

“It is this decline in the rate of expansion of a civilization which marks its passage from the Age of Expansion to the **Age of Conflict**. This latter is the most complex, most interesting, and most critical of all the periods in the life cycle of a civilization. It is marked by four chief characteristics: a) it is a period of declining rate of expansion; b) it is a period of growing tensions and class conflicts; c) it is a period of increasingly frequent and increasingly violent imperialist wars; and d) **it is a period of growing irrationality, pessimism, superstitions, and otherworldliness**. All these phenomena appear in the core area of a civilization before they appear in the more peripheral portions of the society.”

-Carroll Quigley, *Tragedy & Hope: A History of the World in Our Time*

