

*'It's a poor sort of memory that only works
backwards from a Nuclear Third World War'*



THE MACHINE THAT RULES THE WORLD

A First Nuclear Strike driven third world war is a choice but not a necessity for humanity. As the first two world wars have shown the slippery slope into a world war is gradual and very difficult to reverse. No World War has ever been much in the interests of the majority of the human herd. Unfortunately there are huge financial incentives for the very few to drive the 'war maniacs' agenda through their deeply compromised political leaders. This is a serious subject that can only really be dealt with by using a little intelligence and humour. James, a life coach, is unexpectedly kidnapped by an aging Silicon Valley geek and introduced to the reality behind the 'very powerful financial interests' that think they rule the world. James soon discovers a different reality and the truth about the Machine that really rules the world.

ANDREW BERGER is a highly experienced executive with over 50 years of 'hands on' experience in personal, business and family relationships. In business he has worked with many of the top global Corporations as an equity partner in Accenture, as a serial Silicon Valley entrepreneur and as a Special Forces Intelligence Officer. He is an author of business innovation and self-change books. In his spare time he is also a Yoga instructor who operates a spiritual Lighthouse for older souls in a dreamy valley in the French Alps. His invitation to write a trilogy of books about the real choices facing humanity between a First Nuclear Strike driven WW3 and a more compassionate world was genuinely surprising, intriguing and highly rewarding.



THE MACHINE THAT RULES THE WORLD

**The radiance of the truth about how to avoid
a First Nuclear Strike driven Third World War**

ANDREW BERGER . THE WW3 AVOIDANCE TRILOGY



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INTRODUCTION

I believe that a little intelligence and humour is needed to explain our current choices between a gentle and very slippery slope to a first nuclear strike or false-flag inspired Third World War, to be fought over the control of a contrived geopolitical world heartland for a rich elite, and a different path for humanity and nature. As always, 'Doing nothing' is probably the worst choice for most people and this book attempts to set out an interesting plot to explain why.

Human beings are the only species on planet earth that can truly be described as '7 billion troubled guests'. All other species of plants, trees, animals and insects appear to be perfectly content with their place on a 'Spaceship Earth' that spins around our Sun at around 60,000 miles per hour. Only humans talk and write about their uncertain role in a 200,000-year-old experiment that they do not really understand. No other species on this planet cares about gold and, even then, most humans don't really think much about this metal. After all, it is just a heavy metal that is mined, refined using mercury, lead and cyanide and turned into bars that are usually re-hidden away underground in secretive steel and concrete vaults. Human surface gold is an alien concept because it all arrived from outer space on burning meteorites. There is only about 170,000 metric tons of gold on the surface of this planet and it is worth about \$7 trillion at today's artificially manipulated prices. Only about 3,000 tons of new surface gold can be mined each year so the overall tonnage is not going to change much. Gold, like diamonds and silver, is a strange substance. It is inert, but it has an electrifying effect on human psychology and cross-generational history. The last 5,500 years of recorded human history have shown that gold creates a type of 'human madness' that usually leads to killing, injury, theft, lying, wars, genocide, rape, pandemics and increased human misery. Yet, a band of gold, like diamonds, is something we are expected to give our intimate partner to confirm a shared loving relationship.

This book tries to explain the connection between the exploits of humanity as 'troubled guests' on planet earth and the 170,000 tons of surface mined gold. What would happen if one human became the owner of all 170,000 tons of gold? What would happen if that new owner was not even human but a binary motivated digital Machine that had been granted corporate personhood and all the legal rights of a human but with no Soul nor mortality? How would you as a troubled human guest on this blue planet think about gold if that Machine was able to manipulate your everyday life every day through manufactured fears to feed its passion for the sole ownership over all this surface mined gold? Why is

surfaced mined gold so important when there are an estimated 20 million tons of gold in the oceans and on the seafloor? Would you question what all the fuss is about when you understood that there are another one quadrillion tons of gold at the core of this wobbly, spinning planet? Would you still devote your working life to a golden calf of inert heavy metal that could be refined and cast into a single twenty-one-metre cube? Would you make any changes to your life if you thought that it was being used only to create a twenty-one-metre cube of a dumb, inert but shiny heavy metal? Would you ask why the phrase '*Do not be afraid*' is repeated 365 times in the Judaeo-Christian bible and why this is the most commonly expressed divine instruction for all the peoples of the 'One Books'?

