

Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes

By Jacques Ellul

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Modern Propaganda operates with many different kinds of truth - half truth, limited truth, and truth out of context. Even Goebbels always insisted that Wehrmacht Communiques be as accurate as possible. It aims to intensify existing trends and to lead men to action, or when it is appropriate - inaction through mass terror or discouragement, to prevent them from interfering.

There are two broad types of propaganda: agitation propaganda and integration propaganda. Agitation propaganda leads men from mere resentment to rebellion. Integration propaganda aims at making them adjust themselves to desired patterns.

Intellectuals are the most vulnerable of all to modern propaganda for the following reasons.

1. They absorb the largest amount of secondhand, unverifiable information.
2. They feel a compelling need to have an opinion on every important question of our time, and thus easily succumb to opinions offered to them by propaganda.
3. They consider themselves capable of "judging for themselves".

Without the intense collaboration of the masses the propagandist would be helpless. Propaganda first creates pseudo-needs and then supplies pseudo-solutions or satisfactions for them. In the world today, there are three great propaganda blocs - Russia, China and the United States of America. These are the most important propaganda systems in terms of scope, depth, and coherence.

Propaganda must be effective. Ineffective propaganda is not propaganda. Propaganda is secret action. The aim to indoctrinate, particularly in regard to political, economic, and social matters, has been regarded as the hallmark of propaganda. The propagandist seeks to modify opinions by purely psychological means. Most often he pursues a semi-educative objective. The methods serve to make the individual or group conform. This is the aim of propaganda.

Propaganda as a phenomenon is essentially the same in China or Russia or the United States or Algeria. Propaganda, no matter who makes it, has certain identical results in Communism or Hitlerism or Western democracy.

Modern man worships "facts" - that is, he accepts "facts" as the ultimate reality. He is convinced that what is, is good. He believes that facts in themselves provide evidence and proof, and he willingly subordinates his values to them. He obeys what he believes to be necessity, which he somehow connects with the idea of progress.

As long as man denies the inevitability of a phenomenon, as long as he avoids facing up to it, he will go astray. The force of propaganda is a direct attack against man. Man is terribly malleable, uncertain of himself, ready to accept and to follow many suggestions, and is tossed about by all the winds of doctrine.

Propaganda renders the true exercise of democracy almost impossible. Propaganda is situated at the center of the growing powers of the State and governmental and administrative techniques. People keep saying: "Everything depends on what kind of state makes use of propaganda". But such a statement is meaningless.

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Propaganda is simply the means used to prevent things from being felt as too oppressive and to persuade man to submit with good grace. Then, man will end by obeying with enthusiasm, convinced of the excellence of what he is forced to do, the constraint of the organization will no longer be felt by him. It will no longer be a constraint and the police will have nothing to do.

Enthusiasm for the right social myths - created by propaganda will finally have solved the problem of man.

The Characteristics of Propaganda

Propaganda is a technique rather than a science. It is a modern technique that is based on one or more branches of science. Modern propaganda is based on scientific analysis of psychology and sociology. Without the scientific research of modern psychology and sociology there would be no propaganda. The important thing is that propaganda has decided to submit itself to science and to make use of it. Propaganda is no longer a self-contained action, covering up for evil deeds. It is an object of serious thought, and proceeds along scientific channels. Stalinist propaganda was in great measure founded on Pavlov's theory of the conditioned reflex. Hitlerian propaganda was in great measure founded on Freud's theory of repression and libido. American propaganda is founded in great measure on Dewey's theory of teaching.

Any modern propaganda will, first of all, address itself at one and the same to the individual and to the masses. It cannot separate the two elements. The individual is of no interest to the propagandist; as an isolated unit he presents much too much resistance to external action.

Modern propaganda reaches individuals enclosed in the mass and as participants in that mass, yet it also aims at a crowd, but only as a body composed of individuals.

The individual is never considered as an individual, but always in terms of what he has in common with others, such as his motivations, his feelings, or his myths. He is reduced to an average and action based on averages will be effectual.

Moreover, the individual is considered part of the mass and included in it because in that way his psychic defenses are weakened, his reactions are easier to provoke, and the propagandist profits from the process of diffusion of emotions through the mass, and at the same time, the pressures felt by an individual when in a group.

Emotionalism, impulsiveness, excess etc - all these characteristics of the individual caught up in a mass are well known and very helpful to propaganda. Therefore, the individual must never be considered to be alone; the listener to a radio broadcast, though actually alone, is nevertheless part of a large group, and he is aware of it.

Similarly, the propaganda that is carried on by door-to-door visits, one is dealing with a reality of a unit submerged into an invisible crowd composed of all those who have been interviewed and will be interviewed. They all hold similar ideas and live by the same myths.

Conversely, when propaganda is being addressed to a crowd, it must touch each individual in that crowd, in that whole group. To be effective, it must give the impression of being personal, for we must never forget that the mass is composed of individuals, and is nothing but assembled individuals.

Just because men are in a group, and therefore weakened, receptive and in a state of psychological regression, they pretend all the more to be "strong individuals". The mass man is clearly sub-human but pretends to be superman. He is more suggestible but insists he is more forceful. He is more unstable, but thinks he is firm in his convictions.

If one openly treats the mass as a mass, the individuals who form it will feel themselves belittled and will refuse to participate. They will withdraw and we will not be able to get anything out of them. On Ellul, Jacques (1965). Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes. Vintage Books. NY.

the contrary, each one must feel individualized, each must have the impression that he is being looked at, that he is being addressed personally. Only then will he respond as desired and cease to be anonymous.

In reality propaganda cannot exist without using the mass media. The transformation of very small groups by purely psychological means is one of the most important techniques of propaganda. Only when very small groups are thus annihilated, when the individual finds no more defenses, no equilibrium, no resistance exercised by the group to which he belongs, does total action by propaganda become possible. Propaganda must be total. The propagandist must utilize all the technical means at his disposal. Each usable medium has its own particular way of penetration - specific, but at the same time localized and limited; by itself it cannot attack the individual, break down his resistance, and make his decisions for him.

The very fact that effectiveness of each medium is limited to one particular area clearly shows the necessity of complementing it with other media. To draw the individual into the net of propaganda, each technique must be utilized in its own specific way.

Thus one leaves no part of the intellectual or emotional life alone. The movies and human contacts are the best media for sociological propaganda in terms of social climate, slow infiltration, progressive inroads, and over-all integration.

Public meetings and posters are more suitable tools for providing shock propaganda, intense but temporary, leading to immediate action. Radio is likely to be an instrument of international action and psychological warfare, whereas the press is used domestically.

It is a matter of reaching and encircling the whole man and all men. Propaganda tries to surround man by all possible routes, in the realm of feelings as well as ideas, by playing on his will or on his needs, through his conscious and unconscious, assailing him in both his private and his public life.

It furnishes him with a complete system for explaining the world, and provides immediate incentives to action. We are here in the presence of an organized myth that tries to take hold of the entire person. Through the myth it creates, propaganda imposes a complete range of intuitive knowledge, susceptible of only one interpretation, unique and one-sided, and precluding any divergence.

This myth becomes so powerful that it invades every area of consciousness, leaving no faculty or motivation intact. It stimulates in the individual a feeling of exclusiveness, and produces a biased attitude.

The myth has such motive force that, once accepted, it controls the whole of the individual, who becomes immune to any other influence. This explains the totalitarian attitude that the individual adopts and that simply reflects the totalitarian action of propaganda on him.

Not only does propaganda seek to invade the whole man, to lead him to adopt a mystical attitude and reach him through all possible psychological channels, but more, it speaks to all men. Propaganda cannot be satisfied with partial success, for it does not tolerate discussion. As long as a noticeable or expressed tension or a conflict of action remains, propaganda cannot be said to have accomplished its aim.

Extreme propaganda must win over the adversary and at least use him by integrating him into its own frame of reference. That is why it was so important to have an Englishman speak on the Nazi radio.

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Clearly, the ultimate was achieved by Soviet propaganda in the self-criticism of its opponents. That the enemy of a regime can be made to declare that this regime was right, that his opposition was criminal - that is the ultimate result of totalitarian propaganda.

The enemy is converted into a supporter of the regime. This is not simply a very useful and effective means of propaganda. On the one hand, the propagandist must keep in mind the stimuli that can be utilized at a given moment, and must organize them. This results in a propaganda "campaign". On the other hand, the propagandist must use various instruments, each in relation to all the others.

Alongside the mass media of communication propaganda employs censorship, legal texts, proposed legislation, international conferences, and so forth. We should not only consider the media; personal contacts are considered increasingly effective.

Educational methods play an immense role in political indoctrination. One must utilize the education of the young to condition them to what comes later. The schools and all methods of instruction are transformed under such conditions, with the child integrated into the conformist group in such a way that the individualist is not tolerated by the authorities but by his peers.

Propaganda will take over literature, past and present, and history, which must be rewritten according to propaganda's needs. Propaganda carries within itself, the power to take over everything that can serve it.

Direct propaganda, aimed at modifying opinions and attitudes, must be preceded by propaganda that is sociological in character, slow, general, seeking to create a climate. No direct propaganda can be effective without pre-propaganda.

The spectator will be much more disposed to believe in the grandeur of France when he has seen a dozen films on French petroleum, railroads, or jetliners. Sociological propaganda can be compared to ploughing, direct propaganda to sowing; you cannot do one without doing the other first.

We must also distinguish between covert propaganda and overt propaganda. Covert propaganda tends to hide its aims, identity, significance, and source. The people are not aware that someone is trying to influence them, and do not feel that they are being pushed in a certain direction.

This is often called "black propaganda". It also makes use of mystery and silence. The other kind, "white propaganda" is open and aboveboard. There is a Ministry of Propaganda; one admits that propaganda is being made, its source is known; its aims and intentions are identified. The public knows that an attempt is being made to influence it.

Overt propaganda is necessary for attacking enemies; it alone is capable of reassuring one's own forces, it is a manifestation of strength and good organization, a token of victory. But covert propaganda is more effective if the aim is to push one's supporters in a certain direction without their being aware of it.

The Nazis knew very well how to alternate long silences, mystery, the secret revealed, the waiting period that raises anxiety levels, and then, suddenly, the explosive decision, the storm that seems all the more violent because it breaks into the silence.

White propaganda actually becomes a cover and mask for black propaganda. Direct incitement is that by which the propagandist himself acts, becomes involved, demonstrates his conviction, his belief, his good faith.

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He commits himself to the course of action that he proposes and supports, in order to obtain a similar action, he solicits a corresponding response from his subjects. Democratic propaganda - in which the politician extends a hand to the citizen - is of this type.

Indirect incitement is that which rests on a difference between the statesman, who takes action, and the public, which is limited to passive acceptance and compliance. There is a coercive influence and there is obedience; this is one of the characteristics of authoritarian propaganda.

These two types of propaganda no longer belong to different political regimes, but are differing needs of the same propaganda and of various levels on which propaganda is organized.

Propaganda must be continuous and lasting - continuous in that it must not leave any gaps, but must fill the citizen's whole day and all of his days, lasting in that it must function over a very long period of time. Propaganda tends to make the individual live in a separate world; he must not have outside points of reference. He must not be allowed a moment of meditation or reflection in which to see himself vis-à-vis the propagandist.

At that moment, the individual emerges from the grip of propaganda. Instead, successful propaganda will occupy every moment of the individual's life; through posters and loudspeakers when he is out walking, through the radio and newspapers at home, through meetings and movies in the evening.

The individual must not be allowed to recover, to collect himself, to remain untouched by propaganda during any relatively long period, for propaganda is not the touch of the magic wand. It is based on slow, constant impregnation. It creates convictions and compliance through imperceptible influences that are effective only by continuous repetition.

It must create a complete environment for the individual, one from which he never emerges. And to prevent him from finding external points of reference, it protects him by censoring everything that might come in from the outside.

The slow building up of reflexes and myths, of psychological environment and prejudices, requires propaganda of a long duration. Propaganda is not a stimulus that appears quickly; it consists of successive impulses and shocks aimed at various feelings or thoughts by means of the many instruments previously mentioned.

Propaganda is a continuous action, without failure or interruption; as soon as the effect of one impulse is weakened, it is renewed by another. At no point does it fail to subject its recipient to its influence. As soon as one effect wears off, it is followed by a new shock.

