

## Lesson Eleven

# Iwanto B. Dictator

### LESSON IDEA

Some principles can be imparted more effectively by a parable than by the mere recitation of facts. Tonight's lesson portrays, with a parable, the rise of a collectivist regime.

### VISUAL AID

None recommended for this lesson.

**O**NCE UPON A TIME there lived a very ambitious and brilliant young man who decided that he was uniquely qualified to solve the world's problems, if only the world would do as he demanded. "The great evil," he told all who would listen, "is that people are not treated equally. Some have more property than they need, while most have very little. Many do not have enough to meet their basic needs."

Continuing, he explained: "This is why wars are fought and crimes are committed; people want more property. The private ownership of property is the culprit that is causing so much misery in the world. The rich never have enough property to satisfy their ambitions, while the poor are constantly struggling for enough to barely survive. If I were in command, that would all change."

Many in his audiences were impressed by his speeches. They asked for more details. "First of all," he replied, "I would make men equal by confiscating all property in the name of the State. Then I would see that it was redistributed so that every person had an equal share. Once the State owns all land, industry, and means of transportation and communication, we can assure that everyone receives what they need and that no one has more than anyone else. Once men become accustomed to such equal sharing, their greed will subside. Since there will be no rich or poor, envy and hatred will disappear."

Soon this young man, Iwanto B. Dictator, attracted a sizable following. Many students concluded that his goals were noble and his ideas exciting. They agreed to support him, since they sincerely wanted to help the less fortunate. Others joined his cause for less noble reasons.

What do you think their motives were? [Many were attracted by the prospect of acquiring someone else's property.]

**I**WANTO B. DICTATOR was smart enough to realize that he would need the support of wise and shrewd politicians to achieve his objectives. He would also need the backing of journalists and other opinion molders to generate additional support for his agenda. And he knew that it would take time; that his goals would have to be achieved with patient gradualism, step by step.

His followers increased, and he was eventually elected to his country's parliament. Later, he became an assistant to a vice premier. And later still, working with increasing skill and influence, his supporters succeeded in having him elected premier.

Once in control of the government, the army, and the police (and with the media, schools, and many churches infiltrated by his fellow conspirators), he began moving more rapidly to live up to his name. He began implementing his program of redistribution and reeducation.

But he still faced opposition, because some of his stubborn subjects refused to go along with his "noble" goals. They were unwilling to surrender their farms, factories, and businesses. Their "unreasonable" attitude posed a serious problem for Iwanto B. Dictator's regime, which he decided to solve as most despots do. What do you think he did? [Ask each family member to answer.]

He began to murder and imprison his opponents, and during the purge he remained philosophical. "This is part of the price that must be paid for the wonderful new world order that I will eventually establish," he said. "After all, you can't make an omelet without breaking eggs." When someone asked when the new day of peace and plenty would be ushered in, he replied, "As soon as the opposition dissipates and everyone has been properly reeducated."

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bureaucracy of informers and enforcers had to be created. Neighbors began spying on each other, while workers reported their bosses to authorities and vice versa. Soon, informers and spies permeated the society and the government that even Iwanto B. Dictator did not know whom he could trust. The liquidation of opponents therefore continued unabated.

Eventually, however, the dictator's perseverance paid off and his opposition was silenced. Prisons were filled, churches were closed, and freedom of the press became a historical oddity. There were fewer mouths to feed, and above all there was "peace."

The resignation and despair of the people was music to Iwanto B. Dictator's ears. "Now we are making progress," he claimed. But were conditions actually improving? Farms lagged in production, factories became idle, and many businesses closed their doors.

"A temporary inconvenience," the dictator

#### FOR YOUNGER AMERICANS

Most youngsters enjoy interesting stories, so tonight's parable should hold their attention. It is possible, however, that some may miss the point that the tale actually applies to real persons and events. They may not realize, or want to believe, that real-life rulers can be as dangerous and evil as Iwanto B. Dictator.

In future lessons, we will discuss many historical events that confirm the evil of some rulers, and underscore the important principle that governments should never be given unlimited power. Rather (to paraphrase Thomas Jefferson) they should be bound by the chains of a written constitution and the restraints imposed by a moral people.

For now, however, simply illustrate the important points of our fictional story by raising questions. For instance, the parable concludes with aid being sent to the dictatorship by the Republic of Liberty. Would such aid actually help the oppressed, or would it merely strengthen the dictator? How could the Republic of Liberty have effectively assisted those living under the dictatorship to regain their freedom? How could their enslavement have been avoided in the first place?

Should government ever be given power to determine what should be manufactured and planted, or where people should work? Do rationing and other economic controls increase or reduce the quantity of available goods? Why? (For answers, refer to earlier lessons.)

#### FOR SERIOUS STUDENTS

It is easy to realize that Iwanto B. Dictator really represents the rulers of the Communist-bloc countries. And that the Republic of Liberty symbolizes the United States.

Our story tonight ended with the Republic of Liberty rescuing the dictatorship, by sending it millions of dollars in aid. In actual fact, the United States has sent billions of dollars in aid and equipment to the Communists. Investigate this whole shocking story for yourself. Ample literature on economics and trade is available. (Check your American Opinion Book Services catalog or go to [www.aobs-store.com](http://www.aobs-store.com))

Did this aid prolong the Vietnam War? Did it, as some maintain, actually help keep Communism in power? In fact, could Communism even survive without constant transfusions of aid? What should Americans do now about this issue?

assured his top advisers and the people. "Our teams of planners will soon have everything running smoothly. People will eventually get over such silly notions as private property and making a profit. They will realize how much better it is to place the welfare of all ahead of their own selfish desires."

