

When I was in college in the late 1970's, I took a political science class that included an assignment to read a report published by a think tank called The Club of Rome. The book outlined a plan and made an argument for the necessity to reshape world order. What I read shocked me and seemed to be unbelievable at the time, but I never could forget what I had read. Nowadays, I believe what I read, but I am not happy about it, and neither should you be!

In essence, the book outlined the fact that tensions in the world were historically marked by hostilities between the superpowers of the East and the West. At the time the book was written, the superpower of the East was the empire of the Soviet Union, and the superpower of the West was the United States of America. The clash at that time was, of course, a clash of civilizations distinguished and characterized in part by different political ideologies and the resultant economies of capitalism and communism.

Nobody at the time could have envisioned the future fall of the Soviet empire as President Regan would succeed in getting his Soviet counterpart to indeed "tear down that wall". But the book I read didn't concern itself with the trivial competition and aggressions between the East and the West, because it envisioned a greater conflict ahead on a different geopolitical and economic plain. What the Club of Rome envisioned was the coming clash between the Northern and Southern hemispheres- not necessarily due to different ideologies, but because of economic necessity.

What was true in the 1960's and 1970's, when the data for the report was being written, compiled, debated, and presented, is truer today than it was then. The fact is, the report quite accurately characterized the Northern hemisphere countries as have-countries, and the Southern hemisphere countries as have-not-countries. For the most part, wealth, quality of life, ample food supplies, quality health care, were all abundant in the North then, and still hard to find in the South today. The report indicated that the folks in the South would eventually become bellicose with respect to the Northern hemisphere countries and that literal hostilities would surely and eventually ensue.

Whereas, these initial points could be considered believable, what was laughable to me at the time was that the book then called for a voluntary redistribution of world wealth! The Club of Rome wanted the Northern Hemisphere countries to artificially and voluntarily reduce their standard of living and somehow transfer their wealth to the South. I thought that such a suggestion was not plausible at the time. I have now realized a Trojan horse could be created that would make the suggestion not only plausible, but actually make it sound like it was for our own good! The Trojan horse I refer to is the environmental movement in general, and the prescriptions abounding concerning our responsibilities in dealing with the perceived threat of global warming in particular.

Generally speaking, it is believed that we in the North produce and consume too much, and that this is a source of the inequality of wealth distribution in the world today. People believe that we can only have this quality of wealth at the expense of others. So, the goal of the Club of Rome types was to have us give up the means to produce and consume, and shift the same to the Southern hemisphere countries, in order to avoid hostilities and to be fair and equitable. The best

method that eventually emerged, decades later, in order to accomplish this shift in a peaceful means, is the protocols being pushed today by the United Nations. All in the name of saving the planet!

Even though we share our planet, we are supposed to believe that shifting the permission and means to pollute to poor countries is somehow going to result in a healthier environment! To put it another way, realize that what Americans and Europeans are being called upon to give up, in the way of manufacturing and industrial emissions, and quality of life, is not being asked of the Southern hemisphere- the have-not countries. It is the industrialized North that is being asked to sacrifice the means of creating wealth in order to save the planet, while the South will be able to pollute away. China, for instance, is slated and permitted by the Kyoto Protocol, to build 2,200 coal fired plants by 2030 in order to produce electricity- that is one plant constructed nearly every ten days! Our country during this same time frame, on the other hand, is supposed to try and end our dependence upon coal generated electricity because of the effect of the same upon global warming.

The late Dixie Lee Ray warned us about all of this back in 1993 in her book, "Environmental Overkill". She reported the following in a summary of what happened in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992 at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. Specifically, Maurice Strong, the secretary general for the conference, spoke of "patterns of production and consumption in the industrialized world that are undermining Earth's life support systems...To continue along this pathway could lead to the end of civilization....This conference must establish the foundation for effecting the transition to sustainable development. This can only be done through fundamental changes in our economic life and in international economic relations, particularly as between industrialized and developing countries..." As Lee observed, the principles guiding the UN conference were that "the only remedy is to reduce progress and economic growth in the industrialized world". Stay tuned for more "Gore-y" details!

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