Continuous propaganda exceeds the individual's capacities for attention or adaptation and thus his capabilities of resistance. It is always surprising that the content of propaganda can be so inconsistent that it can approve today what it condemned yesterday.

Man continues to follow the line because he is caught up in the system. Of course, he notices when a change has taken place and he is surprised. He may even be tempted to resist. But will he break with the environment in which his propaganda is active? Will he stop reading a particular newspaper?

Such breaks are too painful; faced with them, the individual, feeling that the change in line is not an attack on his real self, prefers to retain his habits. Immediately thereafter he will hear the new truth

reassessed a hundred times, he will find it explained and proved, and he does not have the strength to fight against it each day on the basis of yesterday's truth.

He does not even become fully involved in this battle. Propaganda continues its assault without an instant's respite; his resistance is fragmentary and sporadic. He is caught up in professional tasks and personal preoccupations, and each time he emerges from them he hears and sees the new truth proclaimed.

The steadiness of propaganda prevails over his sporadic action and makes him follow all the turns from the time he has begun to eat of this bread. That is why one cannot really speak of propaganda in connection with an election campaign that lasts only two weeks.

The population is often indifferent to election propaganda. But it is not surprising that such propaganda has little effect; none of the great techniques of propaganda can be effective in two weeks.

When propaganda suddenly appears in a social environment normally not subject to this type of influence, the individual can recognize it clearly as propaganda and begin to be wary. That is precisely what happens in an election campaign; the individual can defend himself when left to himself in his everyday situation.

This is why it is fatal to the effectiveness of propaganda to proceed in spurts, with big noisy campaigns separated by long gaps. In such circumstances the individual will always find his bearings again; he will know how to distinguish propaganda from the rest of what the press carries in normal times.

Moreover, the more intense the propaganda campaign, the more alert he will become - comparing this sudden intensity with the great calm that reigned before. What is needed, then, is continuous agitation produced artificially even when nothing in the events of the day justifies or arouses excitement.

Therefore, continuing propaganda must slowly create the climate first, and then prevent the individual from noticing a particular propaganda operation in contrast to ordinary daily events. Every modern state is expected to have a Ministry of Propaganda, whatever its actual name may be.

No propaganda is possible unless psychological influence rests on reality, and the recruiting of individuals into cadres or movements goes hand in hand with psychological manipulation. As long as no physical influence is exerted by an organization on an individual, there is no propaganda.

The physical organization can be of various types. It can be a party organization (Nazi, Fascist, Communist) in which those who are won over are absorbed and made to participate in action. Or such physical organization can be the integration of an entire population into cells by agents in each block of residences.

We know that the propagandist is also a psychological consultant to governments; he indicates what measures should or should not be taken to facilitate certain psychological manipulations. Propaganda outside a group - toward other nations for example, or toward an enemy is necessarily weak.

The principal reason for this is undoubtedly the absence of physical organization and of encirclement of the individual. One cannot reach another nation except by way of symbols, through press or radio, and even then only in sporadic fashion.

In case of a war, the enemy will not be demoralized by such abstract propaganda unless he is at the same time beaten by armies and pounded by bombers. We can hardly expect great results from a simple

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dissemination of words unless we prepare for it by education, pre-propaganda, and sustain it by organization and action.

This points up a major difference between Communist and Western countries. Western countries conduct their propaganda against Soviet nations solely by psychological means, with the propaganda clearly emanating from a base situated in the democratic countries themselves.

By contrast, the Soviet Union makes very little propaganda itself; it does not seek to reach western peoples by its radio. It confines its propaganda to organization in the form of national communist parties inside the national boundaries of the people to be propagandized.

Propaganda, then, is no longer mere words; it incites an enormous demonstration by the masses and thus becomes a fact - which gives strength to the words outside the frontiers. The manipulation of symbols is necessary for three reasons: First of all, it persuades the individual to enter the framework of an organization. Second, it furnishes him with reasons, justifications, motivations for action. Third, it obtains his total allegiance. More and more we are learning that genuine compliance is essential if action is to be effective.

The worker, the soldier, and the partisan must believe in what they are doing, must put all their heart and their good will into it; they must also find their equilibrium, their satisfactions, in their actions. All this is the result of psychological influence, which cannot attain great results alone, but which can attempt anything when combined with organization.

Finally, the presence of organization creates one more phenomenon: the propagandist is always separated from the mass. He remains a stranger to them. Even in the actual contact of human relations, at meetings, in door-to-door visits, the propagandist is of a different order; he is nothing else and nothing more than the representative of the organization, or rather, a delegated fraction of it.

He remains a manipulator, in the shadow of the machine. He knows why he speaks certain words and what effect they should have. His words are no longer human words but technically calculated words; they no longer repress a feeling or a spontaneous idea, but reflect an organization even when they seem entirely spontaneous.

Thus, the propagandist is never asked to be involved in what he is saying, for, if it becomes necessary, he may be asked to say the exact opposite with similar conviction. He must, of course, believe in the cause he serves but not in his particular argument.

On the other hand, the propagandee hears the word spoken to him here and now and the argument presented to him in which he is asked to believe. He must take them to be human words, spontaneous and carried by conviction.

Obviously, if the propagandist were left to himself, he would end up by being taken in by his own trick, by believing it. He would then be the prisoner of his own formulas and would lose all effectiveness as a propagandist.

The propagandist thus becomes more and more the technician who treats his patients in various ways but keeps himself cold and aloof, selecting his words and actions for purely technical reasons. The patient is an object to be saved or sacrificed according to the necessities of the cause.

Propaganda is very frequently described as a manipulation for the purpose of changing ideas or opinions, or making individuals "believe" some idea, and finally of making them adhere to some doctrine - all matters of mind.

If the individual is a Marxist, it tries to destroy his conviction and turn him into an anti-Marxist, and so on. It calls on all the psychological mechanisms but appeals to reason as well. It tries to convince, to bring about a decision, to create firm adherence to some idea.

Then, obviously, if the conviction is sufficiently strong, after some soul searching, the individual is ready for action. The aim of modern propaganda is no longer to modify ideas, but to provoke action - to buy a particular product for example.

It is no longer to change adherence to a doctrine, but to make the individual cling irrationally to a process of action. It is no longer to lead to a choice, but to loosen the reflexes. It is no longer to transform an opinion, but to arouse active and mythical belief.

The propagandist does not normally address himself to the individual's intelligence. To place propaganda efforts on the intellectual level would require that the propagandist engage in individual debate with each person - an unthinkable method.

The injection of propaganda into the mechanism of popular action suppresses liberal democracy. The supporter of a football team, though not physically in the game, makes his presence felt psychologically by rooting for the players, exciting them, and pushing them to outdo themselves.

Similarly the faithful who attend Mass do not interfere physically, but their communicant participation is positive and changes the nature of the phenomenon. These two examples illustrate what we mean by passive participation obtained through propaganda.

To be effective, propaganda must constantly short-circuit all thought and decision. It must operate on the individual at the level of the unconscious. He must not know that he is being shaped by outside forces.

The propagandist knows what objective should be sought and what action should be accomplished, and he maneuvers the instrument that will secure precisely this action. We aim to target man in his political and social action where we find him channeled and engaged in actions that do not necessarily conform to his private beliefs.

He even can have political convictions but still be led to act in a manner apparently contradictory to them. The propagandist can in fact mobilize man for action that is not in accord with his previous convictions.

Propaganda does not seek to create wise or reasonable men, but militants. He is actually transformed into a religious man in the psycho-sociological sense of the term. Integration is the principal aim of all propaganda today, and it is also what makes the effect of propaganda endure.

Action makes propaganda's effect irreversible. He who acts in obedience to propaganda can never go back. He is now obliged to believe in that propaganda because of his action. He is obliged to receive from it his justification and authority, without which his action will seem to him absurd and unjust, which would be intolerable.

He is obliged to continue to advance in the direction indicated by propaganda, for action demands more action. He is what one calls "committed" - which is certainly what the Communist party anticipates, for example, and what the Nazis accomplished.

The man who has acted in accordance with the existing propaganda has taken his place in society. From then on he has enemies. Often he has broken with his milieu or his family; he may be compromised. He is forced to accept the new milieu and the new friends propaganda makes for him.

Often he has committed an act reprehensible by traditional moral standards and has disturbed a certain order; he needs a justification for this - and he gets more deeply involved by repeating the act in order to prove that it was just.

Thus he is caught up in a movement that develops until it totally occupies the breadth of his conscience. Propaganda now masters him completely - and we must bear in mind that any propaganda that does not lead to this kind of participation is mere child's play.

We may properly ask how propaganda can achieve such a result, a type of reflex action, by short-circuiting the intellectual process. The essential objective of pre-propaganda is to prepare man for a particular action, to make him sensitive to some influence, to get him into conditions for the time when he will be effective, and without delay or hesitation, participate in an action.

Prepropaganda has nothing to do with an opinion, an idea or a doctrine. It proceeds by psychological manipulations by the creation of feelings or stereotypes useful when the time comes. Man must be penetrated in order to shape such tendencies. He must be made to live in a certain psychological climate.

The two great routes that this sub-propaganda takes are the conditioned reflex and the myth.

Propaganda tries first of all to create conditioned reflexes in the individual by training him so that certain words, signs, or symbols, even certain persons or ideas, provoke unfailing reactions.

Despite many protests from psychologists, creating such conditioned reflexes, collectively as well as individually, is definitely possible. But in order for such a procedure to succeed, a certain amount of time must elapse, a period of training and repetition.

One cannot hope to obtain automatic reactions after only a few weeks' repetition of the same formulas. A real psychic reformation must be undertaken, so that after months of patient work a crowd will react automatically in the hoped for direction to some image.

The propagandist tries to create myths by which man will live, which respond to his sense of the sacred. By "myth" we mean an all-encompassing, activating image; a sort of vision of desirable objectives that have lost their material, practical character and have become strongly coloured and overwhelming.

Such an image pushes man to action precisely because it includes all that he feels is good, just and true. Eventually the myth takes possession of a man's mind so completely that his life is consecrated to it.

Only when conditioned reflexes have been created in a man and he lives in a collective myth can he be readily mobilized. The United States prefers to utilize the myth; the Soviet Union has for a long time preferred the reflex. The important thing is that when the time is ripe, the individual can be thrown into action by active propaganda. The preparatory work leads only to man's readiness. Once he is ready, he

can be mobilized effectively in very different directions. That is why pre-propaganda must be constant, whereas active propaganda can be sporadic when the goal is a particular action or involvement.

A communist or a christian with strong beliefs is very little, if at all, shaken by adverse propaganda. Similarly, a prejudice or a stereogype is hardly ever changed by propaganda; for example it is almost impossible to break down racial prejudice by propaganda. What people think of Negroes or Jews will be only slightly altered by propaganda attempts.

The propagandist cannot go contrary to what is in an individual; he cannot create just any new psychological mechanism or obtain just any action or decision. The propagandist must know the sentiments and opinions, the current tendencies and the stereotypes among the public he is trying to reach.

Methods and arguments must be tailored to the type of man to be reached. The technique of propaganda consists in precisely calculating the desired action in terms of the individual who is to be made to act. The propagandist should never make a direct attack on an established, reasoned, durable opinion or accepted cliché.

The skillful propagandist will seek to obtain action without demanding consistency, without fighting prejudices and images, by taking his stance deliberately on inconsistencies. A man can be an enthusiastic communist and yet be convinced to vote conservative.

Existing opinion is not to be contradicted, but utilized. Each individual harbors a large number of stereotypes and established tendencies; from this arsenal the propagandist must select those easiest to mobilize, those which will give the greatest strength to the action he wants to precipitate.

However, the ordinary man in our democracies has a wide range of feelings and ideas. propaganda need only determine which opinions must not be attacked head on, and be content to undermine them gradually and to weaken them by cloaking them in ambiguity.

Another conclusion, drawn from experiments made chiefly in the united states, is that propaganda cannot create something out of nothing. It must attach itself to a feeling, an idea; it must build on a foundation already present in the individual. propaganda is confined to utilizing existing material; it does not create it.