So the planning commissions went to work. Quotas were established, goals were set, instructions were passed down. Some people were assigned to work on farms, while others were ordered to take jobs in factories. There was work for everyone — husbands, wives, the elderly, even children. The country had full employment, but did it have abundant production? If not, why not?

**D**ESPITE THE BEST efforts of the planners, including threats of force and imprisonment, scarcity continued to plague the land. Since there was a shortage of bread and cereal, the planners ordered farmers to plant more wheat. Soon there was enough wheat to go around, but now there was a shortage of corn, which had not been planted due to the emphasis on wheat. The country had lost an important foodstuff for cattle and pigs, and since there wasn't much else to feed them, there was soon a shortage of both beef and bacon.

Conditions in the factories were not much better. The planners in charge of shoes, for instance,

realized there was no way to coordinate the multitude of manufacturers and sellers. There were too many shoe styles and sizes, so it was decided to eliminate all but three basic types of footwear: a work boot, with laces coming nearly to the knee; a business shoe, which did not cover the ankle; and a gym shoe.

But the commission in charge of laces got its orders mixed up. White gym shoe laces were sent to the factory that made working boots. The long leather laces for work boots were sent to the factory that made business shoes. And no one even remembered to order laces for the business shoes.

Such trouble multiplied, and as more problems occurred, more planners were assigned to deal with them. Soon, more people were employed by the government than were working on farms or in factories. Salesmen lost their jobs because, with all goods being rationed, there was no competition and nothing for them to sell. Some became ration clerks. As one economist has noted, the ultimate economic weapons of a dictator is the ration book, since it enables a dictator to keep the average citizen in line by controlling the food and other necessities available for him and his family. More and more people were forced to work at jobs for which they were ill-prepared. And since many former owners and managers had been executed or imprisoned as enemies of the state, there were few left to train new workers. As a result, both the quality and quantity of goods continued to deteriorate. Streets which were once filled with proud workers, happy customers, and attractive shops, were now replete with the poorly dressed and under-fed masses standing in long lines to exchange their ration checks for the few available goods.

When some began fleeing to other countries, Iwanto B. Dictator ordered his country's borders closed, and instructed border guards to shoot anyone who tried to escape. Coils of razor wire and strands of barbed wire were strung, mines were placed, and brick walls were erected to barricade roads. Identification cards were required for travel on the few trains and planes still operating, and the government eventually required such cards for any travel, by any means, from one town to another.

Yet despite (indeed, because of) such efforts, conditions continued to go from bad, to worse, to

desperate. Even though the planning commissioners had the first pick of food and other goods, they were unhappy, because now even the best was second-rate. Rumors began to reach the dictator that some of his top officers were talking about deposing him. For his own survival, he knew further steps had to be taken.

ONCE AGAIN, Iwanto B. Dictator demonstrated his brilliance and cunning. He called a meeting of his planning commissioners and told them that he had found a solution to the problems plaguing the country. "Are we going to let the farmers own their own land again?" one of the planners asked. "Are we going to give the industries back to the original owners and managers?" another wondered. "Are you going to suggest that we pay people what they actually deserve, and not merely ration everything?" a third questioned.

"You are fools and imbeciles," Iwanto B. Dictator fumed. "Don't you realize that if we were to abandon the system of state socialism that it has taken us so long to construct, we would lose our power and authority? Don't you realize that giving the peasants any freedom at all would only whet their appetites for more, until someday they would want the freedom to hold us accountable for what we have done?"

"Then there is no solution," one commissioner groaned, "for there is no other way to restore prosperity to our country." But Iwanto B. Dictator had thought of a way. Can you guess what it was? [Let each family member suggest a solution, but remind them it must be one that allows the dictatorship to stay in place.]

"Here is the answer to our dilemma," the dictator said. "We will arrange to receive the aid we need from the Republic of Liberty. The leaders of that country will send us millions of dollars, and shiploads of food and other goods, and will even send engineers to build new factories and supervisors to train our workers. I believe that we can further entice them to send us the plans and materials to build better guns, tanks, and other military equipment which we can use to strengthen our grip on economy and our people. And once the people realize that even the Republic of Liberty is assisting us, they will become further demoralized and lose virtually all hope of regain-

ing their freedom.”

Many commissioners did not believe that the Republic of Liberty, a country supposedly at odds with the dictator’s regime, would provide such assistance. But they were wrong. They did not know that men like Iwanto B. Dictator himself had also been at work in the Republic of Liberty, infiltrating not only the government, but schools, churches, the news and entertainment media, and other cultural elements. They did not know that the citizens of Liberty had become so confused, misled, and deceived that most would condone sending aid to a foreign dictatorship. And they never dreamed that leaders of the Republic of Liberty would cite the need to render such assistance, and use other excuses, to justify higher taxes, more government regulation, and increasing interference with the free enterprise system within their own country.

In other words, the Republic of Liberty would begin moving closer to, and becoming more like, its dictatorial rival.

### **Concluding Thought**

The saga of Iwanto B. Dictator is fictitious, but is based on fact. For thousands of years, tyrants have seized power by promising the masses “something for nothing.” But once in control, the executions and enslavement escalate as production and freedom decline, until there is less food, clothing and shelter than before, and prisons are overcrowded.

In coming weeks we will study many actual events that parallel tonight’s tale. It is important to learn how other peoples have been enticed to surrender their liberties, and how other countries have been subverted from within, if we are to prevent the same fate in the United States.

### **Looking Ahead**

Next week, we will look at an aspect of freedom that all dictators hate and fear. It is a component of the free enterprise system that constantly operates to provide superior goods and services at lower prices. It is as important to athletic contests as to manufacturing, production, and distribution. We learn why competition is so essential, and what happens when it disappears.