measures mandated labeling foreign parts in finished products. Finally, Burke-Hartke also included a partial repeal of an older trade law that had implications for duties on imports.⁵⁵ While labor unions supported the bill, as Vernie Oliveira notes, multinational managers "feared that the increased tax burdens promised by Burke-Hartke would severely reduce returns."⁵⁶

Corporate leaders and their advocates in organizations like the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and NAM were staunchly opposed to the bill and wasted no time in mobilizing and issuing declarations condemning Burke-Hartke. NAM even went so far as to print a pamphlet that asked: "Can any U.S. business find happiness with the Burke-Hartke bill?"⁵⁷ The answer, predictably, was an emphatic "no." It was not just big business that would lose out should it become law. The pamphlet warned that the bill could hurt small businesses alongside multinational corporations. Even worse, NAM warned, the bill "would further the process of socializing U.S. business and industry" and "surely reduce the U.S. to a second-rate economic power."⁵⁸ Even though FDI and free trade policies actually posed a threat to some of their members that were small, domestic firms, both NAM and the Chamber of Commerce insisted that FDI was good for the American economy.⁵⁹

Here, such organizations found common cause with some members of the Nixon administration. Nixon had inherited an economy that was in serious trouble. Inflation, which would become the single biggest economic issue in the 1970s, was already a problem when he took office in 1969, and it only promised to get worse. What is more, global competition from Japan and other countries represented a clear threat to U.S. industrial might. Nixon himself appeared to be keenly aware of how dramatic the change was. As Daniel Sargent details, the president was convinced that the United States "could no longer afford to be a benefactor to its allies" and that "the time for a reconsideration of priorities and an adjustment of responsibilities had arrived."⁶⁰

The administration's outlook on economic matters was also informed by a sharp sense that U.S. businesses would need to compete more aggressively with foreign companies. The most

54. Oliveira, "The United States, Multinational Enterprises, and the Politics of Globalization," 145.

55. Background Paper—1972 Legislative Strategy on International Economic Issues, Council on International Economic Policy, January 3, 1972, accessed November 6, 2022, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76v04/d264>.

56. *Ibid.*

57. "Can Any U.S. Business Find Happiness with the Burke-Hartke Bill?" National Association of Manufacturers, n.d., box 22, National Association of Manufacturers records (accession 1411), Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, DE.

58. *Ibid.*

59. Delton, *The Industrialists*, 240–249.

60. Sargent, *A Superpower Transformed*, 100.

pronounced version of this view came from Peter G. Peterson. In some ways, Peterson's addition to the administration was an indication of the ties between the corporate futurists and the Nixon White House. Peterson had been hired away from his private sector position as the president of Bell & Howell to serve as director of the Council on International Economic Policy.⁶¹ The council itself had recently been established by Roy Ash, who had come to DC to head up the White House's Office of Management and Budget. Each man was already a presence in futurist circles.⁶² In 1967, *The Futurist* had reprinted one of Peterson's speeches, and Ash, of course, had contributed an article to the February 1971 special issue on business.

Peterson's December 1971 report *The United States in a Changing World Economy* portrayed a world of increased competition. The postwar advantages that American corporations had enjoyed up until that point now seemed to be a thing of the past. It was folly, in his telling, to resist the changes that were taking place. Peterson was concerned with growing trade deficits and, more to the point, protectionist policies such as tariffs. Throughout his report, Peterson criticized such measures in places like the European Community and Japan. Indeed, some of these policies amounted to a return to "mercantilism." Though Peterson's report was squarely focused on trade, the document reflected the same sense of balancing at the edge of a big historical shift, much like the wide-ranging prognostications of other futurists. In a phrase that futurists had used repeatedly in the past, Peterson labeled another section of the report "Negotiating a New Era." Taking issue with the State Department's approach to foreign aid, he emphasized the need to move on from what he termed "Marshall Plan psychology."⁶³ What is more, Nixon was convinced by Peterson's analysis. As Sargent writes, "Peterson's conclusions caught the attention of a president who viewed the world economy as an arena for competition and struggle."⁶⁴ Years later, in his memoirs, Peterson would recount "the president's enthusiasm for [the] report."⁶⁵