The propagandist must concern himself above all with the needs of those whom he wishes to reach. All propaganda must respond to a need, whether it be a concrete need for bread, peace, security or work, or a psychological need. A frequent error on the part of the propagandists "pushing" something is failure to take into account whether or not the mass needs it.

Take for example unhappy workers threatened by unemployment, exploited, poorly paid, and without hope of improving their situation: karl marx has clearly demonstrated that they might have a certain spontaneous reaction of revolt, and that some sporadic outbursts might occur.

With propaganda this same situation and the existing sentiments might be used to create a class-consciousness and a lasting, organized revolutionary trend. But propaganda can also arouse nationalism, the foundations of which are perfectly natural but which as an integrated force is entirely fabricated. In this way propaganda can be creative.

It is in complete control of its creations; the passions or prejudices that it instills in a man serve to strengthen its hold on him and thus make him do what he would never have done otherwise. It is not true that propaganda is powerless simply because at the start it is limited to what already exists.

It can attack from the rear, wear down slowly, provide new centers of interest, which cause the neglect of previously acquired positions. It can divert a prejudice; or it can elicit an action contrary to an opinion held by the individual without his being clearly aware of it.

Finally, it is obvious that propaganda must not concern itself with what is best in man. Propaganda does not aim to elevate man but to make him serve. It must therefore utilize the most common feelings, the most widespread ideas, the crudest patterns, and in so doing place itself on a very low level with regard to what it wants man to do and to what end.

Hate, hunger and pride make better levers of propaganda than do love or impartiality. Propaganda must not only attach itself to what already exists in the individual, but also express the fundamental currents of the society it seeks to influence. Propaganda must be familiar with collective presuppositions, spontaneous myths, and broad ideologies.

By this we do not mean political currents or temporary opinions that will change in a few months, but the fundamental bases on which a whole society rests. The presuppositions and myths not just of individuals or of particular groups but those shared by all individuals in a society, including men of opposite political inclinations and class loyalties.

A propaganda pitting itself against this fundamental and accepted structure would have no chance of success. Only if it rests on the proper collective beliefs will propaganda be understood and accepted. Propaganda's main task clearly is the psychological reflection of these structures.

Whatever the differences between peoples' opinions, one can discover beneath the differences the same beliefs - in Americans, in Russians, in Communists and in Christians. These presuppositions are sociological in that they are provided for us by the surrounding milieu and carry us along in the sociological current. They are what keeps us in harmony with our environment.

There are four great collective sociological presuppositions in the modern world. One, that man's aim in life is happiness, two - that man is naturally good, three - that history develops in endless progress, and four - that everything is matter.

The other great sociological reflection is myth. The myth expresses the deep inclinations of a society. Without it, the masses would not cling to a certain civilization or its process of development and crisis. It is a vigorous impulse, strongly colored, irrational, and charged with all of man's power to believe. It contains a religious element.

In our society, the two great fundamental myths on which all other myths rest are Science and History. And based on them are the collective myths that are man's principal orientations: the myth of work, the myth of happiness, the myth of the Nation, the myth of youth, the myth of the hero.

Propaganda is forced to build on these presuppositions and to express these myths, for without them nobody would listen to it. A propaganda that stresses virtue over happiness and presents man's future as one dominated by austerity and contemplation would have no audience at all.

A propaganda that questions progress or work would arouse disdain and reach nobody; it would immediately be branded as an ideology of the intellectuals, since most people feel that the serious things are material things because they are related to labour, and so on.

Propaganda must follow the general direction of evolution, which includes the belief in progress. A normal, spontaneous evolution is more or less expected, even if man is completely unaware of it, and in order to succeed, propaganda must move in the direction of that evolution.

All propaganda must play on the fact that the nation will be industrialized, more will be produced, greater progress is imminent, and so on. No propaganda can succeed if it defends outdated production methods or obsolete social or administrative institutions.

Though occasionally advertising may profitably evoke the good old days, political propaganda may not. Rather, it must evoke the future, the tomorrows that beckon, precisely because such visions impel the individual to act.

Propaganda is carried along on this current and cannot oppose it; it must confirm it and reinforce it. Thus, propaganda will turn a normal feeling of patriotism into a raging nationalism. It not only reflects myths and presuppositions, it hardens them, sharpens them, invests them with the power of shock and action.

Modern man believes firmly in the strength of the centrally administered State. Where centralization exists, no propaganda can be made against it. Propaganda must operate in line with the material currents and at the level of material progress.

It must be associated with all economic, administrative, political, and educational development, otherwise it is nothing. Propaganda must always choose the trend that normally will triumph because it agrees with the great myths of the time, common to all men.

Man can be captured and mobilized only if there is consonance between his deep social beliefs and those underlying the propaganda directed at him. He will be aroused and moved to action only if the propaganda pushes him toward a timely action.

Propaganda can succeed only when man feels challenged. It can have no influence when the individual is stabilized, relaxing in his slippers in the midst of total security. Propaganda must start with current events, it would reach nobody if it tried to base itself on historical facts.

Propaganda for peace can only take place where there is a fear of war. The particular skill of Communist propaganda in this area is that it creates a threat of war while conducting peace propaganda. The terms, the words, the subjects that propaganda utilizes must have in themselves the power to break the barrier of the individual's indifference. They must penetrate like bullets; they must spontaneously evoke a set of images that have a certain grandeur of their own.

To the extent that propaganda is based on current news, it cannot permit time for thought or reflection. A man caught up in the news must remain on the surface of the event; he is carried along in the current, and can at no time take a respite to judge and appreciate; he can never stop to reflect.

Under these conditions there can be no thought. And, in fact, modern man does not think about current problems; he feels them. He reacts, but he does not understand them any more than he takes

responsibility for them. He is even less capable of spotting any inconsistency between successive facts; man's capacity to forget is unlimited.

This is one of the most important and useful points for the propagandist, who can always be sure that a particular propaganda theme, statement, or event will be forgotten within a few weeks. Man denies his own continuity; to the same extent that he lives on the surface of events and makes today's events his life by obliterating yesterday's news.

He refuses to see the contradictions in his own life and condemns himself to a life of successive moments, discontinuous and fragmented. This situation makes the "current events man" a ready target for propaganda. Such a man is highly sensitive to the influence of present-day currents; lacking landmarks, he follows all currents.

He is unstable because he runs after what happened today; he relates to the event, and therefore cannot resist any impulse coming from the event. Because he is immersed in current affairs, this man has a psychological weakness that puts him at the mercy of the propagandist.

Propaganda addresses itself to that man, like him, it can relate only to the most superficial aspect of a spectacular event, which alone can interest man and lead him to make a certain decision or adopt a certain attitude.

The current news to which man is sensitive, need have no objective or effective origins; in one way this greatly facilitates the work of propaganda. Propaganda can exploit his concern over news events for its own purposes.

But what about the Undecided - those people whose opinions are vague, who form the great mass of citizens, and who constitute the most fertile public for the propagandist. The Undecided are not the Indifferent.

The Undecided, far from being outside the group, are participants in the life of the group, but do not know what decision to make on problems that seem urgent to them. They are susceptible to the control of public opinion or attitudes, and the role of propaganda is to bring them under this control, transforming their potential into real effect.

Propaganda can play only on individuals intensely involved in social currents. The isolated mountaineer or forester, having only occasional contact with society at the village market, is hardly sensitive to propaganda.

For him it does not even exist. Propaganda acts on the person embroiled in the conflicts of his time, who shares the interest of his society. A prior general interest must exist for propaganda to be effective. If I read a good newspaper advertisement for a particular automobile, I will not have the slightest interest in it if I am indifferent to automobiles.

This advertisement can affect me only if I share, with my contemporaries, the mania for automobiles. Religious propaganda is not very successful; society as a whole is no longer interested in religious problems.

At present, only isolated individuals are interested in religion. It is part of their private opinions, and no real public opinion exists on the matter. On the other hand, propaganda related to technology is sure to arouse a response, for everybody is as passionately interested in technology as in politics.

Ellul, Jacques (1965). *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes*. Vintage Books. NY.

The more intense the life of a group to which an individual belongs, the more active and effective propaganda is. A group in which feelings of belonging are weak, cannot make valid propaganda either to its members or to those outside.

The more active and alive the group, the more its members will listen to propaganda and believe it. The individual who is part of an intense collective life is prone to submit to the influence of propaganda. And anyone who succeeds in keeping aloof from the intense collective life is generally outside the influence of propaganda, because of his ability to escape that intensity.

So, we can present three principles:

1. The propagandist must place his propaganda inside the limits of the focus of interest.
2. The propagandist must understand that his propaganda has the greatest chance for success where the collective life of the individuals he seeks to influence is most intense.
3. The propagandist must remember that collective life is most intense where it revolves around a focus of interest.

On the basis of these principles the propagandist can reach the Undecided and act on the majority.

The most generally held concept of propaganda is that it is a series of tall stories, a tissue of lies, and that lies are necessary for effective propaganda.

Hitler himself apparently confirmed this point of view when he said that the bigger the lie, the more its chance of being believed. This concept leads to two attitudes among the public. The first is: "Of course we shall not be victims of propaganda because we are capable of distinguishing truth from falsehoods". Anyone holding that conviction is extremely susceptible to propaganda, because when propaganda does tell the "truth", he is then convinced that it is no longer propaganda. Moreover, his self-confidence makes him all the more vulnerable to attacks of which he is unaware.

The second attitude is "We believe nothing that the enemy says because everything he says is necessarily untrue". But if the enemy can demonstrate that he has told the truth, a sudden turn in his favour will result.

The truth pays off in the realm of facts. The necessary falsehoods, which also pay off, are in the realm of intentions and interpretations. The lack of coherence and cohesion of factual data is entirely deliberate.

When it would be dangerous to let a fact be known, the modern propagandist prefers to hide it, to say nothing rather than a downright lie. Well-known facts can be simply made to disappear; occasionally they are discovered after much delay.

The public can be made to draw very specific conclusions from a cleverly presented truth, and the great majority comes to the same conclusions. To obtain this result, propaganda must be based on some truth that can be said in few words and is able to linger in the collective consciousness.

Intentions and interpretations is the real element of the lie; but it is exactly here that it cannot be detected. If one falsifies a fact, one may be confronted with unquestionable proof to the contrary. But no proof can be furnished where motivations or intentions are concerned or interpretations of a fact is involved.

Between 1936 and 1939 Hitler made many speeches about his desire for peace. He never expressed an explicit desire for war. He did manage to get a declaration of war from France and England; so he was not the one who started the war.

Propaganda by its very nature is an enterprise for perverting the significance of events and of insinuating false intentions. First of all, the propagandist must insist on the purity of his own intentions and at the same time, hurl accusations at the enemy.

The skilful propagandist will accuse the enemy of the very intention that he himself has and of trying to commit the very crime that he himself is about to commit. He who wants to provoke a war not only proclaims his own peaceful intentions but also accuses the other party of provocation.

He who uses concentration camps accuses his neighbour of doing so. He who intends to establish dictatorship always insists that his adversaries are bent on dictatorship.

The accusation aimed at the other's intention clearly reveals the intention of the accuser. But the public cannot see this because the revelation is carefully interwoven with facts. The trick here is to slip from the facts, to moral terrain and to ethical judgement.

Even intelligent people can be made to swallow professed intentions by well-executed propaganda.

Propaganda must serve as a veil for a government's real intentions. It must in effect be a smokescreen.

Propaganda is a declaration of purity that will never be realized, a declaration of peace, of truth, of social justice.

One must be careful not to promise short-term reforms, for it would be risky to invite a comparison between what was promised and what was actually done. American propaganda seeks the truth, but it resembles the preceding types of propaganda in that it provokes a general system of false claims.

When the United States poses as the defender of liberty of all, everywhere and always, it uses a system of false representation. Propaganda feeds, develops, and spreads the system of false claims - lies aimed at the complete transformation of minds, judgements, values, and actions. We can now advance a definition of propaganda: Propaganda is a set of methods employed by an organized group that wants to bring about active or passive participation in its actions of a mass of individuals, psychologically unified through psychological manipulations and incorporated into the organization.

America uses lots of sociological propaganda: propaganda aimed at integrating the maximum number of individuals into itself, to unify its members' behaviour according to a pattern, to spread its style of life abroad, and thus to impose itself on other groups. This is the American model of propaganda.

