

2084

A Sequel to George Orwell's Book "Nineteen Eighty Four"

This outline was written with the intent of my using it as a baseline for a book I'd like to write depicting what might be the way things "could" be in the year 2084. Unfortunately, these depictions represent my usually over optimistic hopes. While we have made unbelievable technological progress in the past century, our social progress has not kept pace. Women's suffrage and the civil rights movement were major advancements but there are so many areas in which progress has been slow or nonexistent. Global human rights, the end of tyranny and eliminating poverty remain formidable goals.

I have set forth below predictions for change that are within our purview of possible accomplishment. To achieve them would require global leadership that has as its core interests the betterment of the human condition as opposed to the greed for profit that most current global leaders possess. While Orwell's book primarily expresses a Dystopian perspective my groundless optimism would result in a Utopian one.

Major predictions include:

Global Human Rights: On 10 December 2008, the United Nations celebrated the 60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights - similar to our Bill of Rights but more expansive. (see <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/>) I believe that these human rights will belong to most all humans in the world by 2084. While full human rights will be widespread, individual responsibilities will also be expected of everyone. One for all and all for one will have global meaning.

Universal Identification: All humans will be kept track of with biometrics identification with assistance from such things as implanted ID Chips, retina scans and DNA. "Big Brother" will indeed be watching everyone but that will be a good thing. Actually Big Brother is already watching us more intrusively than anything envisioned by Orwell. The databases of Google, Microsoft, the CIA and other major entities contain more information about us than we know about our selves. While it is supposed to be illegal for the government to maintain such databases on individuals, they can and do now access anything about anyone at anytime. To believe our privacy is being protected by our constitution is unrealistic in this Information Technology Age. It is my view that since government already has all this information available to it; we ought to at least exploit the positive attributes of universal identification. It would be a advantage to law enforcement agencies, immigration authorities, medical science and others.

United Nations: The United Nations or an equivalent will become the dominant political and security force in the world. Nuclear weapons will have been globally eradicated. World problems such as global warming, terrorism and disease will have forced this world body to improved methods of decision making. All military forces will be under the command on the UN. Each member nation will have the responsibility of providing

military personnel to the UN proportionate to their population and each nation will have the responsibility of providing funding to the UN proportionate to their GDP.

An example of programs that the UN will undertake to help achieve global human harmony is to form study groups comprised of former winners of the Nobel Peace Prize as well as other leading world philanthropists to provide visionary recommendations of things the UN could do to help improve world conditions.

Energy: There will be little or no energy generated from fossil fuels. Most energy needs will be derived from solar technology, cold fusion and other non-polluting sources. Significant advances will have been made in energy efficiency. Global warming will have been reversed.

Transportation: Most traveling will be done on public transportation (surface and air). Free or inexpensive mass transportation will be available throughout the world. Private vehicles will be available for local use only.

Health Care: Science will have found cures for most diseases. Free medical care will be universally available. Hospitals will exist primarily for health monitoring and trauma victims. Life expectancy will have nearly doubled to approximately 150 years of age.

Religion: Most religionists will have largely come to accept the realities of science. Many religions will have been relegated to the status of all other mythology.

World Population: World population will have reached a zero growth rate. This will be achieved through a series of incentives and disincentives. Parenthood will require special responsibilities.

Life Style: The average "work week" will be lowered to 20 hours per week. Most people will spend more time on vacation than at work. Everyone will have a civic responsibility to "serve" in some capacity while in his or her late teens or early twenty's. Options might include either a 2 year military tour, a 3 year tour for some other service (such as the peace corps) or a 4 year stint in a more desirable service (such as lifeguard or travel guide).

Education: Much of education will be accomplished via the Internet and subliminal learning techniques. There will still be schools for coordination of education progress, for social development of children and for academic research, and of course for football games.

Financial: Cash will no longer be used - all financial transactions will be accomplished via a Universal Identification/Financial Account.

Technology: During my lifetime as an engineer, I have been in the middle of major technological advances, especially in the area of electronics and computers. We went from radios with very large vacuum tubes to today's microchips that contain trillions of

transistors. We went from operator assisted phone calls to today's global all-purpose "smart" cell phones. In my position with the Navy Department, I participated in the development of the Internet long before Al Gore invented it. This section will discuss expected technological advances that can be expected regarding computers and the Internet in the future.

Outer Space: We will have "space stations" on the moon and Mars. We will have sent un-manned missions to several earthlike planets in far-away space with the hope of exploring new frontiers.

Why are these things realistic:

Look at the progress that was made in the world since the year 1900. There were no automobiles or aircraft and no radio or television! Railroads, steamships and telegraph were in their infancy. Science education and knowledge was available to a very small number of humans. One can expect that the unbelievable progress made in the twentieth century will be matched or exceeded in the twenty-first.

I once read that from the total of human knowledge available in 1500 AD it was doubled by the year of 1900. This knowledge was again doubled by the year 2000. It is not unreasonable to assume doubling it again by the year 2050 and again by the year 2075. With this growth of human knowledge, we should be able to expect significant technological and social advancements.

While universal human social progress has not matched that of science over the past 100 years, it is my view that social pressure will push its advancement over the next 50 years. In the past 50 years, in spite of the tremendous increase in productivity, personal income has not kept pace for the vast majority in this country. A few have become more and more wealthy while the plight of the lower and middle classes have deteriorated. In 1960, an average factory worker could easily sustain himself and his family fairly comfortably with his single income. Now, both mom and dad have to work to achieve a relatively lower level of prosperity.

Significant social and economic progress has been made in recent years in some areas of the world. The classic example is China. China has a rapidly expanding middle class as a result of an exploding economy. This growing prosperity has put pressure on leadership in China to liberalize social policy. Another major population country showing similar advancement is India. Unfortunately some areas have not made such progress and in some areas like Africa things are worse. In my view, the unstoppable force of globalization will soon bring about significant progress in both social and economic matters throughout the world.

Today, terrorism is the primary security problem facing humanity. Religious zealots who feel that their Allah must be proliferated throughout the world foster most of this terrorism. The Religious Right in the US pontificate against the use of condoms to combat AIDS and Birth Control in Third World countries while here at home they deny

partner rights to some of "Gods" children and the promise of embryonic stem cell research to all of us. They deny the science of evolution and believe the world is only 6,000 years old like they interpret the bible. An educated, open society will unleash the skepticism needed to put this yoke of organized religion behind us.

America's recent blunder in Iraq has taken its toll on US prestige as the world's sole superpower. I believe that only through enlightened progressive world leadership can we regain the respect of the rest of the humanity.

Faster social progress will take strong leadership. It is my belief that this leadership will emerge as the intellectuals of the current generation come to grips with the seemingly ever-increasing crisis.