Much in the same way that business leaders regarded Burke-Hartke as a labor-backed power grab, Peterson and his allies in Washington recognized it as a threat to their larger vision for international trade. References to the bill quickly began to appear at events where both corporate futurists and Peterson were on the program. In December of 1971, for instance, Peterson, delivered the keynote speech at NAM's annual Congress of American Industry, using the opportunity to promote the conclusions he had reached with his report. Titling his presentation "Business Stake in International Economic Policy," the Nixon official reiterated his conviction that previous administrations' "benign-neglect policy for foreign economics" was indeed "malignant."⁶⁶ Drawing attention to his main concern, the balance-of-payments problem, Peterson worried that the "so-called tax bill" spelled trouble.⁶⁷ The bill and its supporters (especially among the labor unions) represented an "inward-looking,

61. *Ibid.*, 100.

62. There is no evidence that either Peterson or Ash used the term "futurist" to describe themselves.

63. Peterson, *The United States in a Changing World Economy*, 49.

64. Sargent, *A Superpower Transformed*, 101.

65. Peterson, *The Education of American Dreamer*, 147.

66. Peter G. Peterson, "Business Stake in International Economic Policy," December 2, 1971, 76th Congress of American Industry, box 582, National Association of Manufacturers records (accession 1411), Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, DE.

67. *Ibid.*

isolationist stance."⁶⁸ Drawing on a phrase he had used in his report, Peterson also told the audience that he thought it was "not an overstatement to say that we are in a new era" and that U.S. "policies ha[d] to reflect it."⁶⁹ For the remainder of the speech, he offered a defense of the New Economic Policy, measures that Nixon's team had taken to shore up economic conditions, and called the end of Bretton Woods a "bold decision."⁷⁰ Phases I and II of Nixon's plan would help secure "an open trading world in the future."⁷¹ Though Peterson's keynote was not in the register that might be expected from more grandiose futurists like Herman Kahn, other speakers at the conference were bolder in their use of futurist rhetoric.⁷²

Indeed, Roy Ash followed Peterson on the schedule. In significant ways, Ash expanded on the points that Peterson had made. "Free trade is not enough," he declared, before explaining that "free international *business* is essential to meet the needs of the world ahead."⁷³ The line provided a smooth transition to the real focus of his talk: the multinational corporation. Such organizations, he insisted, were "best suited to engage in beneficial international business" and were ideal organizations, because "the world [was] rapidly becoming a single and unified economy."⁷⁴ Significantly, Ash declared the multinational corporation to be "domestic in all countries, foreign in none," the same line he had written in *The Futurist* earlier in the year.⁷⁵ Ash was upfront in invoking the future (and the privileged place the multinational corporation should have in it), telling the audience that such companies would "be at the center of a world economy that [would] develop to its full during the last third of [the] century."⁷⁶ He was also clear about his own support for the administration's vision for world trade, insisting that a "complete rethinking of this country's international economic policy [was] of paramount importance."⁷⁷ In Ash's telling, multinational corporations required the sort of open trading system that Peterson championed. The proximity of these two speeches reveals the ways in which futurist thought complemented the Nixon administration's trade agenda. While Peterson had sketched out his vision for the global economy, Ash's speech had placed multinational corporations at the center of this new world. These two conceits formed the intellectual framework behind a futurist consensus in opposition to the Burke-Hartke bill.

The rhetorical and ideological playing field had been reset, providing opponents of Burke-Hartke with a high-minded argument that moved well beyond the sour and well-worn cries of

68. *Ibid.*

69. *Ibid.*

70. *Ibid.* In what was perhaps a foreshadowing of the economic thinking that took hold by the end of the decade, Peterson rested his argument on analysis coming out of the University of Chicago.

71. *Ibid.*

72. Peterson was not the only member of Nixon's team in attendance. Vice President Spiro Agnew was also on the program.

73. Roy Ash, "Remarks by Roy L. Ash," December 2, 1971, 76th Congress of American Industry, box 582, National Association of Manufacturers records (accession 1411), Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, DE. Emphasis in original.

74. *Ibid.*

75. *Ibid.* Ash had used this phrase in the past, and in ways that were more forthrightly utopian. For instance, in writing for *The Futurist*, he wrote that such an organization was "domestic every place, foreign in none—a true corporate citizen of the world." Indeed, multinational corporations might eventually represent a "transcendental unity" that fostered a single global culture. Ash, "The World Corporation," 13.