The important thing is to make the individual participate actively and to adapt him as much as possible to a specific sociological context. This propaganda is based on a general climate, an atmosphere that influences people imperceptibly without having the appearance of propaganda.

It gets to man through his customs, through his most unconscious habits. It creates new habits in him; it is a sort of persuasion from within. Sociological propaganda produces a progressive adaptation to a certain order of things, a certain concept of human relations, which unconsciously molds individuals and makes them conform to society.

The propaganda is the American way of life. We see here the force of expansion of a vigorous society, which is totalitarian in the sense of the integration of the individual, and which leads to involuntary behaviour.

However, these efforts are not considered propaganda by the average public. The individual in the clutches of such sociological propaganda believes that those who live this way are on the side of the angels, and those that don't live this way are bad.

Those who have this conception of society are right and those that don't have this conception are in error. Such propaganda becomes increasingly effective when those subjected to it accept its doctrines on what is good or bad. The American way of life, for example.

The aim is to instill the public with an attitude that will prepare the ground for the main propaganda to follow. Sociological propaganda must act gently. It acts slowly, by penetration, and is most effective in a relatively stable and active society. But it must sometimes be strengthened by the classic kind of propaganda, which leads to action.

This process has been described in an article by Edward Bernays as the "engineering approach". Another very curious and recent phenomenon is the appearance of "agitators" alongside politicians and political propagandists. The pure agitator who stirs up public opinion functions as a nationalist.

He uses the anxiety psychoses of the lower middle class, the proletarian, and the demobilized soldier - people who are not yet integrated into American society or have not yet adopted ready-made habits and ideas.

The agitator uses the American way of life to provoke anti-semitic, anti-communist, anti-negro, and xenophobic currents of opinion. He makes groups act in the illogical yet coherent universe of propaganda.

These agitators do not work for a political party; it is not clear which interests they serve. They are neither capitalists nor communists but they deeply influence American public opinion. The more conscious sociological propaganda is, the more it tends to express itself externally, and hence to expand its influence abroad, as for example in Europe.

The success of such American propaganda is very uneven. The presentation of the American way of life exasperates French opinion and makes such propaganda largely ineffective in France. There is a distinction between the propaganda of agitation and the propaganda of integration.

Propaganda of agitation, being the most visible and widespread, generally attracts all the attention. It is most often subversive propaganda and has the stamp of opposition. It is led by a party seeking to destroy the government or the established order. It seeks rebellion or war.

All revolutionary movements, all popular wars have been nourished by such propaganda of agitation.

Governments also employ this propaganda of agitation when, after having been installed in power, they want to pursue a revolutionary course of action. Most of Hitler's propaganda was propaganda of agitation.

Hitler could work his sweeping social and economic transformations only by constant agitation, by overexcitement, by straining energies to the utmost. Nazism grew by successive waves of feverish enthusiasm and thus attained its revolutionary objectives.

Ellul, Jacques (1965). *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes*. Vintage Books. NY.

Propaganda of agitation addresses itself, then, to internal elements in each of us, but it is always translated into reality by physical involvement in a tense and overexcited activity. By making the individual participate in this activity, the propagandist releases the internal brakes, the psychological barriers of habit, belief, and judgement.

In all cases, propaganda of agitation tries to stretch energies to the utmost, obtain substantial sacrifices, and induce the individual to bear heavy ordeals. It takes him out of his everyday life, his normal framework, and plunges him into enthusiasm and adventure.

Propaganda of agitation thus unleashes an explosive movement; it operates inside a crisis or actually provokes the crisis itself. On the other hand, such propaganda of agitation can obtain only effects of relatively short duration.

If the proposed objective is not achieved fast enough, enthusiasm will give way to discouragement and despair. There is a period of pressure to obtain some result, then a period of relaxation and rest; this is how Hitler, Lenin, and Mao operated.

A people or a party cannot be kept too long at the highest level of sacrifice, conviction, and devotion. The individual cannot be made to live in a state of perpetual enthusiasm and insecurity. After a certain amount of combat he needs a respite and a familiar universe to which he is accustomed.

This subversive propaganda of agitation is obviously the flashiest: it attracts attention because of its explosive and revolutionary character.

It is also the easiest to make; in order to succeed, it need only be addressed to the most simple and violent sentiments through the most elementary means. Hate is generally its most profitable resource. It is extremely easy to launch a revolutionary movement based on hatred of a particular enemy.

Hatred is probably the most spontaneous and common sentiment; it consists of attributing one's misfortunes and sins to "another", who must be killed in order to assure the disappearance of those misfortunes and sins.

Whether the object of hate is the bourgeois, the communist, the Jew, the colonialist makes no difference. Propaganda of agitation succeeds each time it designates someone as the source of all misery, provided that he is not too powerful.

Hatred, once provoked, continues to reproduce itself. The same is true for the promise of bread to the hungry, the promise of land to the plundered, and the call to truth among the religious. As a whole these are appeals to simple, elementary sentiments requiring no refinement, and thanks to which the propagandist can gain acceptance for the biggest lies, the worst delusions - sentiments that act immediately, provoke violent reactions, and awaken such passions that they justify all sacrifices.

Such sentiments correspond to the primary needs of all men: the need to eat, to be one's own master, to hate. Given the ease of releasing such sentiments, the material and psychological means employed can be simple: the pamphlet, the speech, the poster, the rumour.

In order to make propaganda of agitation, it is not necessary to have the mass media of communication at one's disposal, for such propaganda feeds on itself, and each person seized by it becomes in turn a propagandist.

Any statement whatever, no matter how stupid, any "tall tale" will be believed once it enters into the passionate current of hatred. Finally, the less educated and informed the people to whom propaganda of agitation is addressed, the easier it is to make such propaganda.

That is why it is particularly suited for use among the so called lower classes and among African peoples. There it can rely on some key words of magical import, which are believed without question even though the hearers do not fully understand them.

No reason can prevail against the magic of the word such as "independence". And it is the least intelligent people who are most likely to be thrown into a revolutionary movement by such summary appeals.

In contrast to this propaganda of agitation is the propaganda of integration - the propaganda of developed nations and characteristic of our civilization; in fact it did not exist before the twentieth century. It is the propaganda of conformity.

Individuals must share the stereotypes, beliefs, and reactions of the group, and he must be an active participant in its economic, ethical, esthetic and political doings. All his activities, all his sentiments are dependent on this collectivity.

And, as he is often reminded, he can fulfill himself only through this collectivity, as a member of a group. Propaganda of integration is long-term propaganda, a self-reproducing propaganda that seeks to obtain stable behavior, to adapt the individual to his everyday life, to reshape his thoughts and behavior in terms of a permanent social setting.

This kind of propaganda must be permanent, for the individual can no longer be left to himself. It must be proved that the listeners, the citizens in general, are the beneficiaries of the resultant socio-political developments.

Integration propaganda is the preferred instrument of government. The most important example of the use of integration propaganda is the United States. The more comfortable, cultivated, and informed the milieu to which it is addressed, the better it works.

Intellectuals are more sensitive than peasants to integration propaganda. When a revolutionary movement, such as a change of government is launched, it operates with agitation propaganda; but once the change of government has happened, it must begin immediately to operate with integration propaganda.

The transition from one type of propaganda to another is extremely delicate and difficult. After one has, in an election campaign, excited the masses, fed their hopes and their hatreds, opened the gates of action to them, it is difficult to make them re-enter the ranks, to integrate them into the normal framework of politics and economics.

What has been unleashed cannot be brought under control so easily, particularly habits of violence or to taking the law into one's own hands. The people want to give full vent to the hatred developed by agitation propaganda, and to have the promised bread or land immediately.

In some cases it is actually impossible to regain control of the masses. Sometimes, after an election campaign, there is a long period of trouble and unhappiness, during which it is impossible to restore order, and only after a dozen years of integration propaganda can the situation be controlled again.

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in other cases, the government must follow the crowds, which cannot be held back once they are set off; the government is forced, step by step, to satisfy appetites aroused by agitation propaganda. This was partly the case with Hitler. After taking power, he continued to control people by agitation propaganda; he thus had to hold out something new all the time on the road to war - rearmament, the Rhineland, Spain, Austria, Czechoslovakia.

Classic propaganda, as one usually thinks of it, is a vertical propaganda - in the sense that it is made by a leader, a technician, a political or religious head who acts from the superior position of his authority and seeks to influence the crowd below.

Such propaganda comes from above. It is conceived in the secret recesses of political enclaves; it uses all technical methods of centralized mass communication; it envelops a mass of individuals; but those who practice it are on the outside.

One trait of vertical propaganda is that the propagandee remains alone even though he is part of a crowd. His shouts of enthusiasm or hatred, though part of the shouts of the crowd, do not put him in communication with others; his shouts are only a response to the leader.

Finally, this kind of propaganda requires a passive attitude from those subjected to it. They are seized, they are manipulated, they are committed; they experience what they are asked to experience; they are really transformed into objects.

The individual is depersonalized; his decisions are no longer his own but those suggested by the leader, imposed by a conditioned reflex. When we say that this is a passive attitude, we do not mean that the propagandee does not act; on the contrary, he acts with vigor and passion. But his action is not his own, though he believes it is.

He is mechanized, dominated, hence passive. Vertical propaganda is by far the most widespread. It is primarily useful for agitation propaganda. Horizontal propaganda is a much more recent development. Sociological propaganda is horizontal propaganda. It is made inside the group, not from the top, where, in principle, all individuals are equal and there is no leader.

The individual makes contact with others at his own level rather than with a leader. Its content is directed to the intelligence. His adherence is intellectual because he can express his conviction clearly and logically, but it is not genuine because the information, the data, the reasoning that have led him to adhere to the group were themselves deliberately falsified in order to lead him there.

The individual participates actively in the life of his group, in a genuine and lively dialogue. All the participants are placed on an equal footing, meetings are intimate, discussion is informal, and no leader presides. Progress is slow, but there must be many meetings so that common experience can be shared. To put the individual in a position where he apparently has a freedom of choice and still obtain from him what one expects, is much more subtle and risky.

A member of a small group must not belong to other groups in which he would be subjected to other influences; that would give him a chance to find himself again and, with it, the strength to resist. The small group is a center of total moral, intellectual, psychological, and civic education, but it is primarily a political group, and everything it does is related to politics.

Education has no meaning there except in relation to politics. Individuals are taught how to take action and how to behave as members of a democracy. These groups are a means of education, but such education is only one of the elements of propaganda aimed at obtaining adherence to a society. Horizontal propaganda is very hard to make, particularly because it needs so many instructors, but it is exceptionally efficient through its meticulous encirclement of everybody, through the effective participation of all present, and through their public declarations and adherence.

That propaganda has an irrational character is still a well-established and well-recognized truth. The distinction between propaganda and information is often made; information is addressed to reason and experience; propaganda is addressed to feelings and passions. It is irrational.

There is such a thing as rational propaganda, just as there is rational advertising. There is a propaganda based exclusively on facts, statistics, economic ideas. This propaganda appeals to reason. American propaganda out of concern for honesty and democratic conviction attempts to be rational and factual. The news bulletins of the American services are a typical example of rational propaganda based on "knowledge" and information. Purely impassioned and emotional propaganda is disappearing. Even such propaganda contained elements of fact; Hitler's most inflammatory speeches always contained some facts which served as base or pretext.

It is unusual nowadays to find a frenzied propaganda composed solely of claims without relation to reality. Modern man needs a relation to facts, a self-justification to convince himself that by acting in a certain way he is obeying reason and proved experience.

Propaganda's content increasingly resembles information. The listener's critical powers decrease if the propaganda message is more rational and less violent. Propaganda's content therefore tends to be rational and factual.

However, the facts, the data, and the reasoning are all forgotten, and only the impression remains. The individual will never begin to act on the basis of facts, or engage in purely rational behavior. What makes him act is the emotional pressure, the vision of a future, the myth.

The problem is to create an irrational response on the basis of rational and factual elements. That response must be fed with facts, those frenzies must be provoked by rigorously logical proofs. Thus propaganda itself becomes honest, strict, exact, but its effect remains irrational.

Information, even when it is very well presented, gives people only a broad image of the world. The more facts supplied, the more simplistic the image. If a man is given a hundred items of information on all the political and economic aspects of a nation, he will arrive at a summary judgement - "The Americans are terrific" and so on.

