

The Battle of our Times

by Viv Forbes
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Everyone carries a part of society on his shoulders; no one is relieved of his share of responsibility by others. And no one can find a safe way out for himself if society is sweeping towards destruction.

Therefore everyone, in his own interests, must thrust himself vigorously into the intellectual battle. None can stand aside with unconcern; the interests of everyone hang on the result.

Whether he chooses or not, every man is drawn into the great historical struggle, the decisive battle into which our epoch has plunged us.

Ludwig von Mises "Socialism".

The above passage was written by the great economist and political philosopher, Ludwig von Mises, in German, in 1922. His massive book "Socialism" demolishes the whole idea that centrally planned economies can ever produce prosperity or freedom.

Let's recall the world of the 1920's:

- The League of Nations had just been set up "to prevent war".
- After years of civil war, Lenin's Bolsheviks controlled Russia and starving peasants were eating a mixture of grain, clay and twigs. When Lenin died, Stalin seized power, murdered Trotsky, turned farms into communes and announced the first of Russia's "Five Year Plans". Millions more died.
- Mussolini, leader of the National Fascists (the Black Shirts) and former editor of the Milan Socialist Party Newspaper, declared himself "Il Duce" of Italy.
- Mao Tse-tung formed the Communist Party in China, and commenced setting up communes and Five Year Plans that no one believed in. Millions died in man-made famines.
- French troops occupied the Ruhr to extract reparations from Germany for World War I. The German currency and German savings were destroyed by runaway inflation caused by excessive spending financed by printing paper money.
- Adolph Hitler reorganized the National Socialist German Workers Party and his Brown Shirts attempted to seize power in Bavaria. He also published "Mein Kampf", another grand plan to remake society by force.
- The Conservation Movement was established in Germany and embraced the Nazi party. (see: <http://www.ecofascism.com/review18.html>)
- The Ku Klux Klan claimed one million members in USA.
- The British imposed a Salt Tax in India, thus provoking Ghandi to peaceful revolution. The first Hindu-Muslim riots occurred.
- In Australia there were long strikes in the coal mines, at Broken Hill and on the waterfront.

- A sheep farm in New South Wales was selected as the site of a national capital for Australia to be called “Canberra”. (Had we known what damage that move would do, we would have left it to the sheep and the dingoes.)
- One thing never changes. Australia suffered severe floods, fires and droughts in the 1920’s, as in every other decade.

In summary, the 1920’s saw demagogues and authoritarians attempting to force their brand of centralized, coercive, collectivist, nationalistic Utopia on everyone else.

Every such attempt has seven common characteristics –

The Seven Steps to Dictatorship.

1. ***Start the Scare***
– it can be the Yellow Horde, Inflation, Drugs, Pollution, Terrorism, Bird Flu, Peak Oil, Unemployment or Global Warming – get the people anxious and demanding protection from some terror.
2. ***Lay the Bait***
– the Utopian Vision – freedom from want, stable prices, fair trading, equality, Lebensraum, racial purity, saving the polar bears/koalas/Great Barrier Reef, balmy weather, return to a simple life, job security, world status.
3. ***Trumpet the Call to Arms***
– “Together we can beat this peril/achieve Nirvana”.
4. ***Grab Power and Resources***
– “We need extra powers, more people and extra taxes to save you from this threat”.
5. ***Spread Propaganda***
Use ministerial PR offices to create “The Big Lie”. Follow up with supporting half truths and subliminal messages and pictures. Use suasion and the lure of grant money to create a supportive “research” industry. Then make sure the government media is well stacked with fellow travellers.
6. ***Divert the Masses***
Arrange massive public activities that create feelings of pride, solidarity and excitement - Roman circuses, Nazi rallies, Soviet military parades, heroes, adventures, football, rock concerts and endless games and nationalistic contests. Enlist the young in exciting things like the Hitler Youth or Mao’s Red Brigades.
7. ***Eliminate the Opposition***
Start with pretending they don’t exist (“we have consensus – the science is settled”). If that fails, follow up with denigration, defamation, vilification, questioning of motives and intimidation. Then, for the diehards, the final solution.

The hidden agenda is always the same – more power and money for central controllers and their business mates, higher taxes and less freedom and property rights for the peons.

Menaced by Hobgoblins.