76. Ash, "Remarks by Roy L. Ash."

77. *Ibid.*

an “attack on the free enterprise system” that conservative business interests had relied on for so long.⁷⁸ By contrast, futurology provided a way to frame an anti-Burke-Hartke position as progressive and forward looking. The very next year, the Nixon administration gave futurists a very large platform for promoting their ideas about multinational corporations.

Nixon and the Futurists

Peterson and Ash were not the first futurists to enter Nixon’s orbit. In 1969, the administration created the National Goals Research Staff, which was tasked with “forecasting future developments, and assessing the longer-range consequences of present social trends.”⁷⁹ Initial plans indicated that the group would draw on the work that was being done at SRI and the Institute for the Future, as well as the Chamber of Commerce. One of the National Goals Research Staff’s planned studies, the “Future Structures of Business and Industry,” even reflected many of the same concerns that the corporate futurists had expressed throughout the decade. Indeed, because the world was “going through a basic transition into a post industrial society,” the response from business was going to be of the utmost importance.⁸⁰ Organizations such as NCIB, though, were supportive of the National Goals Research Staff, but the undertaking was likely doomed from the start.⁸¹ Nixon himself was mildly suspicious about the group.⁸² Ultimately, though, the National Goals Research Staff’s efforts stalled out. A lone published report, *Toward Balanced Growth: Quantity with Quality*, released on the Fourth of July in 1970, was fated to be the National Goals Research Staff’s only accomplishment.⁸³

A few years later, though, and amid the sense within the administration that American businesses need to become more competitive on the world stage, planning began for a conference titled “The Industrial World Ahead: Business Looks at 1990,” which was scheduled for early 1972. While planning “The Industrial World Ahead,” administration officials such as Commerce Secretary Maurice Stans were keen to involve “future-oriented organizations” and tasked some of them with producing position papers for the event.⁸⁴ *As Commerce Today* (a newsletter published by the Commerce Department) noted, the event would be “the first White House conference to focus on business, and the first to be concerned just with future

78. See, e.g., Glickman, *Free Enterprise*.

79. Press release, “Statement by the President on the Establishment of a National Goals Research Staff,” July 13, 1969, White House Central Files, [EX] FG 6-13 National Goals Research Staff (3/27/69–12/16/70), folder 1, Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, CA.

80. Report of Proposed Research Plan and Activities to Date, September 16, 1969, White House Central Files, [EX] FG 6-13 National Goals Research Staff (3/27/69-12/16/70), folder 1, Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, CA

81. Blough, “Opening Statement by Roger M. Blough.”

82. Cornish, “The Search for Foresight (Part 2).”

83. National Goals Research Staff, *Toward Balanced Growth: Quantity with Quality*, July 4, 1970, Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, CA.

84. “White House Conference Invitations Receiving Nationwide Acceptance,” *Commerce Today*, December 13, 1971, folder EX MC 3-4 White House Conference on “The Industrial World Ahead,” A Look at Business in 1990 (1/1972–2/1972) (2 of 4), box 12, White House Central Files, Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, California.

issues."⁸⁵ Such a conference was necessary, the article noted, "because the private enterprise system [was] facing new challenges every day on every front."⁸⁶ Indeed, corporations themselves would have to directly confront these challenges. In a carefully scripted quote, Nixon observed that "corporations are being called upon increasingly to help provide solutions to complex national, social and economic problems."⁸⁷ In general, the conference reflected Peterson's own conviction that, as Judith Stein notes, "the country would have to plan more because the world was more competitive."⁸⁸ The event, in other words, would be an attempt to bring together "key leaders" from both business and government who shared an "interest in our industrial society to take a long-range look and develop policies that will help shape [the] future."⁸⁹ If successful, the conference would serve as a first step in devising a new industrial policy for an emerging global economy that would be defined by international competition. For the past few years, corporate futurists had insisted that large-scale companies were ideally positioned to usher in a brighter future. Corporate futurism was having a moment. Even the president appeared to endorse futurism.