A drowning with data, far from permitting people to make judgements and form opinions, prevents them from doing so and actually paralyzes them. They are caught in a web of facts and must remain at the level of the facts they have been given.

The mechanism of modern information induce a sort of hypnosis in the individual who cannot get out of the field that has been laid out for him by the information. His opinion will ultimately be formed solely on the basis of the facts transmitted to him, and not on the basis of his choice and his personal experience.

Ellul, Jacques (1965). *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes*. Vintage Books. NY.

The more the techniques of distributing information develop, the more the individual is shaped by such information. Because rational propaganda creates an irrational situation, it remains, above all, propaganda - that is, an inner control over the individual by a social force, which means that it deprives him of himself.

The Conditions For The Existence Of Propaganda

An individual can be influenced by forces such as propaganda only when he is cut off from membership in local groups. Because such groups are organic and have a well-structured material, spiritual, and emotional life, they are not easily penetrated by propaganda.

An individualist society is fertile ground for modern propaganda. The permanent uncertainty, the social mobility, the absence of sociological protection - all these inevitably provide propaganda with a malleable environment that can be fed information from the outside and conditioned at will.

The common error was to believe that if the individual were liberated from the smaller organic groups he would be set free. But in actual fact he was exposed to the influence of mass currents, to the influence of the state, and direct integration into mass society.

Finally, he became a victim of propaganda. Physically and psychologically uprooted, the individual became much less stable. The stability of the peasantry, for example, is one of the reasons why this group is relatively unaffected by propaganda. Goebbels himself recognized that peasants could be reached only if their structured milieu was shattered.

A mass society is a society with considerable population density in which local structures and organizations are weak, currents of opinion are strongly felt, men are grouped into large and influential collectives, and a certain psychological unity exists.

The individuals making up the mass in the grip of propaganda may seem quite diversified, but they have enough in common for propaganda to act on them directly. The individual constantly moves from one crowd to another, from a street crowd to a factory crowd, or a theater crowd, a subway crowd, a crowd gathered at a meeting.

The very fact of belonging to crowds turns the individual more and more into a mass man and thus modifies his very being. This individual produced by a mass society is more readily available, more credulous, more suggestible, more excitable. Under such conditions propaganda can develop best. From mass society emerge the psychological elements most favorable to propaganda: symbols and stereotypes. Propaganda can act only where man's psychology is influenced by the crowd or mass to which he belongs. Without the mass to receive propaganda and carry it along, propaganda is impossible. Public opinion also needs a mass society. A political organizer will not bother to hold his meeting if he knows he can get together only ten or fifteen people. The "majority effect" so essential as a means of propaganda, can be felt only in a mass society.

The leader or expert who enjoys authority and prestige among the mass is the man who best speaks for that mass. The ordinary man must see himself reflected in his leader. The ordinary man must not feel that the leader transcends him. This quality of the average man in the hero has been clearly demonstrated in history.

When a man follows the leader, he actually follows the mass, the majority group that the leader so perfectly represents. The leader loses all power when he is separated from his group. No propaganda can emanate from a solitary leader.

Interpersonal relations lead to a dominant opinion because, first of all, leadership in such group is recognized spontaneously. The leaders of the group know what the group opinion is and take it into consideration. Leaders contribute amply to the formation of public opinion. Small groups must accept leadership for propaganda to be successful.

Group opinion is formed by individuals whose authority is accepted by the group. An opinion cannot form itself in entire societies unless mass media of communication exist. Without mass media there can be no modern propaganda.

The mass media must be subject to centralized control on the one hand, and well diversified with regard to their products on the other. Where film production, the press, and radio transmission are not centrally controlled, no propaganda is possible.

Only through concentration in a few hands of a large number of media can one attain a true orchestration, a continuity, and an application of scientific methods of influencing individuals. A state monopoly, or a private monopoly, is equally effective. Such a situation exists in the United States. The number of newspapers decreases while the number of readers increases. The concentration itself keeps accelerating, thus making the situation increasingly favorable to propaganda. A person does not buy a television set in order to be propagandized. But by doing so, he must know what he opens the door to propaganda, that he subjects himself to it.

The fact is even more striking with regard to the newspapers, for the reader buys a paper he likes, a paper in which he finds his own ideas and opinions well reflected. This is the only paper he wants, so that one can say he really wants to be propagandized.

He wants to submit to this influence and actually exercises his choice in the direction of the propaganda he wishes to receive. If by chance he finds in "his" newspaper an article he dislikes or an opinion that deviates a little from his own, he cancels his subscription.

He cannot stand anything that does not run on his rails. This is the very mentality of the propagandee. When buying a newspaper, a reader progresses from vague, diffuse opinion to rigorous, exacting, active expression of that opinion. A feeling or an impression is transformed into a motive for action. Confused thoughts are crystallized.

The reader is really subject to propaganda, even though it be the propaganda of his choice. In that sense, propaganda is also a means of reinforcing opinions, of transforming them into action. The reader himself offers his throat to the knife of the propaganda he chooses.

The buying of a television set, though an individual act, inserts the individual into the psychological and behavioral structure of the mass. He obeys the collective motivations when he buys it, and through his act opens the door to propaganda.

An individual must have a certain standard of living to be reached by propaganda. In capitalist countries, the very poor, who have no radio or television set and rarely go to the movies, cannot be reached by propaganda.

The really poor cannot be subjected to integration propaganda because the immediate concerns of daily life absorb all their capacities and efforts. To be sure, the poor can be pushed into rebellion, into an

explosion of violence; they can be subjected to agitation propaganda and excited to the point of theft and murder. But they cannot be trained with integration propaganda.

More advanced propaganda can influence only a man who is not completely haunted by poverty, a man who can view things from a certain distance and be reasonably unconcerned about his daily bread, and who therefore can take an interest in more general matters and mobilize his actions for purposes other than merely earning a living.

It is well known that in Western countries propaganda is particularly effective in the upper segment of the working class and in the middle classes. It faces much greater problems with the proletariat or the peasantry.

Propaganda therefore is made for those who have attained an average standard of living. In Western countries propaganda addresses itself to the large average mass, which alone represents a real force. The poor react only very little and very slowly to any propaganda that is not pure agitation propaganda. This explains the weakness of propaganda in countries like India and Egypt.

For propaganda to be effective, the propagandee must have a certain store of ideas and a number of conditioned reflexes. These are acquired only with a little affluence, some education, and peace of mind springing from relative security.

All propagandists come from the upper middle class, whether Soviet, Nazi, Japanese, or American propagandists. The wealthy and very cultured class provides no propagandists because it is remote from the people and does not understand them well enough to influence them.

The lower class does not furnish any propagandists because its members rarely have the means of educating themselves. They cannot stand back and look at their class with the perspective needed to devise symbols for it. Thus studies show that most propagandists are recruited from the middle class. Adjustment has become one of the keywords of all psychological influence. Whether it is a question of adaptation to working conditions, to consumption, or to a milieu, a clear and conscious intent to integrate people into the "normal" pattern prevails everywhere.

McCarthyism in America was no accident. It expressed, and at the same time exploited, a deep current in American opinion that was against all that was "un-American". It dealt less with opinions than with a way of life.

No reason for this identification existed other than that the Communist was "abnormal" because he failed to accept the "normal", that is, the American - way of life. If man is to be successfully propagandized, he needs at least a minimum of culture.

Propaganda cannot succeed where people have no trace of Western culture. We are not speaking here of intelligence. A man who cannot read will escape most propaganda, as will a man who is not interested in reading.

People used to think that learning to read evidenced human progress. They think that reading is a road to freedom. All this is debatable, for the important thing is not to be able to read, but to understand what one reads, to reflect on and judge what one reads.

The vast majority, perhaps 90 percent, know how to read, but do not exercise their critical faculties. The attribute authority and eminent value to the printed word. As these people do not possess enough knowledge to reflect and discern, they believe, or disbelieve, in total what they read.

And because these people will select the easiest, not the hardest, reading matter, they are precisely on the level at which the printed word can seize and convince them without opposition. They are perfectly adapted to propaganda.

The most obvious result of primary education in the nineteenth century was to make the individual susceptible to super-propaganda. There is no chance of raising the intellectual level of Western populations sufficiently and rapidly enough to compensate for the progress of propaganda. Propaganda techniques have advanced so much faster than the reasoning capacity of the average man that to close this gap and to shape this man intellectually outside the framework of propaganda is almost impossible.

In fact, what happens and what we see all around us is the claim that propaganda itself is our culture and what the mass ought to learn. Only in and through propaganda have the masses access to political economy, politics, art, or literature.

Primary education makes it possible to enter the realm of propaganda, in which people then receive their intellectual and cultural environment. The uncultured man cannot be reached by propaganda. Experience and research done by the Germans between 1933 and 1938 showed that in remote areas, where people hardly knew how to read, propaganda had no effect. There is no doubt that the development of primary education is a fundamental condition for the organization of propaganda. "A person who cannot read a newspaper is not free." Really? Is that a fact?

The more stereotypes there are in a culture, the easier it is to form public opinion, and the more an individual participates in a culture, the more susceptible he becomes to the manipulation of these symbols.

Because he is convinced of his own superiority, the intellectual is much more vulnerable than anybody else to propaganda. Propagandists are well aware that in order to reach someone, one must first convince him that propaganda is ineffectual and not very clever.

Even so, a high intelligence, a broad culture, a constant exercise of critical faculties, and full and objective information are still the best weapons against propaganda. Propaganda can still have an effect on the masses who lack any culture. Poor and uncultured populations are appropriate objects of propaganda of agitation and subversion.

The more miserable and ignorant a person is, the more easily will he be plunged by agitation propaganda. Conversely, an individual of the middle class, of good general culture, will be less susceptible to agitation propaganda but ideal prey to integration propaganda.

Informed opinion is indispensable for propaganda. Where we have no informed opinion with regard to political and economic affairs, propaganda cannot exist. For this reason, in most of the older countries, propaganda was localized and restricted to those groups which had direct contact with political life.

The most difficult to reach are the peasants because they are uninformed. Propaganda does not base itself on errors, but on exact facts.

Ellul, Jacques (1965). *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes*. Vintage Books. NY.

It even seems that the more informed public or private opinion is, the more susceptible it is to propaganda. The greater a person's knowledge of political and economic facts, the more sensitive and vulnerable it is to his judgement.

Intellectuals are most easily reached by propaganda, particularly if it employs ambiguity. The reader of a number of newspapers expressing diverse attitudes is more subjected than anyone else to a propaganda that he cannot perceive, even though he claims to retain free choice in the mastery of all this information.

Actually, he is being conditioned to absorb all the propaganda that coordinates and explains the facts he believes himself to be mastering. Thus, information not only provides the basis for propaganda but gives propaganda the means to operate, for information actually generates the problems that propaganda exploits and for which it pretends to offer solutions.

In fact, no propaganda can work until the moment when a set of facts has become a problem in the eyes of those who constitute public opinion. At the moment such problems begin to confront public opinion, propaganda on the part of government or a party can begin to develop fully by magnifying that problem on the one hand and promising solutions for it on the other.

Propaganda becomes possible only when people develop a consciousness of general problems and specific responses to them. At that very moment, when information is absorbed, the spirit of rebellion transforms itself into the spirit of revolution. As a result of information, individuals come to feel that their own personal problems are really invested with the dignity of a general social problem.

To the extent that a large number of individuals receive the same information, their reactions will be similar. The last condition for the development of propaganda is the prevalence of strong myths and ideologies in a society.

An ideology is any set of ideas accepted by individuals or peoples, without attention to their origin or value. The myth has stronger powers of activation, whereas ideology is more passive; one can believe in an ideology and yet remain on the sidelines.

The Necessity For Propaganda

A common view of propaganda is that it is the work of a few evil men, seducers of the people, cheats and authoritarian rulers who want to dominate a population. According to this view, the public is just an object, a passive crowd that one can manipulate and use and influence.

Within this view it is easy to understand the moralist's hostility to propaganda: man is the innocent victim pushed into evil ways by the propagandist: the propagandee is entirely without blame because he has been fooled and has fallen into a trap.

