

**The Bigger
They Are,
The Harder
We Fall.**

By

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Author of:

THE QUEENSTOWN CONSPIRACY

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THE SECESSION

This is a work of personal opinion.
If it promotes debate, so much the better.

If it promotes argument it has failed.

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The Bigger They Are, The Harder We Fall.

This is unashamedly a ranting little manifesto written by a self-appointed, unofficial Grumpy Old Man, in the hope, or blind faith, of clearing his head.

It is dedicated to all workers, and all ethical businesses.

It laments the loss of fairness and humanity to capitalism.

Prologue

A long time friend, and opponent in many a debate, recently furnished me with details of an alleged outrage in China. This alleged crime against humanity is, that a Chinese manufacturer making rare earth components for the so-called 'Green' industries of the world, has established a toxic tailings dam, and as such, put people's health and welfare in great danger. This serves to remind us that the commercial sector is not the only area where greed, corruption and the exploitation of communities, indeed whole populations, is rife.

Although I believe in the Green movement, and as much as possible follow its philosophies and practice its ways (it is only logical for me to do so), it is also only logical to accept that there will be corruption and exploitation in the name of 'Greening', just as there is corruption and exploitation in the name of commerce, industry, science, politics, or religion. It is human nature to gain advantage in any way possible. The rich and powerful will prevail over the poor, powerless and vulnerable. Call it survival of the most ruthless. A perpetuation of greed.

I recognise that no person and no philosophy has a mortgage on good, or evil. Please read these words in that context.

John Hepher.

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It is the culture of every business to grow, to expand, to provide ever increasing profits. A business could be a single trader, a farmer, a milkman doing his or her morning round, to a juggernaut such as BHP, Macquarie Bank, Toyota or General Motors. But just how big is tolerable to society or government?

In recent years the so-called Global Financial Crisis saw the almost catastrophic breakdown of the capitalist system. There were some casualties in the banking sector, there were some casualties in the industrial sector and indeed real estate took a hit, big time. But in the short time since late 2008, it really is only the workers, the working and middle class, the so-called in Australia, 'Howard battlers', that have borne the brunt of Wall St greed. A greed created by the very institutions and individuals that were trusted by us, by proxy, by the workers of the world, to manage their economies responsibly.

These ultra capitalist opportunists employed under the umbrella of the banking industry, an industry, which, in the largest economy in the world, the USA, has little regulation, the USA has no social security (or welfare as they know it) to speak of, and has a culture of survival of the most ruthless. It also has a population that, thanks to American capitalist propaganda, and religious and commercial brainwashing, largely believes in that system.

A system in which you will die in a gutter if you can't pay a doctor, or unless you have very expensive medical insurance.

Free enterprise, a free market? Doesn't this also mean an unregulated market?

All well and good until someone proves to be bit dodgy like Bernie Madoff or Lehmann Bros, or Christopher Skase, or Alan Bond, or Storm Financial.

In Australia, we have that pillar of society, Macquarie Bank, once the millionaire factory, now the billionaire factory. We have BHP, we have Coles and Woolworths, we have Westfield and Packer and Murdoch , Forrest and Palmer, we have the Farrell family of Federal Hotels, the list goes on, along with the daily corporate mergers and takeovers.

The reality is however, that the Australian Government cannot afford for these companies to fail. Just as America could not afford for General Motors or Mobil-Exxon to fail. A few corporations were propped up by the US government, (the Republicans called that communism, and no government, in their opinion, should be a part of, or regulator to, any business) and still the CEOs claimed salaries way above their worth as they travelled to Washington to meet US President Barak Obama, cap in hand in the middle of the worst financial crisis since the 1930s, from Detroit, in their corporate jets! Hideously huge salaries, while the workers have yet again to suffer for the excesses of those above them, but are too dumb to get it.

The very same workers who don't recognise that to keep a population subservient, you must keep them in debt. How many of these workers have credit card debt or are under mortgage stress with repayments on Mc Mansions so great, their children have no food in the \$3000 stainless steel internet connected refrigerator?

Worse still are the middlemen companies, the agents and consultants. Those who produce nothing, employ no-one and command huge commissions for their questionable advice, salesmanship, or agency activities. Or the marketing gurus who have killed our culture by making Australia a pseudo state of the USA with their crass im-

portation of American language, sport, and McDonalds culture.

All thanks to the power of the screen that sits in seemingly every room of every house in every suburb of Australia, and the dumbing-down of our society by the capitalist content on that screen.

Much of it even purporting to be news.

We once had newspapers which allowed journalists and editors freedom of speech, and freedom of opinion. We once had citizens that could read and analyse those opinions and reports. Sadly now we have scandal sheets and sensational headlines but precious little content. Even worse though, is what is disguised as news being nothing more than cleverly worded advertorial. And the majority of those who read the media of today don't have time, so they say, to digest and analyse a real piece of journalism.

