

## **EDUCOM Press Conference**

### **Introduction**

#### **It was 25 years ago here at the U of M**

that EDUCOM was formed, as an unusual collaboration among America's research universities and industry to develop and implement the computer technology necessary for teaching and research.

#### **Hence it is particularly appropriate that we should**

host once again this important organization, this time celebrating its 25th Anniversary.

### **University of Michigan**

#### **At Michigan we have been convinced**

for some time that the computer has evolved far beyond simply a tool for scientific computation or information process.

#### **It is now a robust technology absolutely**

essential for the support of all knowledge-based activities...and knowledge-based organizations such as universities, corporations, government, ...even the American household!

#### **Under the leadership of Dr. Van Houweling,**

our campus has become a gigantic experiment--a laboratory--in the development of information technology.

#### **You can see it everywhere you turn...**

...from the presence on our campus of NSFnet, the primary computer network linking together the research universities and research laboratories of our nation...  
...to the largest collection of computers on

any American campus (now numbering  
in excess of 30,000)  
...to high-speed networks linking our faculty,  
students, and staff with our libraries,  
laboratories, administrators,...  
...and even your hotels...

### **Themes of Change**

**Yet, we have only begun to scratch the surface**  
in the development and application of this  
incredible technology.

**Over the past decade, information technology**  
has evolved from central “mainframe” computing--  
so-called “time-sharing” to personal computing,  
with the introduction of the microcomputer.

**Today it is evolving once again to what might be**  
termed “interpersonal” computing with the rapid  
spread of computer networks.

**Hence, the computer has become...**  
...not only a lever for the mind,  
a device to extend our intellectual span  
...but as well a tool of interaction and collaboration  
of cooperation and community.

**One of the hats I wear these days**  
is as a member of the National Science Board,  
our nation’s principal body for science policy.

**As a member of the Board, I have sensed**  
the extraordinary increase in the pace of change  
as we approach the end of this century.

**Earlier this morning I spoke of the extraordinary**  
changes occurring in our society...  
...as we evolve from the rather homogeneous,

domestic, industrial nation of the 20th Century  
...into a highly pluralistic, knowledge-intensive  
world nation of the 21st Century.

**These themes of change...**

...the growing pluralism of our people  
...our ever stronger linkages to other nations  
and other peoples  
...and our shift to a knowledge-based  
economy in which educated people and  
their ideas become the key strategic  
commodities

**Are just the themes most directly addressed by**  
this extraordinary new technology.

**In a world of rapid change, this ability**  
of information technology to facilitate linkages  
is becoming all important.

**One final comment and observation...**

**Many view the computer as a symbol of**  
the de-personalizing nature of modern science and technology.

**Yet, if ever there was a tool for empowering**  
the individual, it is information technology.

**This is truly a liberating force in our society,**  
not only freeing us from the mental drudgery of routine tasks  
but linking us together in ways we never dreamed possible  
...overcoming the constraints of space and time.

**In part, it is our challenge, collectively, as**  
journalists, scientists, educators, leaders of business  
...to build greater public understanding and support  
for this extraordinary tool...  
...so key to our nation and the world as we  
prepare to enter the "Age of Knowledge"

that is our future.