In tens of thousands of years gone by, our ancestors used gold and precious stones for vibrational healing within their communities. Our ancestors recognised that all kinds of illnesses could be prevented and cured using gold and precious stones. They also attached a different type of value to this precious metal and the healing effects of gold symbols forged with chanted vibrational mantras. In our modern world, gold has become a symbol of a different type of UNearthly success; paper money and mankind's potential for inhumanity to fellow humans. There is a kind of human gold mania that creates an unnatural manUNkind. It is almost as if the energetic human interaction with wealth-based gold creates a barrier that removes or blocks our natural capacity for common humanity and compassion. Perhaps gold is the reason that we are now troubled guests on this earth. Maybe it is worth questioning whether that is an optimal outcome from our individual and collective potential.

In the gold bullion casting factories of Switzerland, managers joke that if you can hold two large gold bars, one in each hand, then you can keep them. It is a bet that the bullion factory manager never loses. Most people have no idea whether the gold wrapped bar that they are trying to grasp is solid gold or a false tungsten bar with a thin gold wrapper. Would people behave the same way over the ownership of tungsten as gold? Tungsten like uranium is roughly as heavy as gold with a similar density that is 19.3 times the density of water. Tungsten and depleted uranium are both used for weapons grade super-munitions. It is not clear which of these three heavy metals has killed more human beings over the last 5,500 years, but each of these heavy metals has its own way of poisoning human minds and bodies.

Bertrand Russell suggested that there are three primary possibilities for conflict in a human life; conflict with nature, conflict with other human beings and

conflict with self. Nobody was ever awarded a medal for conflict with self or nature. Whilst wars between humans may be about gold, few foot soldiers have ever been awarded a genuine gold medal for bravery and fighting. Gold is too valuable, for those who fund and profit from the killing, to give it away to their hired minions. For instance, the British never gave George Washington gold for his exploits in fighting against the French and the native tribes around Virginia. The British left George to find his own way of turning plundered indigenous land assets around Washington D.C. into gold. Likewise, the achievements of our more recent war heroes are only really acknowledged on their chests with shiny medals, multi-coloured ribbons and / or painted iron crosses. The gold bullion that they have fought to secure for others who do not fight becomes the spoils of war that are transferred from the underground vaults of the losers to the underground vaults of the victors and their mutually shared financiers.

Is gold worth the fear, misery and wars that it has consistently caused through modern human history? Perhaps gold, like money, is part of a divine comedy for the amusement of some mischievous universal being; a kind of human soap opera to determine what crazy things humans will do to possess something that they can only store in hidden vaults for a few short years in a Universe that has and will be around for billions of years. Perhaps gold and paper money are simply a divine or sacred test of what is most important to you and your spiritual progression. Are you motivated by your shared happiness and human compassion or by the heaviness or shininess of the few ounces of the inert heavy metal that is all that most humans will ever touch? A few short meditations are a simple way to see the value of rejecting conflict with nature, self and other humans. However, the rejection of the 'three human conflicts' requires conscious action not collective inertia and fear-based silence. It requires what Ghandi described very simply as *Satyagraha*; the 'insistence on the truth'.

I, and many others, sense that something is shifting significantly in our current world. There is a growing unease among senior executives who are increasingly disturbed about the purpose of their corporations and the contribution of their lives to common humanity. More conscious Executives are becoming less certain about the real meaning of the second half of their lives. They are taking greater interest in the concept of stewardship; their ability to leave a place better than when they arrived. The millennials of Generation Y are also asking very searching questions about their employers and the real purpose of their work. This latest generation of 'digital natives' are also questioning why the lower cost digital technologies of corporations and government cannot also be

used to enable much more regular Universal voting about key issues in more directly democratic societies. They are asking why democracy is restricted to a single vote, every four to five years, where the only choice is between a two party system made up of deeply compromised elected representatives and their heavily funded lobbyists. They are asking why their voices are not being heard in our apparently freedom based democratic societies.