When the conference opened at a Washington, DC, Sheraton on February 7, speaker after speaker insisted to the 1500 attendees that the world was transitioning out of the industrial era. Harman, Madden, Ash, Kahn, Ways, SRI's Weldon Gibson, and others all used their speaking time to promote the ideas they had developed over the previous decade. The world was becoming more interdependent, which was expanding and complicating the role of the corporation. But it was also creating new opportunities for ushering in an enlightened global age.

Significantly, many of the speakers at the conference mounted a defense of the multinational corporation that was indebted to the writing that futurists had produced during the previous decade. Gibson, for instance, described the multinational corporation as a sort of intermediary organizational form that was well-suited to an increasingly integrated world. As he remarked during his talk, large U.S. businesses were becoming "truly 'world corporations' with a greater denationalization of capital, ownership, and management."⁹⁰ Indeed, multinational corporations promised to reshape "the structure of western private enterprise during the 1970s and 1980s."⁹¹ Similarly, the chairman of Dow Chemical declared the multinational corporation to be "the new melting pot," because it provided a "medium in which creed and color and caste can—indeed must—mix and work together, solving problems together daily, working in harmony together for mutual benefit."⁹² This was vitally important, he insisted, because "the futurists are fairly unanimous in their belief that the next 25 years will be

85. "White House Conference Invitations Receiving Nationwide Acceptance."

86. "White House Conference Invitations Receiving Nationwide Acceptance."

87. Press release, April 12, 1971, folder EX MC 3-4 White House Conference on "The Industrial World Ahead," A Look at Business in 1990 (1/1972–2/1972) (2 of 4), box 12, White House Central Files, Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, California.

88. Stein, *Pivotal Decade*, 39.

89. The passage is a scripted quote attributed to Nixon. Press release, April 12, 1971, EX MC 3-4 White House Conference on "The Industrial World Ahead," A Look at Business in 1990 (1/1972–2/1972) (1 of 4), box 12, White House Central Files, Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, CA.

90. Gibson, "An Overview on the Structure of the Private Enterprise System," 253.

91. *Ibid.*

92. Gerstacker, "'Rebalancing' the Corporation," 275.

characterized by vigorous, and sometimes virulent nationalism.”⁹³ Multinational corporations offered an escape from such a grim future. Indeed, such organizations were nothing less than a “countervailing force” producing and “nurturing” “world citizens” inside their walls.⁹⁴

SRI’s Willis Harman insisted that it was the people in that room at the Sheraton who needed to fashion a “humanistic capitalism”—a system in which corporations would look beyond simply turning a profit and begin to cultivate an “authentic social responsibility.”⁹⁵ If men like Amara and Harman described capitalism’s challenges in broad strokes, others at the conference offered possible approaches to the task at hand. For instance, Max Ways argued that the predominant cultural narratives and symbols had tarnished business’s reputation and led to a fundamental misunderstanding about the nature of the corporation.

Taken together, the presentations and remarks at the conference created a patina of a future-oriented view of the world that was, in some ways, progressive and even, at moments, utopian. This optimistic glow helped to contextualize the message that Peterson delivered at the end of the conference. Peterson’s speech had been given the closing spot on the schedule for good reason. Though Maurice Stans had organized the event, “The Industrial World Ahead” also served as a transition of sorts. Peterson was about to replace Stans, who was set to work on Nixon’s reelection effort, as the secretary of commerce.

For his remarks, Peterson largely reiterated the ideas he had first articulated in his report to the president a year earlier. Peterson declared that a “new era” had opened up. “Nothing will ever be the same again,” he said somewhat dramatically.⁹⁶ He followed this bold pronouncement with a direct endorsement of the new economic policy. “The President saw we were in a new era,” the incoming secretary of commerce said, “and he took a series of actions to provide the foundation for a competitive U.S. position in the global economy of the 1970s and 1980s.”⁹⁷ Peterson argued that American business executives needed to get ready for this new age. International competition, he warned, was really a competition for the future. The time had come to “lay the base for a new international competitive effort” by building an American “sense of the future.”⁹⁸ Throughout, Peterson repeatedly and directly invoked the future. He stressed the need to take deliberate steps to ensure the precise sort of future that American businesses needed, asking: “What specifically should we be doing *today*” in order to “have a reasonable chance of being where we want to be?”⁹⁹ Indeed, as he remarked, “the problem of the future” would “require answers to new questions.”¹⁰⁰ Such philosophical rhetoric helped frame the real goal of Peterson’s talk—to promote the New Economic Policy—in much loftier terms. Dubbing American competitiveness “Phase III” of the plan, he established a direct link between his own hopes for the economy and the administration’s policies. The policy implications of Peterson’s talk fit nicely with the broader futurist and business opposition to Burke-Hartke. In fact, an earlier draft of the remarks had singled out the bill for

93. *Ibid.*, 274.