A similar point of view can be found in studies on advertising which regard the buyer as victim and prey. As soon as the individual has been indoctrinated with the "truth", he will act as he is expected to act, from the "spontaneity" of his conscience.

This was the principal aim of propaganda in Hitler's army. Power is based on opinion. What is a government not supported by opinion? Nothing. Theoretically, democracy is political expression of mass opinion.

Democracy is based on the concept that man is rational and capable of seeing clearly what is in his own interest, but the study of public opinion suggests this is a highly doubtful proposition. The modern State must constantly undertake press and opinion surveys and sound out public opinion in a variety of other ways.

But the fundamental question is: Does the State then obey and express and follow that opinion? Our unequivocal answer is that even in a democratic State it does not. Even in a democracy, a government that is honest, serious, benevolent, and respects the voter does not follow public opinion. But it cannot escape it. The masses are there; they are interested in politics. The government cannot act without them. So what can it do?

As the government does not follow public opinion, opinion must follow the government. One must convince this present, ponderous, impassioned mass that the government's decisions are legitimate and good.

Because parties are so rigid, because they deal with only a part of any question, and because they are purely politically motivated, they distort public opinion and prevent it from forming naturally. But even beyond party influence, which is already propaganda influence, government action exists in and by itself.

Because information alone is ineffective, its dissemination leads necessarily to propaganda, particularly when the government is obliged to defend its own actions or the life of the nation against private enterprise.

The giant corporations and pressure groups, pushing their special interests, are resorting increasingly to psychological manipulation. In a democracy, the citizens must be tied to the decisions of the government. This is the great role propaganda must perform.

It must give the people the "feeling" to have wanted the government. At times in the United States, concessions must be made to the people, but if the president really directs opinion, no great concessions will have to be made to elicit the necessary support.

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Power is regarded as legitimate when it derives from the sovereignty of the people, rests on the popular will, expresses and follows this proper will. The will of the people is sacred, and a government that fails to represent that will is an abominable dictatorship. That is the view of the vast majority of citizens. All dictators try to demonstrate that they are the expression of that sovereignty. We can hardly complain when modern dictators talk about the sovereignty of the people. Such is the force of this belief that no government can exist without satisfying it or giving the appearance of sharing it.

Hitler, Stalin, Mussolini were all able to claim that they obtained their power from the people. However, up to now we have not seen a single example of people not eventually complying with what was proposed to them.

People can be given immense satisfaction of having been consulted, of having been given a chance to debate, of having - or so it seems to them, their opinions solicited and weighed. This is the democratic appearance that no authoritarian government can do without.

When a decision seems to meet with resistance or is not fully accepted, propaganda can be addressed to the masses to set them in motion. Whereas the government really acts on its own, it must give the impression of obeying public opinion.

The point is to make the masses demand of the government what the government has already decided to do. If it follows this procedure, the government can no longer be called authoritarian, because the will of the people demands what is being done.

Military aggression has been replaced by indirect aggression - economic and ideological. In today's world, much more than in the past, a nation can survive only if its values are secure, its citizens loyal and unanimous, and if they practice the civic virtues.

Psychological propaganda presents itself as a sort of national education. The effects of one's own propaganda on the personality are exactly the same as those of enemy propaganda. We cannot possibly say we act in order to preserve man's freedom. For propaganda regardless of origin, destroys man's personality and freedom.

Any politically oriented education which creates certain "special values" is propaganda. In reality, the affirmation of certain values which one wants to inculcate, and the rejection of others which one wants to eradicate, is precisely a propaganda operation.

The secret of propaganda success or failure is this: Has it or has it not satisfied the unconscious need of the individual whom it addressed. The majority of people prefer expressing stupidities to not expressing any opinion: this gives them the feeling of participation.

For this they need simple thoughts, elementary explanations, a "key" that will permit them to take a position, even a ready-made opinion. Here one must take into account the individual's laziness, which plays a decisive role in the entire propaganda phenomenon.

Man needs an ideological veil to cover the harsh reality, some consolation, a sense of values. And only propaganda offers him a remedy for a basically intolerable situation. Modern man is called upon for enormous sacrifices, which probably exceed anything known in the past. First of all, work has assumed an all-pervading role in modern life.

Never have men worked so much as in our society for so little. Every modern man works more than the slave of long ago; standards have been adjusted downwards. But whereas the slave worked only because he was forced to, modern man, who believes in his freedom and dignity, needs reasons and justifications to make himself work.

Even the children in a modern nation do an amount of work at school which no child was ever asked to do before the beginning of the nineteenth century, there too, justifications are needed. Such dedication to work does not happen by itself or spontaneously. Its creation is properly the task of propaganda, which must give the individual psychological and ideological reasons why he needs to be where he is. One cannot get good, steady work out of a man merely by pointing to the need for such work, or even to its monetary rewards. One must give him psychological satisfactions of a higher order; man wants a profound and significant reason for what he does.

Everytime the sum total of labour is to be increased, the increase is accomplished through propaganda. The Soviet Union, with its Five Year Plan, set the example, and the Chinese "leaps forward" are also typical. Man must be given promises for working so hard nowadays.

War is another sacrifice. The modern citizen is asked to participate in wars such as have never been seen before. People really live in a permanent atmosphere of war. It was always necessary to give men ideological and sentimental motivations to get them to lay down their lives. To do that, patriotism must become "ideological".

In the world of politics and economics, the news is only about trouble, danger, and problems. This gives man the notion that he lives in a terrible and frightening era, that he lives amid catastrophes in a world where everything threatens him and his safety.

The more complicated the problems, the simpler the explanations must be. The more fragmented the canvas, the simpler the pattern; the more difficult the question, the more all-embracing the solution; the more menacing the reduction of his own worth, the greater the need to boosting his ego.

All this propaganda, and only propaganda, can give him.

Of course, an outstanding man of vast culture, great intelligence, and exceptional energy can find answers for himself, reconcile himself to the absurd, and plan his own action. But we are not thinking here of the outstanding man, but of the ordinary man.

The need for explanations and the need for values both spring largely from the promulgation of news. Just as information is necessary for awareness, propaganda is necessary to prevent this awareness from being desperate.

Modern man is very busy, but he is emotionally empty, open to all entreaties and in search of only one thing - something to fill his inner void. Propaganda is the true remedy for loneliness. In our society, man is being pushed more and more into passivity. He cannot act on his own; he can only act as the result of someone else's decision.

Modern life induces us to wait until we are told to act. The feeling of being unimportant stems from general working conditions, such as mechanization and regimentation; from housing conditions, with small rooms, noise, and lack of privacy; from submission to an ever-growing number of authorities.

The more his needs increase in the collective society, the more propaganda must give man the feeling that he is a free individual. Propaganda alone can create this feeling, which in turn, will integrate the individual into collective movements.

A feeling of inferiority is the normal condition of almost every person in a mass society. Propaganda intervenes as the fake instrument for reducing tensions by external action. Propaganda permits what so far was prohibited, such as hatred, which is a dangerous and destructive feeling and fought by society. Propaganda offers him an object of hatred, for all propaganda is aimed at an enemy. The hatred it offers him is not shameful, evil hatred that he must hide, but a legitimate hatred, which he can justly feel. Moreover, propaganda points out enemies that must be slain, transforming crime into a praiseworthy act.

Almost every man feels a desire to kill his neighbour, but this is forbidden, and in most cases the individual will refrain from it for fear of the consequences. But propaganda opens the door and allows him to kill the Jews, the bourgeois, the Communists, and so on, and such murder even becomes an achievement.

Where transgression becomes a virtue, the lifter of bans becomes a hero, a demi-god, and we consecrate ourselves to serve him because he has liberated our repressed passions. Propaganda can provide release through devious channels.

Authoritarian regimes know that people held very firmly in hand need some decompression, some safety valves. The government offers these. Clearly, such instruments are controlled by the regime. They serve the function of giving the people the impression that they are free, and of singling out those about to be purged by the government as guilty of all that the people dislike.

In such situations, propaganda has an almost therapeutic and compensatory function. One of man's inner needs is to feel that he is right. This corresponds to man's refusal to see reality, his own reality first of all, as it is, for that would be intolerable; it also corresponds to his refusal to acknowledge that he may be wrong.

Before himself and others, man is constantly pleading his own case and working to find good reasons for what he does or has done. Of course, the whole process is unconscious. He gives himself excuses and good reasons for avoiding the disagreeable consequences; or he justifies everything by creating a scapegoat, or justifies his conduct by showing that the other party is to blame, as in the case of racial prejudice.

Most ideologies and political theories are justifications. Even the Nazis tried to give their actions moral and social justification; for example, the concern for maintaining the superiority of the Aryan race justified the sadism of the concentration camps.

The racist justifies his prejudice by saying that the "inferior" group is lazy, anti-social, immoral, biologically inferior. Propaganda attaches itself to man and forces him to play its game because of his overpowering need to be right and just.

In every situation, propaganda hands him proof that he, personally, is in the right, that the action demanded of him is just, even if he has the dark, strong feeling that it is not. Propaganda appeases his tensions and resolves his conflicts.

Ellul, Jacques (1965). *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes*. Vintage Books. NY.

It offers facile, ready-made justifications, which are transmitted by society and easily believed.

Propaganda provides man with a high ideal that permits him to give into his passions while seeming to accomplish a great mission.

The point of propaganda is to excite, to arouse man's sense of power, his desire to assert himself, and to arm him psychologically so that he can feel superior.

Psychological Effects of Propaganda

Aside from the effects that the propagandist seeks to obtain directly - a person's vote for example - his psychological manipulations evoke certain forces in the unconscious and traumatize the individual in various ways.

A person subjected to propaganda does not remain intact or undamaged; not only will his opinions and attitudes be modified, but also his impulses and his mental and emotional structures. Propaganda's effect is more than external; it produces profound changes.

Under the influence of propaganda certain latent drives that are vague, unclear, and often without any particular objective suddenly become powerful, direct, and precise. Propaganda furnishes objectives, organizes the traits of an individual's personality into a system, and freezes them into a mold.

Once propaganda begins to utilize and direct an individual's hatreds, he no longer has any chance to retreat, to reduce his animosities, or to seek reconciliations with his opponents. Moreover, he now has a supply of ready-made judgements where he had only some vague notions before the propaganda set in. In this fashion, propaganda standardizes current ideas, hardens prevailing stereotypes, and furnishes thought patterns in all areas. Propaganda gives the individual the stereotypes he no longer takes the trouble to work out for himself; it furnishes these stereotypes in the form of labels, slogans, ready-made judgements.

It transforms ideas into slogans, and by giving the "word", convinces the individual that he has an opinion. Symbols are related to the psychological phenomenon of the stereotype. A stereotype is a seeming value judgement, acquired by belonging to a group, without any intellectual labour, and reproduces itself automatically with each specific stimulation.

The stereotype arises from feelings one has for one's own group, or against the "out-group". The stereotype is specific: it relates to a given name or image, which must be precise in order for the stereotype to work.

The stereotype, which is stable, helps man to avoid thinking, to take a general position, to form his own opinion. Man reacts as if by reflex in the presence of the stimulus evoking the stereotype. In propaganda, existing stereotypes are awakened by symbols. The symbol permits the formation of a favourable response that can be transferred to persons or objects associated with it.

Propaganda succeeds in weakening the individual's conscience and consciousness and in unsettling individual attitudes with a view to furnishing them with a new content. The photo and the image have a special power to evoke the reality and immediacy of the stereotype.

The slogan assures the continuity of the stereotype. The slogan flourishes in times of crisis, war, and revolution. Thanks to the slogan, the individual is not intellectually lost. He clings to it not only because the slogan is easy to understand and to retain, but also because it permits him "to find himself in it". It tends, further, to produce stereotypes in men who did not have them before the crisis situation.

A man subjected to propaganda cannot any longer modify his judgements or thought patterns. The images begin to occupy a person's entire consciousness, and to push out other feelings and judgements.

All truly personal activity on the part of the individual is diminished, and man finally is filled with nothing but these prejudices and beliefs around which all else revolves.

In his personal life, man will eventually judge everything by such crystallized standards. He loses all sense of responsibility other than the responsibility the propaganda instills in him. Thus he becomes perfectly adapted to objective situations and nothing can create a split within him.

Propaganda builds a one-dimensional being without depth or range of possibilities. He marches forward with full assurance of his righteousness. He attributes to the enemy exactly the atrocities that he himself is in the process of committing.