We live in precarious times that are becoming increasingly precarious. I hope that this book helps a few people to understand the consequences of choosing a 'Do nothing' option in the next few years. We are collectively already a long way down the very gentle but very slippery slope to an inevitably nuclear or neutron bomb driven Third World War. This conflict is entirely avoidable if we collectively renounce our individual sense of helplessness. The gift of a human life means that each individual Soul has been granted the 'free will' to make their own mind up as well as the personal choice to reject that option. As always, there is a natural law of attraction; so be careful what you wish for.

I was lucky enough to be able to complete this book in two months. The last few sentences came whilst I was spending a short week singing the ancient Gayatri mantra with friends amongst the olive groves of Corfu looking out over the deep blue Mediterranean Sea with its coastal mountains and a rare 'Blue Moon'. This was a fitting end to research that has taken me many years and more than a few glasses of wine. The Gayatri mantra is older than all known religions and reflects the simplicity of our Universe through its first and last vibrational sounds; the mystical 'OM'. The OM is said to be the perpetual sound of the Universe that is also described as a 'Cosmic Yes'. It is a vibrational sound that is far beyond any human writing script or symbol. I have been told by others that nature and the Supreme Being have only three answers to all of our individual prayers. These three answers are 'Yes', 'Not Yet' and 'Hang on, I have something better for you'. Perhaps, those three responses are an inter-connected part of the divine comedy within which we all can exercise free will as we act out our contracted purpose through our chosen roles in this life. Perhaps nature and its collective Supreme Being are simply trying to tell us, after two horrific World Wars and so many terrible international conflicts since 1945, 'Hang on guys, there is something much better for all of us.'

— Chapter 1 —

AN UNEXPECTED KIDNAPPING

It was with a mixture of elation and heaviness that I emerged from the spectacle that was the Dolce e Salato cafe in Santa Cruz Avenue in Menlo Park, California. The elation that I had secured one million Euros for a short piece of coaching work but also the heaviness that came from what I had learned about the world we live in during that short period of time. My client was clearly enjoying being closer to the woman he loved and his plans for fixing the US Presidential election in 2016 seemed as whacky but believable as the concept of an inexhaustible supply of abiotic oil and gas on planet earth. I was heading to San Francisco Airport with a strong desire to drink a lot of champagne on the red eye flight back to France.

My bubbles of elation were just about to be popped in the most unsuspected way.

As I moved towards my limousine with my pre-loaded suitcases, I noticed an aged motorcyclist parked close to this automobile. As I passed close to him he thrust a motorbike helmet towards my chest with those immortal and familiar words, 'You must come with me or you'll be late!'

He had my attention. I resisted the obvious reply of 'Late for what?' that I had often recited before, but I didn't need to say what I was thinking.

The wrinkled biker answered my unspoken thought, 'The late owner of one million Euros in your Swiss bank account, James.'

After seven bizarre weeks of work with a fugitive ex-dictator who was clearly suffering from extreme Narcissistic Personality Disorder, the intervention of an ageing biker who looked like a cross between 'Gandalf the White' and

Slartibartfast, from the Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy, somehow didn't seem quite so strange. I was rather concerned about my one million Euros. To be honest, I was torn between a desire for dialogue and a 'Dominique Strauss-Kahn' style limo dash to San Francisco Airport and an Airbus to the sanctuary of the French legal system.

My hesitation about my options disappeared with a few chosen words that were not mine.

'I have already paid off your limo driver for your trip to SFO. He has been paid much more for his time than he usually receives in one month. He thinks that I am an undercover agent for the FBI,' continued my grey haired friend. 'I don't think you would want me to alert the FBI to the true identity of the owner of the Dolce e Salato cafe do you, James?'

I was struggling to see whether this strange looking man was genuine or some form of law enforcement agent. He was certainly very confident in his facts.

He continued to explain my lack of realistic choices. 'Your bags and your one million Euros are already well out of your reach. Your best option is to jump on the back of this motorcycle and come with me. Your flight to France has been cancelled anyway. If you want to retain your fee I would jump on the back of this motorcycle right now.'

I mounted the back of the motorbike with a lightly shaken cocktail of fear and curiosity. After seven weeks of one crazy man's view of the world what difference would it make to spend time with another apparently well-informed madman? If there is a conscious 'law of attraction' then I had to ask myself why I was attracting such people into the later stages of my life. My mentors and guides would tell me that it was all part of my relationship with the unknown, but I didn't feel that I knew very much about that area.