94. *Ibid.*

95. Harman, “Key Choices of the Next Two Decades,” 34.

96. Peterson, “A Competitive America and the World Economy of 1990,” 321.

97. *Ibid.*

98. *Ibid.*, 323.

99. *Ibid.*, 322.

100. *Ibid.*, 322.

blistering criticism, claiming that it would "run counter to all this country is trying to achieve in building toward a more open and peaceful world of 1990."¹⁰¹

Although "The Industrial World Ahead" was not a big news story (the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* covered the event, but not in great detail), the conference was successful on a number of different fronts. Managers from around the country wrote to the Commerce Department requesting copies of the various speeches. One attendee asked for a copy of Peterson's remarks, characterizing it as "a distinguished and somewhat disturbing work."¹⁰² The president of a shoe company also wrote in appreciation of Peterson's talk, noting (with a sense of both philosophical musing and professional dedication to the footwear business) "we arrive at the future one step at a time."¹⁰³

Even apart from Peterson's address, the event clearly made an impression on attendees. James Reynolds, president of the Reynolds Printasign Company, declared that the event had been a "mind stretcher."¹⁰⁴ Amnon Barness, the president and chairman of Daylin drugstores, published his own reflection on the conference in his company's newsletter. The event had been "so stimulating, provocative and important," he wrote to the Commerce Department, "I felt I must share its impact with the executives of my company and all 12,000 of our employees."¹⁰⁵ The author of another letter to the department believed the conference might "provide the adrenalin for arresting the socio-economic hemorrhage which has beset our great country."¹⁰⁶ The Chamber of Commerce also organized smaller, local events in an attempt to extend the original conference's influence.

Unsurprisingly, throughout the 1970s, the chamber's Council on Trends and Perspectives published booklets and reports that continued to promote the ideas that had been voiced at the conference. For example, in 1972, the group published a summary of the conference titled *Business 1990: A Deskbook on the Future*. The conference, the *Deskbook's* authors declared, offered a vision of "what our society could be like at the approach of a new millennium."¹⁰⁷

101. Peter G. Peterson, Draft of "A Competitive America and the World Economy of 1990," n.d. 6, folder EX MC 3-4 White House Conference on "The Industrial World Ahead," A Look at Business in 1990 (1/1972-2/1972) (2 of 4), box 12, White House Central Files, Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, California. It is not entirely clear if Peterson strayed from the version of his remarks that ultimately appeared in print. Interestingly, this draft of the speech also included a gentle swipe at futurology as a field.

102. Letter, C. V. Martin to Maurice Stans, February 22, 1972, folder EX MC 3-4 White House Conference on "The Industrial World Ahead," A Look at Business in 1990 (1/1972-2/1972) (2 of 4), box 12, White House Central Files, Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, CA.

103. Letter, W. L. Hadley Griffin to Maurice Stans, February 21, 1972, folder EX MC 3-4 White House Conference on "The Industrial World Ahead," A Look at Business in 1990 (1/1972-2/1972) (2 of 4), box 12, White House Central Files, Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, CA.

104. James M. Reynolds to Maurice Stans, February 10, 1972, folder EX MC 3-4 White House Conference on "The Industrial World Ahead," A Look at Business in 1990 (1/1972-2/1972) (2 of 4), box 12, White House Central Files, Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, CA.

105. Letter, Amnon Barness to Maurice Stans, February 25, 1972, folder EX MC 3-4 White House Conference on "The Industrial World Ahead," A Look at Business in 1990 (1/1972-2/1972) (2 of 4), box 12, White House Central Files, Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, CA.

