

# Something else is going on?

**Robin Ramsay**

*States of Emergency*

*Keeping the global population in check*

Kees van der Pijl

Atlanta (USA): Clarity Press, 2022, \$28.95 (p/b)

I noticed in late June that there was going to be a music festival in July organised by Covid 'truthers'. I have never quite got hold of what such 'truthers' believe but one of the apparent major themes is expressed in this quotation from one of those taking part in this festival, a DJ called Mark Devlin:

We know that COVID was all part of *some much wider plan* – the Great Reset coming out of the World Economic Forum, and the United Nations Agenda 2030.<sup>1</sup> (emphasis added)

The United Nations Agenda 2030<sup>2</sup> is a list of decent, liberal aspirations – ranging from the clearly defined 'no poverty' and 'zero hunger' to the more vague 'peace, justice and strong institutions', to which many governments could pay lip service but none will use as a guide to current policies. The Great Reset conspiracy theories began in 2020 after that year's Davos meeting of the World Economic Forum discussed the Great Reset – how the world might respond to Covid.<sup>3</sup> A piece on The Daily Beast noted in November that year:

Joe Biden isn't president yet. But his incoming White House already has its first conspiracy theory to deal with.

It goes by the tag the "Great Reset" and under its construct a wild dystopian future is in store. The coronavirus pandemic is merely a means to enslave humanity and end capitalism. Biden's "Build Back Better" slogan is really a cover for nefarious plotting of a global cabal from Davos, Switzerland, intent on abolishing private property and building prison camps for the dissenters who refuse to accept

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<sup>1</sup> <<https://www.vice.com/en/article/v7vgky/freedom-music-festival-covidw>> I reported some of these fantasies below under subhead **Editors needed**.

<sup>2</sup> See <<https://tinyurl.com/mr3yfuxr>> or <<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/21252030%20Agenda%20for%20Sustainable%20Development%20web.pdf>>.

<sup>3</sup> See <<https://www.weforum.org/focus/the-great-reset>>.

microchips that will read their thoughts.<sup>4</sup>

The Great Reset is also the title of a 100 plus page document, COVID-19: THE GREAT RESET, written by Klaus Schwab and Thierry Malleret,<sup>5</sup> published in 2020, as the Covid pandemic spread through the world. Schwab is Founder and Executive Chair of the World Economic Forum which has its annual meeting at Davos; Malleret is a French intellectual.<sup>6</sup> I have only lightly skimmed through THE GREAT RESET but it is an impressive bit of research. This is its basic summary of the situation in 2020.

Rising inequalities, a widespread sense of unfairness, deepening geopolitical divides, political polarisation, rising public deficits and high levels of debt, ineffective or non-existent global governance, excessive financialization, environmental degradation: these are some of the major challenges that existed before the pandemic.

Most of which would be accepted as an accurate description of much of the world by the readers of these pages, I suspect. However the authors' suggestions will be universally ignored by the governments and companies whose behaviour they seek to change.<sup>7</sup> How the 2020 Davos meeting and the UN's aspirational proposals mutated into mega-conspiracy theories, I cannot be bothered trying to trace.<sup>8</sup> In any case, all this has been blown away by the energy crisis now affecting Western Europe.

All of which is by way of a long preamble to Professor van der Pijl's book.<sup>9</sup> I was attracted by the subtitle, 'Keeping the global population in check'. Oh, really? Who is doing this 'keeping'? Is this an intelligent articulation of the great Covid conspiracy theory?

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<sup>4</sup> <<https://tinyurl.com/2p8pwksu>> or <<https://www.thedailybeast.com/joe-bidens-presidency-already-has-its-first-conspiracy-theory-the-great-reset>>

<sup>5</sup> And since Malleret's name is four times the size of Schwab's on the document's frontispiece, it was presumably written by Malleret with Schwab on it merely as an endorsement.

<sup>6</sup> See his profile at <<https://www.theglobalist.com/contributors/thierry-malleret/>>.

<sup>7</sup> In the document's four paragraph preamble there is this: 'we are at a crossroads . . . One path will take us to a better world: more inclusive, more equitable and more respectful of Mother Nature.'