“The whole aim of practical politics is to keep the populace alarmed (and hence clamorous to be led to safety) by menacing it with an endless series of hobgoblins, all of them imaginary.”

H. L. Mencken.

In the 1920's the bait used was either the image of the noble savage returning to the Garden of Eden, the promise of safety from poverty by “sharing the wealth”, better planning for scarce resources or an appeal to tribal nationalism or national destiny.

The Wall Street Financial Crisis of 1929 assisted the central controllers. During a real crisis most people seek or accept a saviour/strong leader. Then the depression that followed caused people to accept extreme solutions. Many good people were deceived and attracted by Utopian visions, but they turned a blind eye to the brutal methods planned by the High Priests to achieve them.

The philosophies of the 1920's led to the armies of the 1930's and the wars of the 1940's.

Today, the same anti-freedom, anti-human, anti-enterprise, anti-private property philosophies are again oozing out of old Europe and infecting the western world. Visions of another collectivist Utopia are again exciting the intellectuals, and this time it is International rather than Nationalistic. The International Green Shirts have arrived. The Big Lie they have concocted is: “Man is causing dangerous Global Warming”. (It IS a big lie because not one word of it is true).

Again we have people advocating restrictions on what they see as extravagant lifestyles and excessive consumption. Certain classes (coal miners, the rich, farmers, foresters, industrialists, multinationals, the West, climate deniers) are being singled out as fair game for humiliation, property destruction and even violence. (One left-wing web site is already calling for climate deniers to be executed; others condone property invasion and destruction, and denial of the freedom to speak).

Grand plans with ration cards, centralised power and universal carbon taxes threaten our freedoms, our property and our life styles. We even have our own Global Financial Crisis and spreading speculation and fraud in Carbon Credits. And just as the League of Nations “saved” our grandparents from war, our own UN and its political offshoot the IPCC are ready to “save us” from global warming if only we give them power and money.

Ministries of Propaganda/Climate Change concoct daily scare stories to keep the public alarmed. Business soon creates opportunities for profit in supporting the coming regimes.

Underlying it all is the collectivist assumption that individuals are too stupid, too venal and too powerless to be trusted to make their own decisions regarding their own life, liberty or property. Are these planners a special breed with superior knowledge or superior ethics?

Should we meekly surrender the right to make our own decisions or hold to our own values?

And should we feel inferior to people many of whom collect a safe salary but have never juggled income, expenses, GST and the bank to find the cash to pay the next wages bill; who drink cappuccinos but have never yarded the cows on a cold frosty morning; and who enjoy power at the flick of a switch but have never walked the length of the longwall in a coal mine?

The global warming story has excited the anti-liberty groups as never before. Here is an issue that can be milked endlessly to achieve income re-distribution, population control, social justice, world government, re-forestation, sustainable development and alternate energy. It will fund vote buying and foreign aid on a massive scale and finance whole new bureaus for government “research”. It can be used to yield detailed data on every business in the land, and life-and-death control over every corporation and industry – a central planner’s dream opportunity.

Just listen to what they are saying. British Labor Minister for Energy and Climate Change, Ed Miliband, recently said he is in “the persuasion business” and said his job was to convince people “to make big changes in their lives”. Al Gore said recently that the congressional climate bill was “the first step towards authentic global governance”. A prominent British socialist, Mike Hulme, noted how global warming claims could be used as a means of persuading “the masses” to give up their economic liberties.

Expanding government power is the real game, not the climate.

Opposing this new authoritarian collectivist green offensive is “The Battle of Our Times”.

We Australians inherited a world of promise hope and opportunity, built by the sweat and enterprise of generations of pioneering ancestors. That all started to go sour with the over-protected, spoilt, scared, busy-body generation that started voting in the 1970’s.

Now a new generation is picking up the baton. But their future liberty and prosperity is threatened by the same failed philosophies that blighted the world in the 1930’s and 1940’s. We must not lose this battle, for no one will save us. We win, or become part of the spoils to be divided among the victors.

The Baton has been Passed to us.

“Let all who are here remember.... that we are on the stage of history, and that whatever our station may be, and whatever part we have to play, great or small, our conduct is liable to be scrutinized, not only by history, but by our own descendants.

Winston Churchill

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For ideas on “What Can we do”? see “**Time to Turn up the Heat**” at:

<http://carbon-sense.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/08/turn-up-the-heat.pdf>

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