

### **Arvind's after dinner remarks:**

How can I thank Steve for being the prime mover behind all this roasting? Let me tell you a story about him.

In 1999 while I was contemplating my next sabbatical, I ran into Steve. "Boss", he said, "why don't you spend it at SUN?" I took him seriously, as I always do and enquired "But what will I do?". Steve, without missing a beat said "Ahh that IS a problem".

I have been blessed by students, my wife Gita, my sons Divakar and Prabhakar who all believe in me in spite of having no faith that I can actually do anything useful.

Pre MIT

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I had the most wonderful time as a graduate student in Minnesota. *Women were lovely, fair and free* (it was 1969 after all and free-love was in full bloom)... and *I did not feel that I had any promises to keep*. It would have been inconceivable to me that a day would come when dataflow graphs and the lambda calculus would become as interesting as women. I knew I had started aging when that happened to me.

Anyway Minnesota is where my interest in architecture, especially Multics, was kindled by Professor Richard Kain, (an MIT man!) who eventually supervised my thesis.

I wanted to go into teaching - Peter Freeman at UC Irvine offered me a job even before I applied. My wife who had lived in New York and Los Angeles convinced me that 1. there was nothing between those two cities and 2. all young people had to go to California. So we went to Irvine.

Looking back, life in Irvine was so idyllic – besides going for a hike in the mountains every week I actually used to read papers in those days out of sheer curiosity. That is how I discovered Dataflow and eventually met Jack. I told Jack at a conference in 1975 (I think an SOSOP where Butler was present too) that my colleagues thought that I was crazy to abandon Operating Systems and that I would never get tenure this way. Jack, in his characteristic style, said "Ignore them", which I happily did.

By 1977 Gita and I were all set to go back to India to teach at IIT Kanpur. However, MIT threw a big wrench in the machinery by offering me a job. I am sure it was all Jack's doing. This was beyond my wildest dreams. Even the interview process gave me the feeling that this place is totally different. But Gita and I had already committed to go to India. Corby who was the head at that time wondered if IIT was paying me more money!

It was fortunate that the following year MIT offered me the job again. That year in India proved very fruitful, I had the opportunity to teach Keshav Pingali, Ambuj Goyal and Vinod Kathail and later, Keshav and Vinod both came to MIT as graduate students.

MIT

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A totally new world – the place where it was happening. For the first time in my life I came in contact with people who had actually done the research that I had read about. It completely changed my outlook on research.

Gita played a crucial role in my early life at MIT. The life at MIT was exhilarating but also tough. I had left a very well functioning group back in Irvine and was trying to assemble a group of graduate students at MIT. We had just started a family (Divakar was born soon after I came to MIT), and the financial pressure was enormous.

When some one offered me a job which would have doubled my salary, I was tempted for a moment. When I came home that evening and mentioned this to Gita, she said *If you are willing to go to Texas (or where ever it was) for twice the money then you should be willing to move to India for half as much.* That settled that matter for good.

(Corby-Moses story): Sometimes I would get tired of defending Dataflow, especially in front of people who had no understanding of Dataflow. So in a moment of weakness I said to Joel Moses and Corby who were running the department at that time, that perhaps I should do some thing that would be more conventional. I was surprised and gratified to hear from them both “What’s the point of doing conventional stuff– You must try out your own ideas” ( I basically took it to mean that I should not let the turkeys get me down)

Mike Dertouzos: Not only did I learn how to raise the level of discourse above the mundane issues but I admired his administrative style. He was a constant supporter and helped me raise enormous amounts of money for my projects. He truly enjoyed wheeling and dealing and we had enormous fun observing him and participating with him.

But the people from whom I learned most were my students; Keshav Pingali, who showed that we should first focus on simpler problems even if we leave out some important details; Bob Iannucci, the most organized person I knew – he was already managing a group of IBM engineers when he was a graduate student; Greg Papadopoulos, showed me that the hardware architecture can have its own elegance; David Culler, the man who could jump into any problem regardless of how ill defined the problem was – the style that I found again in James Hoe and Derek Chiou. I admired the discipline of Ken Traub and Daniel Rosenband, many years his junior; and Richard the businessman. I have learned from every one.

Periodically a set of graduate students work so well together that it feels like nuclear fusion to me. This certainly happened in the eighties and the fusion continued until Jamey graduated in 1992. Andy Boughton (the Boss) , Jack Costenza, R Paul were all an integral part of it. A smaller fusion happened again in late nineties with Derek, James, Boon, Xiaowei, Shail, Jan Wilhelm, Alex Caro and Andy Shaw. Larry certainly helped in this fusion. I have the same faith in my current set of students which started with Dan

Rosenband and I have a feeling that the group now has the critical mass and is about to reach the critical temperature.

There is no place like MIT for colleagues and students. I have learned so much by team-teaching with Krste and earlier with Nikhil. I have also been blessed with extraordinary administrative assistants Natalie, Ann, Mitch and Sally.

I have also been fortunate to have external collaborators like Lennart Augustsson, Eknath at IBM, Joe Stoy at Oxford and people at Todai and ETL in Japan.

Future

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First, I am not going to go away. This is not a retirement party. If Mick Jagger can continue to perform *Sympathy for the Devil* then I can continue to do my thing.

Though young people remind me that I am getting old -- they also provide me the sustenance I need. There is no place like MIT!

Thanks to every one for coming and I know that some of you have come from very far. Also thanks to every one who has sent me greetings and who could not come. And finally a big thanks to Steve, Larry, Sally, Derek, Andy and Victor for organizing such a memorable event.

The people who would have enjoyed this celebration most of all would have been mine and Gita's late parents. By a happy coincidence, today is Gita's mother's birthday.

Now let us party some more.