106. Letter, Thomas De Pinto to Robert Miller, February 16, 1972, folder EX MC 3-4 White House Conference on "The Industrial World Ahead," A Look at Business in 1990 (1/1972-2/1972) (2 of 4), box 12, White House Central Files, Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, CA.

107. *Business 1990: A Deskbook on the Future*, 1972, box 93, Chamber of Commerce of the United States records (accession 1960), Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, DE.

The conference represented an important step in closing the gaps “which heretofore [had] separated [...] businessmen from the rest of society.”¹⁰⁸ In the group’s 1973 booklet, *The Corporation in Transition*, Carl Madden wrote that a new “social dimension” had transformed the business environment. Managers would now have to consider the “indirect costs to society” in their operations. Thinking about the multinational corporation as the ideal vehicle for ushering in a new future remained a persistent thread for corporate futurists. Significantly, such utopian ideas about business and the future proved to be an ideal talking point for making the case against Burke-Hartke. The supposed role that multinational corporations would play in establishing a lasting world peace became invaluable talking points in fending off new regulation.¹⁰⁹

Speaking at industry events following “The Industrial World Ahead,” business futurists specifically singled out Burke-Hartke for condemnation. Max Ways, for instance, used his remarks at the 1972 NAM end-of-the-year Congress of American Industry to characterize Burke-Hartke as resisting the future.¹¹⁰ In this speech, Ways invoked what was fast becoming a futurist truism—that the world stood at the precipice of massive global change. “As a society,” he told the audience, “we are balanced on a high wire, possibly on an endless high wire. If that is in fact our condition, it is probably least risky to keep moving, more risky to stand still, most risky to try to turn back.”¹¹¹ Indeed, change was already underway (much as Peterson had declared in his 1971 report); resisting that change could be genuinely harmful to the American economy. To Ways, Burke-Hartke was a perfect example of this danger. The bill’s success might even be a harbinger of things to come. “If we go in the Burke-Hartke direction in respect to international trade,” Ways worried, the country might “adopt parallel policies of restriction and consolidation in other areas.”¹¹² The future, he warned the business executives in the audience, could be filled with government intervention.

Similarly, speaking in Chicago during April of 1972, M. P. Venema, NAM chairman, declared that the multinational corporation might “become a microcosm of the future.”¹¹³ Venema even noted that futurists like Herman Kahn believed multinational corporations might “set the economic and social tone of the world by the year 2000.”¹¹⁴ Given such promise, the chairman declared, defeating Burke-Hartke was critical. The “future of our enterprises, of our employees, our system and the stability of the free world,” he cautioned at the close of his remarks, “may well depend upon the vigor to which we address ourselves to the issue at

108. Ibid.

109. Indeed, as the multinational corporation came under fire in the 1970s, corporate futurism provided set of talking points for mounting a defense. Indeed, as early as the 1960s, some worried that multinationals were threats to national sovereignty and the fortunes of developing nations. Oliveira, “The United States, Multinational Enterprises, and the Politics of Globalization,” 143–144.

110. Ways might not have considered himself a “futurist” in the ways that others did. However, like Peterson’s, his ideas were largely in line with what other futurists said, and his membership in the Council on Trends and Perspectives mean that he was a part of a group that was composed of self-identifying futurists.

111. Max Ways, “Economic Perspectives, Remarks by Max Ways,” December 7, 1972, 77th Congress of American Industry, box 583, folder 2, National Association of Manufacturers records (accession 1411), Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, DE.

112. Ibid.

113. M. P. Venema, “Remarks by M.P. Venema,” April 7, 1972, box 22, National Association of Manufacturers records (accession 1411), Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, DE.

114. Ibid.

hand."¹¹⁵ Without question, futurist rhetoric became one of the pillars in a broader push to fend off the bill.

Individual firms also began insisting that the path to a bright future ran through multinational corporations. For instance, the 3M Corporation distributed material to its own employees in defense of the multinational corporation, declaring it to be "the organizational means" that would "elevate living standards and encourage the cause of peace."¹¹⁶ Similarly, in 1973, DuPont's Irv Shapiro spoke about the shifting role of business, using the opportunity to take a swipe at the bill. DuPont, much like 3M, even produced booklets attacking Burke-Hartke. Indeed, much of the anti-Burke-Hartke argument—that multinationals were the best hope for the future—had its roots in corporate futurism's intellectual tradition.