Crystallization closes his mind to all new ideas. The individual now has a set of prejudices and beliefs, as well as objective justifications. His entire personality now revolves around these elements. Every new idea will therefore be troublesome to his entire being.

He will defend himself against it because it threatens to destroy his certainties. He thus actually comes to hate everything opposed to what propaganda has made him acquire. Propaganda has created in him a system of opinions and tendencies which may not be subjected to criticism.

That system leaves no room for ambiguity or mitigation of feelings; the individual has received irrational certainties from propaganda, and precisely because they are irrational, they seem to him part of his personality.

He feels personally attacked when these certainties are attacked. Incidentally, this refusal to listen to new ideas usually takes on an ironic aspect: the man who has been successfully subjected to a vigorous propaganda will declare that all new ideas are propaganda and will begin to assert his distrust of this propaganda.

One can postulate that those who call every idea they do not share "propaganda" are themselves almost completely the products of propaganda. Their refusal to examine and question ideas other than their own is characteristic of their condition.

One might go further and say that propaganda tends to give a person a religious personality: his psychological life is organized around an irrational, external, and collective tenet that provides a scale of values, rules of behaviour, and a principle of social integration.

All this is produced by propaganda, which pretends to have lost none of its humanity, to act for the good of mankind, and to represent the highest type of human being. We now ask: If propaganda modifies psychological life in this fashion, will it not eventually lead to neurosis?

Propaganda seems a means of remedying personal deficiencies; at the same time it plunges the individual into a neurotic state. This is apparent from the rigid responses of the propagandee, his unimaginative and stereotyped attitude, his sterility with regard to the socio-political process, his inability to adjust to situations other than those created by propaganda, his need for strict opposites - black and white, good and bad - his involvement in unreal conflicts created and blown up by propaganda. To mistake an artificial conflict with a real one is a characteristic of neurosis. So is the tendency of the propagandee to give everything his own narrow interpretation, to deprive facts of their real meaning in order to integrate them into his system and give them an emotional coloration, which the non-neurotic would not attribute to them.

Ellul, Jacques (1965). *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes*. Vintage Books. NY.

Similarly, the neurotic anxiously seeks the esteem and affection of the largest number of people, just as the propagandee can live only in accord with his comrades, sharing the same reflexes and judgements with those of his group.

In the neurotic, the extraordinary need for self-justification expresses itself in the projection of hostile motives to the outside world; he feels that destructive impulses do not emanate from him, but from someone or something outside.

He who wants to make war projects this intention onto his enemy; then the projected intention spreads to the propagandee who is then being mobilized and prepared for war. As with the neurotic, the “victim-enemy-scapegoat” cycle assumes enormous proportions in the mind of the propagandee.

The typical cycle for the propagandee is: Anxiety, hostility, reduction of self-respect...striving for power... reinforcement of hostility and anxiety ... a tendency to withdraw in the face of competition, accompanied by tendencies to self-deprecation ... failures and disproportion between capabilities and accomplishments ... reinforcement of feelings of superiority ... reinforcement of grandiose ideas ... increase of sensitivity with an inclination to withdraw ... increase of hostility and anxiety.

These responses of the neurotic are identical with those of the propagandee, even if we take into account that propaganda ultimately eliminates conscious anxiety and tranquilizes the propagandee. To be alienated means to be someone other than oneself; it also can mean to belong to someone else.

That is definitely the effect of propaganda. Propaganda strips the individual, robs him of part of himself, and makes him live in an alien and artificial life, to such an extent that he becomes another person and obeys impulses foreign to him. He obeys someone else.

Once again, to produce this effect, propaganda restricts itself to utilizing, increasing, and reinforcing the individual's inclinations to lose himself in something bigger than he is, to dissipate his individuality, to free his ego of all doubt, conflict and suffering - through fusion with others; to devote himself to a great leader and a great cause.

What is it that propaganda makes disappear? The answer is everything in the nature of critical and personal judgement. Propaganda limits the propagandee's field of thought to the extent that it provides him ready-made thoughts and stereotypes.

It orients him toward very limited ends and prevents him from using his mind or experimenting on his own. It determines the core from which all his thoughts must derive and draws from the beginning a sort of guideline that permits neither criticism nor imagination.

In the collective passion created by propaganda, critical judgement disappears altogether, for in no way can there be collective critical judgement. The individual can no longer judge for himself because he inescapably relates his thoughts to the entire complex of values and prejudices established by propaganda.

With regard to political situations, he is given ready-made value judgements invested with the power of truth by the number of supporters and the word of experts. What the individual loses is never easy to revive. Once personal judgement and critical faculties have disappeared or have been atrophied, they will not simply reappear when propaganda has been suppressed.

In fact, we are dealing here with one of propaganda's most durable effects: years of intellectual and spiritual education would be needed to restore such faculties. The propagandee, if deprived of one propaganda, will immediately adopt another; this will spare him the agony of finding himself without a ready-made opinion, and obliged to judge it for himself.

This impersonal public opinion, when produced by propaganda, is artificial. It corresponds to nothing authentic; yet it is precisely this artificial opinion that the individual absorbs. He is filled with it; he no longer expresses his ideas, but those of his group.

He expounds those ideas as his own. He takes a vigorous stand, begins to oppose others. He asserts himself at the very moment that he denies his own self without realizing it. When the propagandee tries to assert himself as a living reality, he demonstrates his total alienation most clearly; for he shows that he can no longer even distinguish between himself and society.

He is then perfectly integrated, he is the social group, there is nothing in him not of the group, there is no opinion in him that is not the group's opinion. He is nothing except what propaganda has taught him. He cannot take a single step back to look at events under such conditions; there can be no distance of any kind between him and propaganda.

This mechanism of alienation generally corresponds either to projection into, and identification with, a hero and leader, or to a fusion with the mass. The creation of a hero is just as much the result of propaganda as is the integration of an individual in an activated mass.

When propaganda makes the individual participate in a collective movement, it not only makes him share in an artificial activity, but also evokes in him a psychology of participation, a "crowd psychology". This psychic modification, which automatically takes place in the presence of other participants, is systematically produced by propaganda.

It is the creation of mass psychology, with man's individual psychology integrated into the crowd. In this process of alienation, the individual loses control and submits to external impulses; his personal inclinations and tastes give way to participation in the collective.

The cult of the hero is the absolutely necessary complement of the massification of society. We see the automatic creation of this cult in connection with champion athletes, movie stars and so on. This exaltation of the hero proves that one lives in a mass society.

The individual who is prevented by circumstances from becoming a real person, who can no longer express himself through personal thought or action, who finds his aspirations frustrated, projects onto the hero all he would wish to be.

The well-known mechanism of identifying with movie stars is almost impossible to avoid for the member of modern society who comes to admire himself in the person of the hero. The hero becomes model and father, power and mythical realization of all that the individual cannot be.

At the same time, the interests of the hero become the personal interests of the propagandee. Publicity campaigns for movie stars and propaganda are almost identical. The propagandee feels, thinks, and acts through the hero.

He is under the guardianship and protection of his living god; he accepts being a child; he ceases to defend his own interests, for he knows his hero loves him and everything his hero decides is for the propagandee's own good; he thus compensates for the rigor of the sacrifices imposed on him. For this reason, every regime that demands a certain amount of heroism must develop this propaganda of projection onto the hero or leader. In this connection one can really speak of alienation, and of regression to an infantile state caused by propaganda.

The propagandee no longer develops intellectually, but becomes arrested in an infantile neurotic pattern; regression sets in when the individual is submerged in mass psychology. Everywhere we find men who pronounce as highly personal truths what they have read in the papers only an hour before, and whose beliefs are merely the result of a powerful propaganda.

Everywhere we find people who have blind confidence in a political party, a general, a movie star, a country, or a cause, and who will not tolerate the slightest challenge to that god. We meet this alienated man at every turn, and are possibly already one ourselves.

Publicity deals with the artificial satisfaction of real needs, and advertising deals with the real satisfaction of artificial needs. Propaganda satisfies man with false, illusory satisfactions. It gives him explanation of the world in which he lives, but the explanations are mendacious and irrational.

It reassures or excites him, but always at the wrong moment. It makes him tremble with fear of some warfare that never did exist, and makes him believe in the peaceful intentions of countries that have no desire for peace.

It gives him reasons for the sacrifices demanded of him, but not the real reasons. Thus, in 1914, it called on him to lay down his life for his country, but remained silent on the war's economic causes, for which he certainly would not have fought.

Goebbels stated expressly that propaganda should reduce frustration, artificially resolve real problems, announce the frustrations to come when one cannot avoid them, and so forth. All this is also at work when propaganda liberates our deepest impulses and tendencies, such as our erotic drives, guilt feelings and desire for power.

But such liberation does not provide true and genuine satisfaction for such drives, any more than it justifies our demands and aggressions by permitting us to feel righteous in spite of them. The satisfactions and liberations offered by propaganda are ersatz.

Their aim is to provide a certain decompression or to use the shock effect of these tremendous forces somewhere else, to use them in support of actions that would otherwise lack impetus. This shows how the propaganda process deprives the individual of his true personality.

Television, for example, creates feelings of friendship, a new intimacy, and thus fully satisfies those needs. But such satisfactions are purely illusory and fallacious because there is no true friendship of any kind between the television personality and the viewer who feels that personality to be his friend.

Here is a typical mendacious satisfaction of a genuine need. And what television produces is systematically exploited by propaganda. Propaganda extends the effects of advertising by promising psychological relief of tensions in general.

Just as propaganda acts to create new needs, it also creates the demand for their solutions. Our tensions are purposely provoked by the propagandist, who holds out their remedy at the same time. He is a master of both excitation and satisfaction. A sickness is deliberately provoked to fit the remedy. These artificial needs become more demanding and imperative for the individual than his own private needs and lead him to sacrifice his private satisfactions. The more the individual is convinced that he thinks, feels, and acts on his own, the greater the alienation will be. Propaganda offers the individual one, two, even three possible courses of action, and the propagandee considers himself a well-organized, fully aware individual when he chooses one of them.

Under the influence of propaganda, the individual always takes the easy way, the path of least resistance, even if it costs him his life. Even while he is coasting downhill, he claims he is climbing uphill and performing a personal, heroic act. This duplicity is propaganda's most destructive act. and it leads us to consider next propaganda's effect of psychic dissociation.

Propaganda creates a tendency to manic-depressive neurosis. This is obviously an exaggeration but it is true that propaganda puts the individual through successive periods of exaltation and depression, caused by exposing him to alternate propaganda themes.

The dissociation between thought and action, is one of the most disturbing facts of our time. One element we must remember is the overexcitement that propaganda provokes. The propagandee is constantly urged to action and often prevented from accomplishing it.

His certainties are absolute, he is constantly overexcited by them. Above all, a propagandee must never reflect on his actions. Propaganda seeks to induce action, adherence, and participation with as little thought as possible.

According to propaganda, it is useless, even harmful for man to think; thinking prevents him from acting with the required righteousness and simplicity. Action must come directly from the depths of the unconscious; it must release tension, become a reflex.

No political thought that is at all coherent or distinct takes place. What man thinks either is totally without effect or must remain unsaid. This is the basic condition of the political organization of the modern world, and propaganda is the instrument to attain this effect.

The conflicting propaganda of opposing political parties is what leads to political abstention. But this is not the abstention of the free spirit which asserts itself; it is the result of resignation. This inhibition is not only political, it also progressively takes over the whole of his being and leads to a general attitude of surrender.

The individual is rendered passive by two competing propagandas. The other defensive reflex is a flight into involvement. He joins a party, to which he then ties himself totally and deeply as propaganda has intended. One propaganda arms him against the other propaganda.

The individual subjected to propaganda can no longer do without it. This is a form of "snowballing"; the more propaganda there is, the more the public wants. The same is true of advertising, which has been said to "feed on its own success".

The more the individual is captured by propaganda, the more sensitive he is, not to its content, but to the impetus it gives him, to the excitement it makes him feel. The smallest excitement, the feeblest

stimulus, activates his conditioned reflexes, awakens the myth, and produces the action that the myth demands.