On the other hand, see the critique at <<https://tinyurl.com/ys7enw2p>> or <<https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/oureconomy/conspiracy-theories-aside-there-something-fishy-about-great-reset>>.

<sup>8</sup> However a start has been made at <<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/blogs-trending-57532368>>.

<sup>9</sup> You may have come across the professor before; the late Mike Peters reviewed one of his books in *Lobster* 38.

Prof. van der Pijl asserts:

. . . since 2008, humanity has also become restless, on a scale unlike anything seen before. Strikes, riots and anti-government demonstrations have broken existing records in every category during this period. (p. 34)

But not in the UK, for example, where the post-2008 'austerity' produced little significant opposition.<sup>10</sup> This is the context in which the Covid events have taken place.

The central thesis of this study is that the Covid crisis provided an avenue of response to the growing unrest among the world's population seized upon by the intelligence-IT-media bloc that enabled it to implement an authoritarian state equipped with the full array of new digital capabilities for permanent surveillance. (p. 112)

Professor van der Pijl does not believe there was any need for the great Covid shutdown.

This is the first pandemic in history that is not self-evident to everybody but rather requires mass indoctrination on the basis of extensive 'testing', media censorship, etc. (p. 23)

The Covid condition, certainly after the summer of 2020, appears to be eminently manageable in every way. Nonetheless, politicians and media claim that there continues to be an exceptional danger. *So something else is going on.* (p. 15 emphasis added)

Only in January-March 2020 did the intelligence-IT-media power bloc have sufficient grounds to unleash the information war against the population and could the state of emergency be introduced. (p. 130)

Last time I saw figures there had been some 200,000 deaths from Covid in the UK and around half million have long Covid.<sup>11</sup> Similar figures (some better, some worse) are found across Europe and the United States. Professor van der Pijl seems to be saying that because Covid wasn't as bad as – say – the 'Spanish flu' after WW1, there was no need for the various lockdowns. This is clearly in dispute. When the various UK committees were making these decisions, thousands of people *were* dying, and the British hospital system was

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<sup>10</sup> Largely because British politicians and their attendant media are economically illiterate, they were (a) unable to resist the homilies of austerity offered by David Cameron and his ilk and (b) afraid of opposing the City of London and were unwilling to suggest the City should pay for the crisis it had helped to create.

<sup>11</sup> <<https://tinyurl.com/ykneanaw>> or <<https://inews.co.uk/news/health/long-covid-how-many-people-uk-zoe-app-coronavirus-symptoms-affected-1578166>>

overwhelmed; they believed they had no choice but to proceed on a worst-case basis. Assuming that the worst-case might be very bad indeed seemed rational to me then and seems rational now.

For Professor van der Pijl:

The Covid crisis has been seized on, *if it was not actually unleashed for this purpose*, to restore discipline within the population through a fear-based information warfare campaign. (p. 58 emphasis added)

And similarly:

The Covid state of emergency is an attempt to turn the current tide of decay and disintegration and exploit the opportunities created by the IT revolution (p. 71)

But *who* is attempting 'to turn the current tide of decay and disintegration'? Yes, as he tells us, the government did indeed set a psy-ops unit of the British Army, the 77th Brigade, to work trying to counter resistance to Covid vaccination in this country. But to no effect that I can detect: so-called vaccine hesitancy apparently increased after their deployment. It will take more than a computer-bashing unit from the Army to combat the tides of speculation, paranoia and ignorance washing back and forth on social media. Further, is anyone really going to argue that the 'current tide of decay and disintegration' in British society is being turned back? *Au contraire* it seems to be accelerating.

The author's asserts:

The intelligence-IT-media bloc outlined above and the transnational networks by which it passes on its power to a broader coalition, thus have joined forces to propagate a new worst-case scenario in response to the threat of an impending 1848. Since in the preceding period the role of a class vanguard in this sense resided with the financial sector, and especially speculative money-capital, the driving ideology of a 'chasing yield', risk society (compounded by the fear of terrorism), had to be replaced by another. My contention is that it is there from whence the myth of the 'pandemic' derives, serving as the new worst-case scenario in the overall politics of fear, now that 9/11 and 'terrorism' have begun losing their effectiveness. (pp. 96/7)

So there you have it: the pandemic was a myth. You may argue, as Conservative politicians have begun to do, that leaving the pandemic response to the scientists was a mistake, and that lockdown was unnecessary. But 200,000 dead in the UK is a myth?

