

The Oligarchy's Attack on Democracy

Transcript of a Commentary by Ambrose I. Lane, Sr.

(Commentary Only. Listener Comments not Included)

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AMBROSE: And top of the morning, top of the week. This is We Ourselves. I'm Ambrose I. Lane Sr. And of course that was none other than Ray Charles.

This morning we want to have a dialogue on what I call the Oligarchic attack on Democracy. This is relatively new, if you recall, and that ended during the great depression. And we had an outpouring of legislative concern about the poor and the middle class in this country. In fact we developed the middleclass in this country from the Great Depression through the early 1970's. We guaranteed that any American that had worked and had built up Social Security points would not go into their old age destitute. And then in 1965 Lyndon Johnson as President and Adam Clayton Powell as Chair of the House Labor and Education Committee guaranteed that the poor would have some form of Health Care and that the seniors would have Health care because they passed Medicare and then inspired the States to deal with Medicaid.

But the fact that Richard Milhous Nixon was considered one of the -- not only a Republican but a Republican who was in the sights of the richest Republicans and was considered one of their protégés, would stand for something like the Environmental Protection Agency, would lead the fight for EPA and would do things to support the efforts by the Congress to deal with the more serious problems facing the poor of this nation, really ticked off the ruling class.

And so, around 1972 they begin organizing. By 1974 they had formed the Big Business Round Table as a group of executives from the Fortune 500, top 500 companies in this country and they determined they were gonna buy, make prostitutes out of the Congress and next President. That took care of the domestic scene.

Then there was created in the In the mid 1970's the group called the Trilateral Commission, created by power brokers in the United States, Canada and Western Europe and Japan. Now it's most widely known creator, one who took the point on this was none other than David

Rockefeller of the infamous Rockefeller clan, a clan that was originated by the first David of the Robber Baron – of Robber Baron infamy.

The Trilateral Commission's public purpose was to bring together selected leadership of the world's capitalist empires to regularly address major issues that the world's capitalist community must face. Its private purposes and hidden agendas remain just that, hidden. But its public face was to say that the world's capitalist community had gotten sick and tired of the legislation and the actions by governments that helped the poor and created out of the poor the middleclass in this country and in other capitalist countries across the world, especially Europe and Canada and Japan.

Now it's always been curious and of special interest that Democracy was chosen by this group, the Trilateral Commission as one of its first public issues of major concern; Democracy. And its limitations on the study of Democracy were also curious. The studies of Democracy were limited to democracies functioning and future. Where? – The United States, Europe, and Japan.

They put money to get these studies done. It hired a Harvard University buddy of then U.S. Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan and a newly minted neo-conservative to do the honors of studying democracy in American. You know Moynihan was not only Senator but he had previously been Richard Milhous Nixon's man in the White House to deal with the whole domestic agenda. He's the one who told Richard Milhous Nixon in a memorandum that the – huh – you ought to stop being concerned about the African American community in the United States of America, they're doing just fine.

Now as I have often said in quoting some of the words of Gilbert & Sullivan's ditty "Things are seldom what they seem. Skim milk masquerades as cream." Now this buddy of Moynihan gave the assembled powers brokers both what they wanted and what they could sanctimoniously claim they didn't want. Since he was paid extremely well for his efforts everyone benefit except the masses of the United States, Europe, Canada and Japan.

The study published in 1975 was titled "The Crisis of Democracy: Report on the Governability of Democracies to the Trilateral Commission". The report addressed the status of democracy in 3 areas of the world, Western Europe, Japan, and the United States. Now the chapter dealing exclusively with the United States was prepared by Dr.

Samuel P. Huntington, who was the Frank G. Thompson professor of Government at Harvard University and Associate Director of Harvard's Center for International Affairs. He was also co-author with Brezinski of a book titled "Political Power: USA/USSR". Brezinski was Director of the Trilateral Commission when the report was published. He later joined the Carter Administration as head of Carter's National Security Council.

Although agreeing with the premise we've always taken about the substantial extension of Democracy in this country in the 1960's Huntington held a negative view that any continued extension of Democracy would not be in the public's best interest. According to Huntington and I quote:

"The 1960's witnessed a dramatic renewal of the Democratic spirit in America. The themes of the 1960's were those of the Jacksonian Democracy and muckraking Progressives. They embodied ideals and beliefs that were deep in the American traditional but which usually command the passionate intensity of commitment that they did in the 1960's. The decade of the 60's bore testimony to the vitality of the democratic idea. It was a decade of democratic surge and a reassertion of democratic equalitarianism." Keeping in mind as we think about what has happened during these seven almost eight years of the Bush administration. And think about how they have continued this terrible assault on Democracy in this country while they talk about Iraq and all of the terrorists being persons who reject the idea of Democracy, who hate us because we are democratic country. Keep these things in mind.

