

Leftists erode our social fabric

By Maurice Newman, The Australian, 29 April 2016

In 1996 John Howard outlined his “white picket fence” vision for Australia, where he said the nuclear family and traditional common values were important to social cohesion in an increasingly insecure world.

Howard was ridiculed by so-called progressives for taking Australia back to the 1950s. He was criticised by feminists and minorities as being against women careerists and for being ethnically divisive. Yet it touched a responsive chord among those who became “Howard’s battlers”. They kept him in office for almost 12 years.

In a speech to the NSW Fabian Society in March 2006, Labor’s future prime minister, Julia Gillard, scorned Howard’s revelation as “a two-dimensional vision”: “He hankers for the monocultural world he remembers of white picket fences shielding white families.” She dismissed his celebration of the “spirit of egalitarianism that embraces tolerance, fair play and compassion for those in need” saying “that very praise ... was framed as a corrective to too much ‘ethnic diversity’ ... How dare he imply that not being Anglo-Saxon casts doubt on an Australian’s respect for the rule of law or compassion for those in need? How dare he take the great Australian value of a fair go and twist it to serve the rhetoric of division? How dare he?”

Determined to enter the pantheon of Fabian socialists

After Howard’s 2007 defeat and, for six tumultuous years thereafter, Gillard, first as deputy and then as prime minister, turned her back on the successful Hawke-Keating Labor legacy. Determined to enter the pantheon of Fabian socialists and, with the support of the Greens, she feverishly pushed her leftist dreams into law. Meanwhile, the “Howard battlers” watched helplessly as their middle-class values and enjoyment of social harmony were jettisoned and replaced with the “progressive” policies of the pretentious, highly paid, tertiary educated, minority-driven establishment. A new code of politically correct behaviour, endorsed by authority and self-appointed thought police, now threatens them.

Gradually, the social cost of these policies is being felt. Weak border protection and admission criteria have seen the over-representation of ethnic minorities in our jails. It isn’t a topic of polite conversation among the inner-city intelligentsia but in the ’burbs, where the crimes take place, free speech is still openly practised.

Leftist elites may sneer at suburban ordinariness

Leftist elites may sneer at suburban ordinariness, but out there, people see respect for the rule of law in ever diminishing supply.

To prepare future generations for the new world order, education is targeted. Using our money, children are brainwashed from preschool. The “black armband” view of Australian history is shamelessly pushed. No counter view is taught. Students are informed that climate change is the result of greed and irresponsible human activity. The Malthusian view of sustainability is the first principle, regardless of contrary empirical evidence. Without parental consent, the Safe Schools program forces radical views of gender and sexuality on to innocent children. Thus indoctrinated, young people go on to tertiary education, where this preconditioning is reinforced. At university, contrary views and debate are discouraged or shut down. If you want

to graduate, toe the party line. And, by the way, you may no longer tell people what they don't want to hear.

Such sweeping cultural reforms are expensive but governments, state and federal, happily foot the bill.

Paying for the growing army of government workers

Indeed, to pay for the growing army of government workers, academics, environmental extremists, the "forever needy" and other politically useful minorities, we have become increasingly dependent on government; useful if you're buying votes.

According to Australian National University researcher Ben Phillips, only 43 per cent of the adult population excluding public sector workers are net taxpayers, meaning more than 50 per cent of voters rely fully on political patronage for their income. This is an unsustainable fool's paradise. It consumes productive capital and limits growth.

These consequences are conveniently ignored by political leaders. They pretend not to see the bubble-up poverty where, over time, ever more taxes are extracted from a diminishing number of taxpayers until none are left to tax. It's the mentality that would spend \$22 billion a year on the National Disability Insurance Scheme, \$70bn-plus on an unnecessary National Broadband Network; that wants sniffer dogs off trains; and, in Belgium, bans police raids between 9pm and 5am. It's the mindset that believes fiscal responsibility means increased debt and deficits, decides for election purposes to spend \$15bn more for submarines than is necessary, rejects self-reliance and sees government as the first port of call for every problem.

Growth will bring us into balance. Really?

Next week, we can expect a piecemeal budget, cobbled together and wrapped in the appropriate prudential rhetoric. Its impact on the deficit will be feeble. The Coalition and Labor argue growth will bring us into balance. Really? Our terms of trade and policy settings don't favour it. Moreover, with a credit rating downgrade highly likely and the International Monetary Fund warning of a weak world outlook "with higher economic and non-economic risks", now is not a good time to bank on growth to balance the budget.

Howard's fiscally responsible, socially cohesive, white picket fence, embracing traditional common values, is now 20 years old and little of it is left. In its place, the Labor-Green coalition has created a fantasy where, for many, anonymous taxpayers are the main breadwinner. It has saddled us with a financial mess, confiscated precious freedoms; it has created social division, weakened our security and abused our compassion. Howard's battlers may disapprove but, for many, the cost of repairing Howard's fence is too great. They are trapped.

It is why, when those same battlers vote at the next election, they can be confident that neither Malcolm Turnbull nor Bill Shorten will take a course in carpentry.