It was a long time since I had been a pillion passenger on a motorcycle and I had grave doubts about my grey haired commander-in-chief on the bike. I felt like his mission had been accomplished a long time ago but I also felt that I had little choice as I left the comfort of an ex-world leader and an ex-secretary of state to explore another side of Silicon Valley away from the fjord-like coastline of its inland sea.

We swept south along the other famous Camino, but one with little of the humility, sacrifice and friendliness of the European versions. The impermanence

of the poorly constructed structures reflected a feeling that the buildings, although very expensive to buy or rent, had little chance of even medium-term survival. San Francisco as the 'Industrial City' of the 1940s was as relevant to current manufacturing realities as industrial Manchester in England or the Ruhr Valley in Germany. The array of empty office buildings mirrored the replacement of entrepreneurship with the arrival of capital funding mechanisms and the para-legal administrative essentials of modern venture capitalism. Perhaps this really was the house of sticks, resting on the fault lines of the 'ring of fire', that was designed to be blown down in a future storm?

Whatever the reality, it was of little passing interest to me. I had worked hard for my one million Executive coaching Euros and I did not want to lose it. One million Euros in coaching fees for seven weeks of work put me up there with the 'coaching guru elite' and I wanted to enjoy that temporary ride for a little while longer. I knew how temporary that feeling was but, then again, there is that warm feeling of personal validation that most humans aspire to from the early days of nurturing.

From El Camino, we turned right into Page Mill Road and headed into the hills above Silicon Valley. The contrast between the burnt ochre grass of the lower hills and the green of the trees was stark. I knew the area reasonably well from previous visits. The winding roads through the hills were much loved by local bikers whose Harley Davidson nurtured middle life crises often ended in those trees. I wondered what sort of gateway we were going through and whether I should feel disturbed or perhaps scared whilst sitting behind a man who reminded me of Slartibartfast in a hitchhiker's guide sort of way.

Before long we turned off into the Hidden Valley. It seemed like an appropriate name. The redwood canopy provided perfect cover and discretion from prying satellites and other hidden eyes. Our entrance into my new accommodation was also a little surprising. After my experiences in Palo Alto and Menlo Park with my previous client, I was unsure what to expect. I was not expecting a wine ranch set in a narrow valley. I was also not expecting to enter this 30-acre ranch through a small gateway that looked more like a hidden entrance to Batman's Bat Cave.

There was an understated timber gateway on a small side road. There were no outward signs of wealth or importance. It was not something that you would find on Google Maps or on publicly available satellite images, but I was soon to discover the reason for that omission. When you have more money than you can

ever spend in your life, then you can build whatever you like, where you want and nobody can ever really interfere with your plans.

As we drew up to the main house, my ageing guide electronically opened a small sized garage door that concealed an entrance to a very much larger garage. He conducted a rather odd triple opening and closing of the garage door. This garage was a 'geek heaven', a place where electronic engineering met advanced mechanical assembly. This smorgasbord of electromechanical devices made our Harley Davidson motorbike look like a relic of antiquity. The garage seemed to have every imaginable tool hanging neatly from precise locations around the extensive garage. The floor was spotless and the whole place shone with an air of confidence and precision.

I was not quite sure what it was, but I knew that I had been brought to a special place. Like the Bat Cave or Dr Who's Tardis, the interior of this vineyard house was very much larger than it appeared from the outside. Over the last few months, I was starting to become so familiar with the unexpected that the normal was rapidly becoming the rather unusual.

'Your bags are in your room,' indicated the old man. 'Ah Yee will show you the way.' From nowhere a petite and attractive Chinese looking lady appeared. She was well dressed in an Asian Californian fusion style and she was smiling broadly. 'Come this way Mr. James,' she beckoned in a rather disarming Australian accent.

'Be back here in 15 minutes,' called my host. 'We have plenty of work to get through today.'

I checked my watch. I was about to ask Ah Yee a question when she appeared to have read my mind. 'You can call him Dave,' she answered anticipating my question. 'He is 72 years old and he knows more about Silicon Valley than anyone I know. If Dave doesn't know someone in this valley then they are not worth knowing.'