Now this report by the Trilateral Commissions says that the basic point of Mr. Huntington's analysis was, and I quote;

"The vitality of Democracy in the United States in the 1960's produced a substantial increase in governmental activity and a substantial decrease in governmental authority."

Let me repeat that because you have to understand the thrust of their reasoning. He wrote;

"The vitality of Democracy in the United States in the 1960's produced a substantial increase in governmental activity and a substantial decrease in governmental authority."

"The impulse of Democracy..." he wrote "...is to make government less powerfully and more active, to increase its functions and decrease its authority."

Among the questions he posed to address were, and I quote;
"If a balance is to be restored between governmental activity and governmental authority what are the consequences of this restoration for the Democratic surge and movement of the 1960's?"

Does an increase in the vitality of Democracy necessarily have to mean a decrease in the Governability of Democracy?"

You can see where he's going with this. Well he asked the questions and 54 pages later Huntington concluded that the answer to both questions was yes; More Democracy means less ability to govern. (laugh) He wrote and I quote;

"Al Smith once remarked the only cure for the evils of Democracy is more Democracy. But our analysis suggests that applying that cure at the present time could well be adding fuel to the flames. Needed instead is a greater degree of moderation in Democracy." Less Democracy.

"In practice this moderation has two major areas of application. In many situations..." he wrote "...the claims of expertise, seniority, experience, and special talents may over ride the claims of Democratic principle. This was extended to many institutions where it can in the long run only frustrate the purposes of those institutions."

Now as examples Huntington cited universities and the military. He wrote;

"Second, the effective operation of a democratic political system usually requires some measure...' listen to this very carefully "...some measure of apathy and non-involvement on the part of some individuals and groups. In the past every democratic society has had a marginal population of greater or lesser size, which has not actively participated in politics. In itself this marginality on the part of some groups is inherently undemocratic. But it is also been one of the factors which has enabled Democracy to function effectively."

What he's saying is this marginal group didn't experience real democracy. With them it was inherently undemocratic and we felt that

that was necessary because it enabled democracy to function effectively for us, the majority and those of us in control. That's what he meant by that.

He continued. His writing says;

"Marginal social groups, as in the case of blacks in America, are now becoming full participants in the political system. Yet the danger of overloading the political system with demands, which extends its functions and undermine its authority, still remains. Less marginality on the part of some groups thus needs to be replaced by more self restraint on the part of all groups."

I hope you got that. Then he says;

"Democracy was more of a threat itself in the United States..." I guess Bush and his boys ought to read this stuff "... than it is in either Europe and Japan where there still exists residual inheritances of Trilateral and traditional and aristocratic values. In the United States the strength of Democracy poses a problem for the governability of Democracy in a way which is not the case elsewhere."

Finally after quoting one of America's founders, John Adams, to the effect that Democracies always commit suicide Huntington wounds up his dissertation this way, and I quote;

"That suicide is more likely to be the product of over indulgence than of any other cause. A value which is normally good in itself is not necessarily optimized when it is maximized. We've come to recognized ..." he wrote "... that there are potentially desirable limits to economic growth. There are also potential desirable limits to the indefinite extension of Democracy. Democracy will have a longer life if it has a more balanced existence."

Well, with what Huntington wrote the stage was now set for the frontal assault by the nation's Oligarchy against the Federal government and the domestic programs -- the productivity of the Lyndon Johnson years. It was time to put the cap back on the bubble. Democracy's Genie had to be resealed in his own bottle. A year earlier the Big Business Round table had been formed. Now its international arm was in place and a Harvard professor had given them the philosophical underpinning for their backward thrust against America's poor and Middle Class and especially minority populations. It was to be Robber

Baron time again in America and the world, that whole system of insane capitalism that brought the world to the Great Depression.

What Huntington and associates concluded was that the problems of our Democracy were solely, only the responsibilities of those who were being governed, of the excesses of those being governed, their failures and their ill-conceived Democratic surge. In short the masses of the people are alone to blame in these capitalistic democracies not the inept corrupt leadership, not the visionless prostitute politicians, not the greedy corrupt heads of the multi-national corporations, not the avaricious bankers, not the academicians and scholars, and certainly not the military-industrial complex establishment. To put it another way the have-nots and their political allies, according to Huntington, are to blame for social problems caused by the increase governmental activity resulting from these historically marginal groups insisting on becoming full participants in the political system.

