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## **The potential crisis for humanity inherent in a movement toward a “controlled economy”**

By OHI Sachiko,

My parents were born in the late 1920s to early 1930s, and my grandparents were born in the Meiji Era. I still remember hearing my family members' stories about the World War II. They would talk about the rice distribution under the food-control system, for example, and the government slogan, such as “Expel the Yankees and Brits.” They would say things like, “Luxury is the enemy,” and “Desire nothing until we win.” The reason why such war time slogan came up in my mind is that cosmetics and skin care industry are subjected to ban in China, where extravagant lifestyle of celebrities are becoming targets of public criticism. These phenomena in China are reminiscent of how things were in the wartime Japan.

Under the controlled economy in the wartime Japan, every aspect of civil life was under the strict surveillance: no freedom of speech under the military regime. Now, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we are experiencing the similar, wide range of surveillance by the government, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Such phenomena have been observed simultaneously all over the world since the outbreak of the COVID-19. We have been experiencing repeatedly since March 2020, various variants coming and going.

Under such circumstances, I have noticed the following pattern:

### 1. Tag war between new variants and the vaccine

The global media just started covering the outbreak of the Omicron variant. I suspect this is again the beginning of the pandemic fear agitated by the media, so that the public will be directed to getting booster. The tag war was played out from Alpha to Delta, Delta to Omicron, and will be from Omicron to another.

### 2. Restrictions on economic activities

Once the government declares the state of emergence and restricts manufacturing and business operations, our economic activities are force to freeze. The next thing that will happen is that we will be soon losing our economic liberty: we have no power to produce nor consume.

### 3. Pressure on the supply side will cause shortages of goods and high prices

Government lockdown has made demands artificially suppressed. After lifting lockdown, even though the public try to retrieve the pre-pandemic demands, it is the supply side that takes long to restore factory assembly lines to normalize the production. Especially, it takes longer time to restore disrupted global supply chains. This is the major cause of shortage of energy resources and higher prices. Global powerful governments have simultaneously politicized man-made inflation risk to control economic activities by repressing producers from supply quantities and logistics to end-users, consumers.

Recently, the Biden administration asked allied nations to release of strategic oil reserves. This attempt is for the Administration to curve the rising gasoline price, which seems to me the pre-emptive strike for price control and the beginning of the wartime-controlled economy.

### 4. Controlled economy and extraordinary, big government

In April 2020, every American citizen received government check during the lockdown period. Generous unemployment compensation and other payments were also paid. At the same time, fiscal expenditures increased dramatically, which led to unprecedented expansion of the government debt. In addition to that, we must take it into consideration that we are under the severe geopolitical risks. Once the real war breaks out, it is obvious that the US and major governments will declare the end of civil liberty and beginning of the controlled economy. The governments start to supply us with living expenses and daily necessities, forcing us to conform to vaccination. Such extraordinary, big governments will exercise “unlimited” power to deprive people of privacy, freedom of speech, freedom of conscience, and human dignity. All the non-conformists are crushed, then vanished.

### 5. Community lost and rise of acute anomie

Each time new variant spreads, we would gradually lose direct human contact and solidarity that bind us as a sense of community, while all the gatherings of voluntary associations (even in business levels) and congregations are prohibited. This may be the beginning of the destruction of daily civilized life. Once we get deprived of our common sense and natural human communications, our cultural activities, traditional events and festivals would dilute our incentive to keep our spiritual community. Then, we feel so isolated that we easily lose our spiritual balance. This may lead our society to a very danger zone of “acute anomie” (social disorder due to the lack of social norm), where we can observe increase in domestic violence, suicides, alcoholism, and crimes.

At this stage of anomie, once fake news (undisclosed information) and propaganda induce people into a state of fear, certain political agitations would easily lead people to fascism.

Since COVID-19 outbreak in 2020, the world has moved to the direction of controlled economy and totalitarian society. This is not the matter of public health, but the politicized attempt of enslaving their own citizen. If this series of social experiments continue, we may end up with the society of George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

Naoki Komuro, renowned sociologist once wrote in his book *Japan's Nineteen Eighty-Four (nihon no 1984 nen*; PHP, December 1983): "Orwell's book may seem to be a dreamlike work of science fiction depicting the world where people lost freedom and repressed under complete Big Brother's control. But it is not! ... *Nineteen Eighty-Four* depicts a totalitarian country that has demolished the democracy."

Which will establish a totalitarian government first, the Chinese Communist Party or the US: (1) the CCP completes the digital fascism, or (2) the US becomes a communist state? Regardless of which scenario plays out, it is the crisis for humanity.

**(This is an English translation of the article written by OHI Sachiko, Global Financial Analyst, which originally appeared on the e-forum "Hyakka-Somei (Hundred Ducks in Full Voice)" of CEAC on December 7.)**