Conclusion

Given the unified opposition to Burke-Hartke, it is hardly surprising that the bill never became law. To be sure, futurism was not the only avenue of attack that business interests took when speaking out against Burke-Hartke. Still, it is notable that futurism emerged as one of the primary rhetorical modes in this effort. In subsequent years, Burke-Hartke continued to be a focus for corporate futurists. For instance, the authors of a 1973 Institute for the Future report still found it necessary to comment on the bill's prospects.¹¹⁷

Of course, it is unsurprising that industry lobbyists, business-minded politicians, and the heads of multinational corporations were opposed to a bill that so obviously worked against their interests. What is significant, though, is the particular shape that their argument took. In contrast to the sort of aggrieved conservative claims of a relentless "attack on the free enterprise system," corporate futurism offered a sunnier way to argue some of the very same positions.¹¹⁸ In short, futurology provided a novel set of rhetorical tools that they felt were best suited to push back against Burke-Hartke. Likewise, the Nixon administration had found common cause with trade associations in using futurist ideas to promote its trade agenda. What is more, subsequent administrations and politicians also found futurism useful in helping promote or advance their agendas. Ted Kennedy, Nelson Rockefeller, and Hubert Humphrey, for instance, all appeared at World Future Society events. In sum, these futurists provided a new example of how corporate and political leaders could advance their own interests while making much broader and more grandiose claims about an expanded role for business in society.

This opposition to Burke-Hartke reveals corporate futurism's political and rhetorical power. Even if the bill itself never became law, multinational corporations continued to face

115. Ibid.

116. Such talking points were part of a coordinated effort that included the Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers, and the National Foreign Trade Council. 3M, "Your Job Is Bigger Than You Think," n.d., box 141 number, National Foreign Trade Council (NFTC) records (accession 2345), Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, DE.

117. Institute for the Future, Project AWARE Data Base Summaries, August 1973, box 29, folder 5, Institute for the Future Reports, Stanford University Library Special Collections, Palo Alto, CA.

118. Glickman, *Free Enterprise*.

the threat of unwanted regulation and oversight by organizations like the United Nations. As the decade wore on, the rhetorical and conceptual framework set by the corporate futurists continued to be a touchstone. In fact, corporate boosters were quick to draw on futurist defenses of multinational corporations. Corporate futurists such as Ian Wilson and Willis Harman continued to insist that business (especially multinational corporations) could and should take on more responsibility in deliberately shaping the future. As late as 1975, Carl Madden argued that multinational corporations “promote[d] peace and understanding.”¹¹⁹ Tellingly, it was a line of reasoning that came straight from the futurist response to Burke-Hartke. It stands as just one example of how, in later years, futurists, and business interests more broadly, would not hesitate to use some of the same arguments that they had tested out during the fight against Burke-Hartke.

GAVIN BENKE is a Senior Lecturer in Boston University’s College of Arts and Sciences Writing Program. Boston University, Boston, Massachusetts 02215-1300. E-mail: gbenke@bu.edu.

Bibliography

Books

- Anderson, Jenny. *The Future of the World: Futurology, Futurists, and the Struggle for the Post-Cold War Imagination*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018.
- Delton, Jennifer. *The Industrialists: How the National Association of Manufacturers Shaped American Capitalism*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2020.
- Ghamari-Tabrizi, Sharon. *The Worlds of Herman Kahn: The Intuitive Science of Thermonuclear War*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005.
- Gibson, Weldon B. *SRI: The Take-Off Days*. Los Altos, CA: Publishing Services Center, 1986.
- Glickman, Lawrence. *Free Enterprise: An American History*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2019.
- Jones, Geoffrey. *Multinationals and Global Capitalism: From the Nineteenth Century to the Twenty-First Century*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Lustig, Doreen. *Veiled Power: International Law and the Private Corporation, 1886–1981*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020.
- Madden, Carl. *Clash of Culture: Management in an Age of Changing Values*. Washington, DC: National Planning Association, 1972.
- Meikle, Jeffrey. *American Plastic: A Cultural History*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1997.
- O’Mara, Margaret. *The Code: Silicon Valley and the Remaking of America*. New York: Penguin, 2019.
- Perspectives for the ’70s and ’80s: Tomorrow’s Problems Confronting Today’s Management*. New York: National Industrial Conference Board, 1970.
- Peterson, Peter G. *The Education of American Dreamer*. New York: Hachette, 2009.
- Sargent, Daniel. *A Superpower Transformed: The Remaking of Foreign Relations in the 1970s*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.
- Stein, Judith. *Pivotal Decade*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010