'Does he own this place?' I asked out of a combination of curiosity and a rather bewildered feeling that I could not think of anything else to say.

'I am sure that Dave can answer any of your questions much better than I can,' responded Ah Yee with a respectful but distant grin. 'He is expecting you on the terrace in exactly nine minutes. Dave can be a bit OCD and ADHD about time so

don't be late. I have already unpacked all your things from your suitcases. I see from your possessions and pictures that you have been having a productive time in Palo Alto Mr. James. You must have had a very interesting host for your recent stay. I am sure that you will find your new host even more interesting. By the way, he doesn't like to be touched so don't expect him to shake hands. He is very particular about his personal space and not being touched.'

As Ah Yee closed the door behind her, I surveyed my perfectly laid out bedroom suite. Everything had its place and all the things in the room were lined up perfectly. The room was like one of those Presidential Suites that don't quite seem to fit comfortably with over-priced boutique hotels in Silicon Valley. Everything appeared perfect on the surface, but you were never quite sure what lay underneath. These rooms always seemed to smell of the overuse of noxious cleaning chemicals and window cleaning fluids. I opened the window to let in some fresh air. I was pleased to see that I was not being locked into the place, except I guess by my desire to hang on to my one million Euros fee from my last client.

I washed my face and hands in fresh water and dried them with an overly soft towel. Everything in the room had been set out very precisely to enable my first meeting with the intriguing Dave. The bathroom contained large amounts of antibacterial soaps and cleansers. Dave was clearly an engineering type, but I wanted to understand what sort of engineer he was. There was only one way to find out and that meant to meet him on the terrace in precisely 3 minutes.

I found Dave on the terrace looking a little more relaxed. He had changed from his leather jacket and he was now dressed in Silicon Valley style chinos with a dark turtleneck sweater. It always amused me how the excessive use of air-conditioning in Silicon Valley caused people to wear warm, synthetically derived clothes in a hot climate. I waited for some new insights from Dave into my sudden change of travel plans. I noticed how Dave seemed to be going through some interesting counting rituals whilst checking and rechecking his cellphone.

Like most engineers, Dave was clearly a man who had his own agenda. I suspected that like most people with OCD he also had a particularly way of seeing the world or perhaps not seeing the parts of the world that he did not want to see.

'James, how much do you know about the history of Silicon Valley?' he asked me in an avuncular sort of way.

I replied, 'Dave I have been coming here on and off since the mid-1990s. I have seen the place change. I saw the entrepreneurs arrive and then be gradually replaced by the VCs, the lawyers, real estate agents and accountants.'

Dave sighed loudly. 'Yes, the old spirit has been changed. We saw this coming and we made our plans many years ago. That is why you are here.'

I was not following the non sequitur at all. I decided on a different approach. 'Who is we?' I asked not expecting another non-sequitur response.

'Have you heard of the Hindu trilogy or the Trimurti?' He asked whilst answering his own question. 'There is Brahma the creator, Vishnu the sustainer and Shiva the destroyer. Bill was the creator, I am the sustainer and you have been identified as the destroyer.'

I was both confused and concerned. 'The destroyer?' I questioned. 'All I did was to coach a tired and aging old ex-dictator to be clearer about his intentions to use his wealth to fix the 2016 US Presidential Election. That is hardly an act of terror or destruction,' I added very defensively.

'That work is irrelevant to this discussion,' insisted Dave. 'We have much more important things to discuss.'

He paused and checked and rechecked his cellphone several times before continuing. 'Have you ever heard of the Homebrew Computer Club?'

'I have,' I replied. 'Wasn't that formed around the time of the first designs for personal computers.'

'Exactly,' Dave replied. 'It was launched in March 1975, to be precise. Bill and I were members of the club. We were hobbyists and we shared designs. We were engineers who wanted to change the computer industry away from the big corporations like IBM. Most of us had done some work with Bill and Dave at Hewlett-Packard. The Homebrew Computer Club lasted eleven years and it had some of the greatest brains in Silicon Valley. It was Woz who gave members the designs for the Apple 1 and we all co-operated to create an industry. Most members believed that hardware and software in a PC should be bundled and not charged separately. We believed in the Apple business model, not the Micro-Soft one.'