Indeed, there are few real journalists left. In their place are recyclers of media releases written by PR companies and public servant spin doctors to everyone from large companies, government departments, and politicians themselves. How do I know that? I was one in an earlier life. The tragedy here is that almost the entire population believe what little they read or see, and there is precious

little scrutineering or questioning of the lies, spin or advertising disguised as news or current affairs. These days even pictures and video can be digitally manipulated.

Believe nothing of what you read, and ten percent of what you see.

And the media? The once respected fourth estate that was for centuries the source of revealing the wrongs of society, commerce and government, and was charged with the practice of “keeping the bastards honest”. What has it become?

Sadly the mass media has become the tool of capitalism for the broadcasting of the bullshit seed. It is a huge money making industry unto itself, and its very few (and diminishing in number), barons and their ability to dumb us down so we don't recognise it is them, along with a few more corporate dictators, who have the real power to make or break governments and shape the world according to their own personal agendas, with their insatiable menu of sensationalism, commercialism, and celebrity over real issues.

Who cares that we have reached peak oil and the world is in utter turmoil as Egypt, Libya and other countries try their hardest to self-destruct, and we have up to four nuclear reactors about to melt down in the wake of

an earthquake and tsunami disaster, possibly without precedence, when Liz Hurley has flown all the way to Australia to meet Mr Text himself.

Now there's some profound news!

Even literature, the documenting of our culture, is a shadow of its former self.

Mass publishing houses are owned by the aforementioned few media moguls. All of the mass publishing houses will mainly only publish books by celebrities, sports stars or cooks, purely because they are proven money spinners which will cost less to publish and provide more profit for the entrepreneurs of Wall St. No publisher will take a risk that what they publish will merely enhance the culture or humanity or the community, rather than just their bank account.

Let alone, it could be controversial, or promote free thought or debate!

But worse still are the glossy magazines, for both females and males mostly lifestyle and fashion oriented. Yes, men these days appear to start being 'metro-sexuals' from about 8 years old, and women? Well they start to wear padded bras, G Strings and make up from about the same age. The advertising and merchandising industry is sexualising our children at an alarmingly young age. Chil-

dren have lost their childhood to profit. It is not uncommon to find a magazine of one hundred or so pages containing what adds up to a mere ten or so pages of editorial, most of which is advertorial and relates to subsequent ads in the same publication, and the other ninety pages? Pure advertising. There are dozens of these magazines aimed at every demographic and section of the money spending community.

Notice there are not too many magazines aimed at senior citizens, the handicapped, or other pensioners? No, no money there.

There is a market for this questionable assembly of words, created by our capitalist society, but one must question the choices of the consumers of these glossy rags. Who in their right mind would pay \$10 for a publication ninety percent full of advertising for prestige products that the vast majority of those same consumers could never afford? Oh the BLING!!!

The publishers of these galleries of advertising are creating a fantasy world, a retail pornography, and the consumer dreamers drool over and covet what those few who can afford such decadence buy.

Try to get a manuscript through the door of a publishing house these days. None are ever read. One in twenty

publishers may furnish a rejection note saying “we don’t accept unsolicited material,” and to go and “employ a literary agent.” No manuscript is ever returned. Employ a literary agent? They also don’t accept unsolicited material from an unknown author. Another way for the corporations and governments to dumb down society, and along with it, the loss of our culture, in the name of profit.

And to illustrate the point, we now see the demise of booksellers Angus and Robinson, and Borders, two of the largest volume retailers in Australia. They blame their downfall on on-line shoppers, e-books and discounts from overseas undermining their profits, there is some element of that, however, when one considers the content of their shelves and the prices charged for the types of publications already mentioned, is it any wonder serious readers are not shopping at their stores.

Bookshops once were repositories of culture.

For an independent author without the luxury of a major publishing house to assist and promote their very small contribution to culture, it used to be some bookshops were benevolent enough to assist writers to market their wares. No more. Profit is the only criteria. Consumers of the written culture are not shopping at these multi-national supermarkets of trivia.

These chain stores, as mentioned previously, also blame the emergence of so-called e-books. A technology that delivers publications electronically to iPads and other forms of carry-with-you screens and internet connections.

Generally, people do not accept this method of reading. Most people like to hold a physical copy of a book, something they can curl up in the armchair with and lose themselves in the fantasy of the story, or the research of the subject. There is a warmth connected to that not found in the plastic of an iPad. Maybe future generations will accept it but for now, no thank you.

Just as people are shunning the on-line newspaper concept. It is impersonal, cold, open to hackers manipulating content, both text and images, and pop-up ads. I do not want to suddenly be confronted with how good a certain brand of tampon is as I try to read about the plight of Afghan refugees in my daily news.

There was once the concept of a paperless office, that was about twenty years ago, and I do support that concept of not using paper and storing everything electronically. It makes environmental sense. But that concept failed miserably because people (me included) like to actually hold and feel the paper or book. They like to physically turn pages. They like the bookmarks that litter the coffee table, they like to dog-ear the corners of pages as markers or ref-

erence points. Books can be carried easily in a pocket or handbag.