119. Madden, “Introduction,” 5.

Articles, Book Chapters, Reports, and Speeches

- Andersson, Jenny. "The Great Future Debate and the Struggle for the World." *American Historical Review*, December 2012, 1411–1430.
- Blough, Roger. "Opening Statement by Roger M. Blough at the International Industrial Conference, jointly sponsored by the National Industrial Conference Board and Stanford Research Institute," September 16, 1969.
- Connolly, Matthew. "Future Shock: The End of the World as They Knew It." In *The Shock of the Global*, edited by Niall Ferguson, Charles S. Maier, Erez Manela, and Daniel J. Sargent, 337–350. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2011.
- General Electric Company. *Our Future Business Environment*. New York: General Electric, 1968.
- Gerstacker, Carl A. "'Rebalancing' the Corporation." In *A Look at Business in 1990: A Summary of the White House Conference on the Industrial World Ahead*, 274–278. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1972.
- Gibson, Weldon B. "An Overview on the Structure of the Private Enterprise System." In *A Look at Business in 1990: A Summary of the White House Conference on the Industrial World Ahead*, 247–263. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1972.
- Harman, Willis W. "Key Choices of the Next Two Decades." In *A Look at Business in 1990: A Summary of the White House Conference on the Industrial World Ahead*, 28–36. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1972.
- Madden, Carl. "Introduction." In *The Case for the Multinational Corporation: Proceedings of a Two-Day Conference Held in Washington, DC on November 25–26, 1975*, edited by Carl Madden, 1–9. New York: Praeger, 1977.
- Oliveiro, Vernie. "The United States, Multinational Enterprises, and the Politics of Globalization." In *The Shock of the Global*, edited by Niall Ferguson, Charles S. Maier, Erez Manela, and Daniel J. Sargent, 143–155. Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 2011.
- Peterson, Peter G. "A Competitive America and the World Economy of 1990." In *A Look at Business in 1990: A Summary of the White House Conference on the Industrial World Ahead*, 321–325. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1972.
- Peterson, Peter G. *The United States in a Changing World Economy*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1971.

Newspapers and Magazines

- Ash, Roy L. "The World Corporation." *The Futurist*, February 1971.
- "The Human Touch," *New York Times*, July 17, 1969.
- Madden, Carl. "The Long-Range Future of Business." *The Futurist*, February 1971.
- Michaelis, Michael. "The Management of Change." *The Futurist*, February 1971.
- Ways, Max. "The Era of Radical Change." *Fortune*, May 1964.

Online Sources

- Background Paper—1972 Legislative Strategy on International Economic Issues, Council on International Economic Policy, January 3, 1972, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76v04/d264>.
- Cornish, Edward. "The Search for Foresight: How *The Futurist* Was Born (Part 1)." Medium.com, October 30, 2019, accessed May 15, 2023, <https://medium.com/@wfs/the-search-for-foresight-how-the-futurist-was-born-part-1-bf3e8341d5b7>.

Cornish, Edward. "The Search for Foresight: The World Future Society's Emergence from Dream to Reality (Part 2)." Medium.com, November 13, 2019, accessed May 15, 2023, <https://medium.com/@wfs/the-search-for-foresight-the-world-future-societys-emergence-from-dream-to-reality-part-2-b198b99f6b6c>.

Archives

Chamber of Commerce of the United States records, Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, DE.
Institute for the Future Reports. Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Stanford Libraries, Stanford, CA.
National Association of Manufacturers records, Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, DE.
National Foreign Trade Council (NFTC) records, Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, DE.
Stanford Research Institute Records, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, CA.
White House Central Files. Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, CA.

Cite this article: Benke, Gavin. "‘Domestic in Every Place, Foreign in None’: Corporate Futurism, Multinational Corporations, and the Politics of International Trade in the Early 1970s." *Enterprise & Society* (2023): 1–20.