Now that was Huntington's message to the Trilateral Commission. And were it not for the official mess and disaster of Vietnam, and of that domestic mess involving Watergate which forced Nixon's resignation the intelligence abuses that people learned about and super-inflation in this country that could not be hidden, the Haves might well have succeeded in erasing all doubt in the minds of the public that they were really at blame and that the message being spread all over the world by the rich of the world was the truth.

Although the sight of the political blood dripping from the wound inflicted by Vietnam and Watergate made it impossible for them to fool us all they were able to use their "owned" media and "paid for" interest groups to spread fear and suspicion among the people. Increasing tensions and by making Americans feel negative about ourselves they lead us to feel negative about other Americans as well.

That negativity and the determination of the Republicans during the Reagan/bush years to capture what they viewed as dumb racists throughout the South who were historically dumb racist Democrats and convert them to Republicans, that was the major thrust of Ronald Reagan and George Herbert Walker Bush when they took office. And that enabled the super rich to get richer and all other Americans to get poorer as corporate money turned the people's houses on both ends of Washington's Pennsylvania Avenue into political brothels. I call it brothels but others would call them whore houses. And America became a more hateful place.

The Oligarchy was firmly in the saddle steering political jackasses and Judas goats, black and white, where they wanted them to go. And those Judas goats are still out there, as well as the political jackasses and prostitutes. And we've got to deal with that. That's the reason this country is in such a mess now. It began with Ronald Reagan and I can't understand why people just don't call him what he was. He was a racist, jingle spouting, co-called capitalist; co-called capitalist. And he made fools of the American people, especially white American's because he talked about saving their money and about making government smaller while he did just exactly the opposite. But you suppress in such a way that white American's wanting so much to believe in this racist as Roselyn Carter said "...who made them feel good about their racism." They simply ignored the truth.

When Ronald Reagan and George Herbert Walker Bush assumed the Presidency this nation was the world's greatest creditor nation. It had taken us 200 years to run a debt of \$994 billion dollars. And please don't take my word for anything I'm saying to you. Go to the library, go to the reference department and get the Statistical Abstract of the United States and you'll find in there what our debt was when Ronald Reagan and George Herbert Walker Bush took office. It was \$994 billion dollars. We were the world's greatest creditor nation. The whole world admired us because we had handled our money so well for over a 200 year period.

In eight years that debt had grown to more than \$3 trillion dollars and we had become the world's greatest debtor nation. And by the time this Bush leaves office our debt will be exceeding \$10 trillion dollars, debt as far as the eye can behold. And he goes around the world running his mouth about how so-called terrorists envy us because of our Democracy and here he has conducted the most vicious attack on Democracy of any President in history.

And so the Oligarchy was firmly in the saddle with Ronald Reagan steering political goats and Judas goats where they wanted them to go. And the more they rode the backs of these political jackasses and Judas goats and dishonest media people the more the people heard about how power should be returned to the states. As the corporations got bigger and stronger and as our budget went out the window these political jackasses and prostitutes and Judas goats, willing mouth pieces for their new masters, told the people repeatedly that the only level of government responsible for all the people, the federal level,

should be made smaller and less powerful. That is the level of insanity our leadership has reached. And the people bought it because the media lied or simply ignored the lies that were coming out of these administrations.

I will remind you as I open the phones of what Thomas Jefferson had to say because we have to seriously ask and answer the question; has not our government become the type of government Thomas Jefferson saw in Europe in 1787? In a letter from Paris, France to his friend here Edward Carrington, Jefferson said that the European governments he observed while there had, quote;

"... divided their nations into two classes; wolves and sheep."

And he warned that

"..if once they..." meaning the people of this country " become inattentive to the public affairs..." in other words if the people ignore what the government is doing, he wrote;

"...you and I, Congress and Assemblies, Judges, and Governors shall all become wolves."

And he concluded;

"I can apply no milder term to the governments of Europe and to their general prey of the rich on the poor."

The prey of the rich on the poor divided their nations into wolves and sheep. If people of this country don't wake up and change this government we not only have become wolves and sheep we have become the fascist government that these fools want to impose on us.

That's going to do it for us today. I want to thank all of you for listening and calling. And we'll see you again on Friday. You have a great, great week. And be aware of the politics of the television because they're playing games with your minds. They're playing games with your minds. Don't let it happen to you and your family. Take care.