An A4 sized screen using today's technology is a burden no matter how tech savvy its user may be. Ah but what about iPhones and the like, I hear you say? It used to be that Nokia, Motorola and others prided themselves on the small size of their phones. As I remember they got down to the size of a credit card. Remember the brick size phones, (and their weight) we carried with us in the eighties? Now with new technology phones are once again becoming larger, to accommodate the reading of the amount of text and image in an e-book or e-newspaper. The human eye can only focus down to a certain size.

Somebody once printed The Lord's Prayer on an area the size of the head of a pin.

A shame that the normal human eye can't read it though, and none of us carry a microscope.

And for other media, commercial television networks are mostly disinterested in making real drama, or telling real stories that could enhance our culture. They rely on so-called reality shows, mostly imported from or are franchises originating in America. These are much more cost effective. Networks don't have to pay actors or writers when ordinary people are prepared to make fools of

themselves for nothing, these programmes are less controversial but more sensational and adversarial and as such, sure winners of ratings compared to a programme that the viewer might have to think about, or one which will promote an idea, or add to the cultural tapestry that once was Australia. Reality shows? What reality?

We are now seeing antics such as a contestant on cooking competition show, 'My Kitchen Rules', suffering death threats through so-called social networking website Facebook. No doubt, the producers love the extra free advertising brought about by this occurrence. Or, could it be the whole saga is a beat-up for that very reason? Either way, it is a sad state of affairs.

Even more sadly, the Australian film industry is now all but defunct. Director Peter Weir however put it in terms of, "Australia does not have a film industry, rather we have some film makers". And that is true to a certain extent.

But whether it is called an industry, or collection of film makers is semantics, these film makers do not suffer from the lack of good stories to make into films, but because investors want a quick and sure return on their money, many fascinating, possibly riskier but more culturally significant stories do not find their way onto celluloid. Would a producer of today make 'The Castle'? I

doubt it. Or 'Picnic at Hanging Rock'? Or 'Phar Lap', or 'Mad Max', or 'Bodyline', or 'Shine', or 'Kenny'?

More culture lost.

An answer to this could be that when film producers do see a major profit from a mainstream production, part of that profit is quarantined as a tax to fund a future culturally significant if not immediately profitable project.

American producers made many major films in Australia in recent years. And then our dollar became equal with theirs. Bugger. No more foreign investment and our industry is on its knees. Why did Hollywood come to the old Sydney Showground? Because they could exploit our industry. The minute our dollar rose to parity with theirs they deserted us.

The publishers and media outlets, and their parent publishing barons, have the power to bring down governments at will. They are the true masters of our so-called democracy, and the custodians of our culture, in cahoots with the communications companies, more often than not also owned by the very same barons and their shareholders. It is not hard for Rupert to manipulate democracy. If a publication prints the words, or pictures a concept as often as is needed, people (simply by overexposure), start to believe it. It is an age old tactic called prop-

aganda. All governments use it to varying degrees. Once the population believe the propaganda, the manipulation follows not too far behind, and woweeee! George Dubya is President.

Julia Gillard is only the Prime Minister of Australia at the behest of the media, not the people. Believe it, if she gets on the wrong side of a hostile media magnate, she will suffer the same fate as Rudd or Howard. Look at the media campaign to unseat them. They were dumped almost entirely because of adverse opinion polls. The king-makers got nervous.

These polls are mostly concocted from loaded questions, and are owned and operated by the very same media. Statistics show.....more bullshit. And politics thrives on statistics.

We now have American style election campaigns based on the perceived personalities of the leaders, the adversarial mouthpieces of the two, maybe now three, main parties, rather than debate on the real issues that are facing and shaping our country. It is amazing how many people don't realise, unless they happen to live in the electorate of the leaders, they are not voting for Gillard or Abbott, and are in fact voting for a local member or candidate who they, the voters, would not even recognise, or would not have a clue as to which faction of their particular par-

ty they belong. Or what the candidates themselves support in terms of local issues.

The media and therefore the political parties are purely poll driven on a fifteen minute news cycle. Rupert and Co. are more influential to society than the so-called faceless men of the NSW Labor right who are also addicted to the media, the polls, and how they think can manipulate them.

And so it goes that governments can't afford for the mega-corporations to fail. So just how big is too big?

Any entity that can dictate to a government, and then demand that government's assistance when it fails, and its workforce is about to be sacrificed at the altar of economic rationalisation, is too big. Any corporation is too big that, be it a bank, a manufacturer, a processor, a retailer, or a religion, needs to be propped up by a government, which is us, the people, and also the people's money, only to turn around in the better times and pay hideously unjustifiably enormous salaries and bonuses to executives, as they go over the top of the Reserve Bank and raise interest rates on home and personal loans and credit cards, above Reserve Bank official cash rate rises.

That is too big.

Any corporation that will put not only their customers but also their own employees into further stress, as they sack thousands in the name of efficiency and profit margin, is too big.

Any scientific organisation that can influence a scientist to falsify and corrupt research data for the profit of that corporation is too big.

Any religion which can manipulate government policy is too big.