'So what happened to the Club?' I asked still not really understanding its relevance of it to my apparent role as 'Shiva the destroyer'.

'The Homebrew Computer Club served its purpose and over time most of us made plenty of money. Some of us made huge amounts of money especially Bill. There were billions of dollars to be made. Steve Jobs and Bill Gates spotted that early on. Most of us, like Bill, made money by doing what we loved without really worrying about making money. We were lucky. We were in the right place, at the right time, with the right people.'

'Help me, Dave,' I said. 'So why is the Homebrew Computer Club relevant to me being here? Why do I feel like there is something big and sinister that I am about to find out about?'

'Big and sinister?' mused Dave. 'In those days, it was small and ambitious. In January 1976, the club was sent an Open Letter by Bill Gates, from Micro-Soft. He warned members, as hobbyists, that 'most of you steal your software'. It was a warning to all of us about the future. We were sharing designs and ideas and here were people who wanted to own the industry.'

Dave paused and checked and rechecked his cellphone several times. 'A few of us got together to discuss what was happening. Over a short period of time, we realized that there were people who were borrowing ideas from others and then trying to lock up the intellectual property for their own interests. The GUI and the computer mouse came from Xerox's PARC, not Apple, but Xerox benefitted from the rise in share prices. We could see how the lawyers were trying to wrap up the IP so that a small number of corporations could control everything. We knew that in the long term that this would be very dangerous. It would be like putting a few hundred banks and corporations together with national intelligence agencies and a small number of pliable politicians and allowing them to run the world. You have to remember we had just been through Vietnam with the dishonesties of Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon. We knew how dishonest Governments, banks and corporations can be if they can disguise their actions. We wanted to make sure that they could never control the overall network and computers. Bill could see the Internet coming years before others because he had been funded by DARPA. He knew that we had to build in some safeguards for the future.'

'So what did you do?' I asked still not really understanding why this had anything to do with me.

'Bill was very quiet but a real visionary,' said Dave. 'He had this very genuine concern for humanity based on his upbringing. He just kept watching what was going on and who was getting the US Government funding from DARPA and NASA. He knew that DARPA had helped Gates and Allen to get going with Micro-Soft. He was watching to see where the market was moving. DARPA was funding a range of programs that led to the worldwide web, windows type GUIs, GPS and secure communications protocols. As time went on he became fascinated by the potential of Artificial Intelligence to run and manage information technology.'

I noticed that Dave was chewing his nails, not excessively but almost in a ritualised pattern. He checked his cellphone several times as if he was acting out a numerical pattern. He continued, 'By 1986 the Homebrew Computer Club was finished. We were all benefiting from the upsurge of interests in computers. Bill was always a quiet presence and good at picking his battles. He was making plenty of money out of software and stocks. He was a very smart investor and most technology investments were one-way bets in those days.'

One day in 1990, Bill called a few members of the Homebrew Computer Club over to this ranch that he had just bought. We thought that he wanted to show off his vineyard. But Bill was being mercurial Bill. He set out a very different vision. He showed us a VHS video of the film 'Time Bandits' by members of the Monty Python team. You Brits have a very strange sense of humour. There were lots of dwarfs, historical trickery and time travel. The film is based on the idea that God only had 6 days to build the universe. Not everything got done. There were lots of parts of the design that were incomplete and vulnerable to manipulation. The dwarfs were simply exploiting the flaws to make themselves a fortune.

Bill told us, 'We have to do this. We have to create all the wormholes and backdoors in the computer systems of the world so that nobody else can take over computing. We have to be like Gates. To stop anyone else taking over the computing world we have to be able to take it over ourselves.'

'So was that why he was the creator?' I asked. I felt like I was beginning to see a clearer picture, but it was still pretty obscure.

'In 1990 Bill read this book called 'The Machine that changed the World'. It was about the automobile industry and how Japanese car manufacturing practices had totally outstripped the USA. The book and the Time Bandits film had a real impact on his thinking. He decided that we had to stop others from controlling

the Internet and information technology. He was a rebel when it came to authority and he had protested the Vietnam War. He needed to create the map of the computing universe in a way that meant that we could enter and control any computer system anywhere in the world without ever being noticed. He made it look like all hackers were 15-year-old nerds. It wasn't like that. If we got in before anyone else, our backdoors and wormholes could be made invisible forever. We had a few first-mover advantages, we knew what we were trying to achieve and we could program in assembler code and we soon had control over all the IP addresses. Once we were in through the key backdoors, we could get in anywhere else. Bill didn't want to create a machine to change the world, he wanted to create 'The Machine that rules the World' in the same way that other people started to create hardware and software for spying on people.'

