„Governments of the Industrial World, you weary gi-
ants of flesh and steel, I come from Cyberspace, the
new home of Mind. On behalf of the future, I ask you of
the past to leave us alone. You are not welcome among
us. You have no sovereignty where we gather. We have no
elected government, nor are we likely to have one, so
I address you with no greater authority than that with
which liberty itself always speaks. I declare the global
social space we are building to be naturally independent
of the tyrannies you seek to impose on us. You have no
moral right to rule us, nor do you possess any methods of
enforcement we have true reason to fear. Governments de-
rive their just powers from the consent of the governed.
You have neither solicited nor received ours. We did not
invite you. You do not know us, nor do you know our world.
Cyberspace does not lie within your borders. Do not think
that you can build it, as though it were a public con-
struction project. You cannot. It is an act of nature,
and it grows itself through our collective actions. You
have not engaged in our great and gathering conversati-
on, nor did you create the wealth of our marketplaces.
You do not know our culture, our ethics, or the unwritten
codes that already provide our society more order than
could be obtained by any of your impositions. You claim
there are problems among us that you need to solve. You
use this claim as an excuse to invade our precincts.
Many of these problems don't exist. Where there are real
conflicts, where there are wrongs, we will identify them
and address them by our means. We are forming our own
Social Contract. This governance will arise according
to the conditions of our world, not yours. Our world is
different" (Barlow 1996, quoted in Ludlow 2001: 1–2).

For various reasons this declaration
has received a lot of criticism. Besides
its libertarian character, Bennahum (2001)
argues for the text being naive and delu-
sional in the sense that we don't actually
inhabit cyberspace, but the real world, com-
posed of real places, real governments and
legislation. Nevertheless, Ludlow (2001:
4) gives credit to Barlow arguing that
people's virtual reality with its virtual
identity in many instances might matter
just as much as those of the real world.

All of these aspects indicate in one
way or another the erosion of nation sta-
tes. Timothy May observed the global flow
of data and its implication for borders
far before data would become the major re-
course of our century: „National borders
are becoming more transparent than ever to