The establishment of an authoritarian surveillance society presupposes that the liberal division of powers between the legislative, executive, and judicial arms of the state, be replaced by an integral state power that abolishes existing framers of popular sovereignty and subjects the population to permanent control. (p. 41)

Even if I knew what 'existing framers of popular sovereignty' meant, the only current attempts I see in this country to subject the population to permanent control are those of the trans lobby trying to control how we speak about gender.

Amidst the professor's assertions there are occasional indications that he is a little conspiracy theory prone. There is his comment, quoted above, 'The Covid crisis has been seized on, *if it was not actually unleashed for this purpose*', which suggests that he thinks it not wholly impossible that the virus was released deliberately. And then there is this:

Whether or not an electoral fraud that brought the stammering Biden into the White House was indeed organized from the U.S. Embassy in Rome. . .[using] a space satellite [from] the Italian arms company, Leonardo [to break] into the Dominion voting machines, I will leave aside. (p. 121)

For that he cites an article in the hard-core, conspiracy theory-laden Federal Inquirer.<sup>12</sup> At that point in the book I gave up. If the professor can't tell this particular piece of shit from Shinola I am not going to take him seriously, I'm afraid.

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Not a million miles from Professor van der Pijl's thesis was Craig Murray recently:

But in addition to legislative and state attacks on protest, the neo-liberal state is also ramping up its more subtle elements of control. The security services are continually being expanded. The media is not only increasingly concentrated, it is increasingly under direct security-service influence — the Integrity Initiative, the Paul Mason revelations and the barely disguised spookery of Luke Harding and Mark Urban all being

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<sup>12</sup> 'Conte, Leonardo SpaA and the U.S. Embassy behind the Election Data Switch fraud to take out Trump' in Federal Inquirer, 6 January 2021 At <<https://tinyurl.com/5frkepmd>> or <<https://federalinquirer.com/conte-leonardo-spa-and-the-u-s-embassy-behind-the-election-data-switch-fraud-to-take-out-trump/>>.

small elements of a massive web designed to control the popular imagination.<sup>13</sup>

That 'massive web' I don't see. The state doesn't need to create a 'massive web' to control the popular imagination: the Internet does that on its own without state prompting. The tens of millions of people in the UK who are now addicted to their mobile devices are not being prompted and steered by state agencies. Nor would state agencies have success if they tried. The whole thing is way beyond state control in the West. To my knowledge only the Chinese, North Korean<sup>14</sup> and, to a lesser extent, the Russian states have got control of their population's internet use.

As for 'direct security-service influence' I don't see much of that, either. There is infinitely more reporting on – and analysis of – the British state and secret state than there used to be.<sup>15</sup> I became interested in this in the late 1970s when all we had regularly writing on the subject were Paul Lashmar and David Leigh at the *Observer*, Duncan Campbell at the *New Statesman*, little bits and pieces in things like *The Leveller* and *Time Out*, and there was *Statewatch*.<sup>16</sup> The Tory broadsheet newspapers had people who were obviously simply conduits for MI5 and 6. I used to buy the *Sunday Telegraph* in the late 1980s precisely because it was the MI6 outlet competing with the *Sunday Times*, edited by Andrew Neil, which had the MI5 franchise. This media spook-spotting is one of the recurring themes of the first 25 or so issues of *Lobster*. Since those days, the history of the British secret state has become an academic subject and many books on it are published every year. SIS gave up all pretence to being a *secret* agency when it had that flashy new building on the Thames constructed for it. Former intelligence chiefs and former officers are now regularly interviewed by broadcasters. They have been dragged out part of the way into the light and have discovered that nothing has happened as a result; indeed hardly anyone even noticed the event.

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<sup>13</sup> <<https://consortiumnews.com/2022/08/31/craig-murray-marx-was-right/>>

<sup>14</sup> <<https://slate.com/technology/2016/11/how-the-internet-works-in-north-korea.html>>  
Thanks to Nick Must for this reference.

<sup>15</sup> Much of it now being published by Declassified at <<https://declassifieduk.org>>.

<sup>16</sup> Still going at <<https://www.statewatch.org>>.