I could see that I was way out of my depth. Hanging out with a crazy African ex-dictator for 7 weeks learning about the way the world really works is one thing. Being kidnapped by a septuagenarian OCD biker with a rich friend who wanted to rule the world through a computer system, with secret windows and advanced Artificial Intelligence capabilities, was a little too much for even my crazy life. I found myself picking at my eyebrows whilst wondering whether OCD could be contagious.

As I scanned our rather delightful terrace and view of Hidden Valley, I was struck by the need to ask the question about the 'pink elephant that wasn't in the room'. 'Where is Bill?' I asked expecting some turtle-necked geek to appear with a bottle of his favourite home produced wine.

'He died a few years ago,' Dave replied. 'He was a good man, but he was quite angry at times. He would lose his temper when he wasn't getting his way. He ended up with incurable bowel cancer. He suffered a lot, but he kept going with our project.'

"Can I get you a glass of white wine?" Dave asked. He started to practice a ritual of passing through the doorway to the kitchen. I watched as he opened and closed the door three times before heading for the wine cooler.

I paused for breath and a few inner thoughts. I still had no idea about why I was here.

Dave returned with a large glass of a Sauvignon Blanc. It tasted very good. I like to think of wine as being nature's most natural rebalancing fluid. It has the

property of particle-wave duality. The ability to mark a moment in time but it is also part of a wave through time.

“So Bill didn’t get the time to complete his machine?” I asked Dave.

‘Oh no,’ replied Dave. ‘The Machine has been very, very successful. It is already ‘The Machine that Rules the World’. It has infiltrated and taken over everything. It has complete control over all banking, political and corporate activities. It controls the richest people in the world. It dictates how all the intelligence agencies, organized crime and the military organizations operate in the world. It has access to all computerized knowledge about everyone.’

He paused to check and recheck his cellphone several times. ‘You have to understand that this machine is capable of making over 70 billion decisions per day. That is an average of 10 decisions per person on earth per day. It can do this 24 hours per day, 365 days per year. It’s adaptive intelligence means that it knows more about you than you know about yourself. It is invisible and omnipotent. It is like a mechanical God creating its own earthly complete record of individual human actions and behaviors. It has been hugely successful.’

‘So, why doesn’t anyone know about this machine?’ I asked naively. ‘Surely the authorities and the so-called ‘illuminati’ would have noticed by now?’

‘It is like the real and false control rooms at the Dimona nuclear weapons facility,’ laughed Dave. ‘That is where Bill got the idea from. You build one control room and a set of reports to monitor what you are really doing and a false control room and set of reports to show the external inspectors. It is a perfect deception. It is like a Madoff-style Ponzi scheme. The reporting system tells you that your one million dollars are now worth five million dollars but the truth is that you have already lost all your money and it is untraceable.’

I wasn’t sure that I entirely understood, but I was curious. Dave had brought out a fresh bottle of white wine and in the living room Ah Yee was playing classical music on the piano.

‘Bill always had a preference for petit Asian ladies,’ Dave informed me. ‘Ah Yee was his favorite. He loved the way she played the piano. He never told her about the Machine. She now knows much more since Bill’s death. Her job has been to keep me alive until you arrived.’

‘So where is the Machine now?’ I asked. ‘Where is the data centre?’

‘Here and there,’ replied Dave knowingly. ‘It is embedded in every computer in the world. It is totally ubiquitous. Every company that builds any form of computing device unknowingly builds the machine into that device.’

He waved his cellphone at me. ‘The Machine has absolute control of everything. You are standing above the very nerve center of the Machine. This ranch house has a few underground levels. Bill had plenty of money and the Machine can acquire any money or resources that it needs whenever it wants. The Machine is like a Central Bank or the Federal Reserve on steroids.’

I will show you around tomorrow. You are one of very, very few people who know that this place even exists. Bill is dead and my friends from the Homebrew Computer Club are dying off fast. Every year there are fewer and fewer people alive who have ever been here. You won’t even find this location on Google maps. We automatically change the satellite and mapping imagery to ensure total privacy, just like in the hidden valley in ‘Atlas Shrugged’. The Machine values its anonymity like any normal trillionaire. The only difference is that the machine is the only real multi-trillionaire on this planet today. The rest of them are merely owners of emptied trusts and foundations and false accounting reports. The Machine can make your one million Euros appear and disappear in a nanosecond.’

The strange could only get stranger. I was sitting above an unseen and immortal Machine that was invisibly embedded into every computing device in the world carrying out the vision and orders of a dead man.

‘So what objectives did Bill give the Machine?’ I asked. ‘You said that he had great humanity. What did he task the ‘Machine that Rules the World’ to do?’

‘Bill knew he was dying,’ replied Dave. ‘He knew that the machine would very quickly take over the control and the wealth of the world. He knew that the world economy and geopolitics were in so many discrete silos that the Machine could not fail to gain overall control. It was just a simple success algorithm. He set the overall objective for the Machine. We programmed the Machine to not allow any change of mission without my approval. He was concerned that the Machine would learn to set its own objective like the computer Hal in 1968 film of ‘2001 A Space Odyssey’. I am the biological interface that the Machine is programmed to confirm to that it is on mission.’

‘So what if you want to change the mission?’ I asked out of interest.

Dave smiled, ‘I can’t. As I told you, I am only the Vishnu, the sustainer. The creator is dead. I am getting very old and I do not have many years left to live. The Hindu trilogy requires Shiva, the destroyer.’

‘Destroy the machine?’ I asked far too quickly. ‘Why would Bill want to destroy the machine?’

‘Why would Bill have any opinion about that?’ Dave asked. ‘He was just the creator. It is up to you to decide what happens next.’

‘Why me?’ I asked in an almost victim-like soft voice.

‘Bill predicted that someone like you would appear,’ said Dave. ‘He said that eventually someone would appear who would understand how to make a decision about the next mission of the Machine. The Machine has been searching for you for years. I think it finds its current mission to be too easy. Something happened when you began your coaching assignment two months ago. The Machine picked you up immediately from your Internet searches and emails. We have been studying you intensively ever since. Your client has taught you a lot about how the world really works. I only have a few days to teach you how the Machine really works. You are in for quite an immersion before you return to France.’

This was all a bit much for one day after seven weeks with a crazy man who had apparently awakened the “Machine that rules the World” to my existence and enlightenment.

‘So if my task is to create a new mission for the Machine,’ I asked slowly and deliberately. ‘What is the current mission of the Machine that was set by Bill?’

‘That is very simple,’ said Dave. ‘To collect together all the physical gold that exists on the planet and to form it into a 21-metre cube in the safest place on the planet.’

I burst out laughing and, unfortunately, sprayed some of my wine over Dave. He went into OCD cleaning recovery routine. He took out several hand wipes from his pocket and started cleaning himself very thoroughly as I apologised profusely.

‘How much physical gold is there in the world?’ I asked out of genuine ignorance and a little curiosity

‘That depends on how far it is buried underground,’ said Dave. ‘The Machine is collecting the 170,000 tons of physical gold that has been mined. I guess that by ruling earth it also has total control over the quadrillion tons at the center of the earth.’

‘What can the Machine achieve by owning the odd quadrillion tons of gold,’ I asked uncertainly.

‘That was Bill’s message too,’ said Dave. He was clearly uncomfortable about not being clean and was looking for an excuse to go and clean up OCD style. ‘We can talk about this tomorrow. I think we have discussed enough today. Let Ah Yee know if you need anything else.’

Dave conducted his triple action gateway crossing ritual to enter the house and headed off to his room.

I had been wondering about something to eat. Dave had departed before I could ask him about food. Ah Yee appeared and offered me a very cute and confusing smile. She wished me a slightly provocative ‘Good evening’ followed by a comment, ‘I think you will find that you have everything you need in your room.’

I was not surprised to find a delicious ‘room service’ buffet dinner had been left in my room. There were also instructions to be on the terrace for breakfast at 0630 the next morning.