The motivating drives of his psyche had to be reached, the doors of his unconscious had to be forced open, his attitudes and habits had to be broken and new behaviour determined. This meant the use of methods and techniques at once subtle and crushing.

He no longer attaches importance to what propaganda says but he acts according to the proper stimuli. Here we find again the dissociation between action and thought. An individual who has arrived at this point has a constant and irresistible need for propaganda. He cannot bear to have it stop.

He lived in anxiety, and propaganda gave him certainty. Now his anxiety doubles at the very instant when propaganda stops. All the more so because, in this terrible silence that suddenly surrounds him, he, who permitted himself to be led, no longer knows where to go.

Propaganda removed him from his subhuman situation and gave him a feeling of self-importance. It permitted him to assert himself and satisfied his need for active participation. When it stops, he finds himself more powerless than before, with a feeling of impotence all the more intense because he had come to believe in the effectiveness of his actions.

He is suddenly plunged into apathy and has no personal way of getting out of it. Finally, propaganda gave him justification. The individual needs to have his justification constantly renewed. He needs it in some form at every step, for every action, as a guarantee that he is on the right path.

When propaganda ceases, he loses his justification; he no longer has confidence in himself. He feels guilty because under the influence of propaganda he performed deeds that he now dreads or for which he is remorseful.

When propaganda ceases in a group we see a social disintegration of the group and a corresponding internal disintegration of the individuals within it. They completely withdraw into themselves and reject all participation in social or political life.

They begin to feel that everything is useless, that there is no need to have opinions or participate in political life. They are now wholly disinterested in all that was the center of their lives. As far as they are concerned, everything will go on henceforth "without me".

Egocentricity is the product of the cessation of propaganda. Not only egocentric withdrawal, but also genuine nervous or mental troubles, such as schizophrenia, paranoia, and guilt complexes, are sometimes found in those who have been dominated by a propaganda that has ceased.

Such individuals must now compensate for the absence of propaganda by seeking psychiatric treatment. These effects could be seen in countries where propaganda suddenly stopped, as in Hitler's Germany in 1945 or in the United States in 1946.

From the moment the individual is caught, he needs his ration of pseudo-intellectual nourishment, of nervous and emotional stimulation, of catchwords, and of social integration. Propaganda must therefore be unceasing.

We have said that propaganda cannot run counter to an epoch's deep-seated trends and collective presuppositions. But when propaganda acts in the direction and support of these, its effect becomes very durable on both the intellectual and emotional level.

Ellul, Jacques (1965). *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes*. Vintage Books. NY.

Nowadays propaganda hostile to the State, would have no chance whatever of succeeding; but if it supports the State, it will penetrate deeply into man's consciousness. The propagandee becomes a man without a past and without a future, a man who receives from propaganda his portion of thought and action for the day; his discontinuous personality must be given continuity from the outside, and this makes the need for propaganda very strong.

When the propagandee ceases to receive propaganda, he experiences the feeling of being cut off from his own past and of facing a completely unpredictable future, of being separated from the world he lives in. Thus the moment propaganda begins, with its machine and its organization, one can no longer stop it. It can only grow and perfect itself, for its discontinuation would ask too great a sacrifice of the propagandee, a too thorough remaking of himself. This is more than he is ready to accept.

After a propaganda campaign of fear or terror, the listener is left in a state of emotional tension which cannot be resolved by kind words or suggestions. Only action can resolve the conflict into which he was thrown. In the same way, purely negative and critical propaganda seeks to stiffen the individual against his environment; it plays on and stimulates instinctive feelings of aggression and frustration.

The propagandist must try to find the optimum degree of tension and anxiety. This rule was expressly stated by Goebbels. Tension is not an accidental side-effect of propaganda. The propagandist knows well what he is doing when he works in this way.

Too much tension can produce panic, demoralization, disorderly and impulsive action; too little tension does not push people to act; they remain complacent and seek to adapt themselves passively. It is therefore necessary to reinforce anxiety in some cases, for example, concerning the effects of a military defeat, in others, to reduce tensions that become too strong for people to handle themselves, for example, the fear of air raids.

This ambivalence of propaganda, of creating tension in some cases and reducing it in others, explains itself largely by the distinction between agitation propaganda and integration propaganda. Agitation propaganda aims at rapid, violent action, must arouse feelings of frustration, conflict, and aggression, which lead individuals to action.

Integration propaganda seeks man's conformity with his group, will aim at the reduction of tensions, adjustment to the environment, and acceptance of the symbols of authority. We have seen the strength of propaganda when it furnishes the individual a feeling of security and righteousness. But propaganda also stimulates guilt feelings.

In fact, to develop such feelings is its principal objective when it addresses a hostile group. The success of propaganda also requires that the individual progressively lose interest in his family and friends. To sacrifice his wife and children to a political decision becomes the ideal of the political hero, and that sacrifice will, of course, be justified as being for the common good, for one's country, or some such symbol.

Propaganda must always fight against the feeling in man to consider his personal private affairs. A modern State can function only if the citizens give it their support, and that support can be obtained only if interest in personal affairs is erased in individuals.

One aspect of propaganda by the State seems to us even more important: when it creates a situation in which the State has a free hand because the exercise of political power is very complex, and must therefore be left to professional politicians.

In this instance, the citizenry must be convinced that participation in political controversy is dangerous and does not serve any good. This leaves the government complete freedom to act as it thinks proper. The “reasonable” appeal of such propaganda will be heeded quite readily because in general man does not like to assume responsibilities.

Thus the State, in various ways neutralizes the masses, forces them into passivity, throws them back on their private life and personal happiness, in order to leave it a free hand to those who are in power.

The Socio-Political Effects of Propaganda

Ideologies emerge where doctrines are degraded and vulgarized and when an element of belief enters into them. However that may be, it has long been known that some ideologies are compatible with passive behavior, but most of them are active i.e. they push men into action.

Moreover, to the extent that members of a group believe their ideology to represent the truth, they almost always assume an aggressive posture and try to impose that ideology elsewhere. In such cases, ideology becomes bent on conquest.

The drive toward conquest may arise within a society as a conflict between groups, for example, the proletarian ideology vs others within a nation, or it can aim at targets outside, as a nationalist ideology will.

Propaganda is a means of spreading an ideology beyond the borders of a group or of fortifying it within a group. Propaganda organizes itself in conformity with that ideology. Hitler modified the National Socialist ideology several times according to the requirements of propaganda. Thus Hitler established an entirely new relationship between ideology and propaganda.

Propaganda no longer obeys an ideology. The propagandist is not, and cannot be, a “believer”. In his work, he must change the propaganda themes so frequently that he cannot possibly attach himself to any formal, sentimental, political or other aspect of the ideology.

Ideology and doctrine are merely accessories used by propaganda to mobilize individuals. The aim is the power of the party or the state, supported by the masses. For the propagandist, it is senseless to debate whether the Marxist view of history has more validity than any other, or whether the racist doctrine is true. That is of no importance in the framework of propaganda. The only problem is that of effectiveness, of utility.

The point for the propagandist is not to ask himself whether some economic or intellectual doctrine is valid, but only whether it can furnish effective catch words capable of mobilizing the masses here and now. In many cases ideology can be an obstacle to blind action.

In this case the propagandist must be careful not to run head-on into a prevailing ideology; all he can do is integrate it into his system, use some parts of it and so on. He must ask himself whether the ideology, such as it is, can be used for his propaganda; whether it has psychologically predisposed an individual to submit to propaganda’s impulses.

Democratic belief among the public is of no importance. Such beliefs are not obstacle to the establishment of dictatorship. Propaganda can bring about the transition from democratic beliefs to a new form of democracy.

People live in the mental confusion that propaganda purposely seeks to create. Some ideologies can serve as a springboard for the creation of myths by the propagandist. Socialist ideology was transformed into myth by Leninist propaganda.

The existence of a generally accepted ideology is a remarkable instrument for providing a good conscience. Propaganda gives the individual a good conscience by making him aware of the collectivity of beliefs.

Ellul, Jacques (1965). Propaganda: The Formation of Men’s Attitudes. Vintage Books. NY.

With propagand, interpersonal communications cease. There is action, but no interaction. A few scattered individual opinions can suddenly by a mysterious operation, unite and form public opinion. It is then said that one of the elements in this process is propaganda.

What were only vague inclinations until the intervention of propaganda, now take the form of ideas. But propaganda acts much more through emotional shock than through reasoned conviction. If one can harden opinion on a certain key point, one can control an entire sector of opinion from there.

This hardening of opinion soon makes it impervious to all contrary reasoning, proof, and fact.

Propaganda that plays on opinion influences that opinion without offering proof. This will cause opinion to pass to the stage of crystallization, and from that moment on opinion will no longer accept anything that is different.

Even a proven fact can do nothing against crystallized opinion. The more active the propaganda, the more monolithic and less individualized public opinion will be. Present-day class consciousness is a typical product of propaganda.

Without simplification no public opinion can exist. Nuances and gradations prevent public opinion from forming; the more complicated it is, the longer it takes to assume solid shape. But in this case, propaganda intervenes with a force of simplification.

Goebbels wrote: "By simplifying the thoughts of the masses and reducing them to primitive patterns, propaganda was able to present the complex process of political and economic life in the simplest terms... We have taken matters previously available only to experts and a small number of specialists, and have carried them into the street and hammered them into the brain of the little man".

Answers to problems are clear-cut, white and black; under such conditions, public opinion forms rapidly and expresses itself with force. Prejudices arise spontaneously; but propaganda uses them for the formation of public opinion, which in turn becomes simplified, unreal, rigid, and infantile.

Public opinion shaped by propaganda loses all authenticity. When propaganda takes over public opinion, public opinion assumes a rigidity and a density that make the expression of individual opinion impossible and moreover close it in on all sides.

Private opinion clearly becomes devalued where public opinion is organized by propaganda. The development of the press and radio has considerably reduced the number of people who can express their ideas and opinions publicly.

Propaganda makes public opinion impossible to be assimilated by the individual; he can only follow impersonally the current into which he is thrown. The most striking result of propaganda is that it leads people into action.

Propaganda demands the individual's support as a minimum, and his active participation as a maximum. The great feat of propaganda is to cause the progression from thought to action artificially. The continuous and automatic action, into which propaganda plunges the individual, undoubtedly also creates attitudes that determine further actions.

Propaganda shows the individual what to do. The individual who burns with desire for action but does not know what to do is a common type in our society. If propaganda can show him this "how", it has won the game; action will surely follow.

Ellul, Jacques (1965). *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes*. Vintage Books. NY.

The individual also must be convinced of the success of his action, or of the possible reward or satisfaction he will get from it. Man will act when he feels that a certain result needs to be obtained and that the need is urgent.

Advertising demonstrates it to him in the commercial domain, propaganda demonstrates it in politics. The prestige of the person who gives out the information pushes the listener toward action. If propaganda is to lead to action, it must also have a collective influence.

When the group acquires a certain uniformity, it inevitably experiences the need for proceeding to action. This goes further when the media are purposely used for propaganda. Public opinion meets itself and hears itself on the screen and the airwaves invested with power, grandeur, and magnificence.

Propaganda can be a substitute for a group leader. Ultimately, a group subjected to propaganda would not need a leader, but would behave as though it had one. All propaganda has to set off its group from all the other groups.

Here we find again the fallacious character of the intellectual communication media, press and radio, which, far from uniting people and bringing them closer together, divide them all the more. The Irish tune into radio programs about the Irish; the communist read the communist press, and the protestant press is read by protestants.

Those who read the press of their group and listen to the radio of their group are constantly reinforced in their allegiance. They learn more and more that their group is right, that its actions are justified; thus their beliefs are strengthened.

At the same time, such propaganda contains elements of criticism and refutation of other groups, which will never be read or heard by a member of another group. This criticism of one's neighbour, which is not heard by that neighbour, is known to those inside the group that expresses it.

People ignore each other more and more. They cease altogether to be open to an exchange of reason, arguments, and points of view. This double foray on the part of propaganda, proving the excellence of one's own group and the evilness of others, produces an increasingly stringent partitioning of our society.

This partitioning takes place on different levels - a unionist partitioning, a religious partitioning, a partitioning of political parties or classes. The more propaganda there is, the more partitioning there is. For propaganda suppresses conversation; the man opposite is no longer an interlocutor but an enemy. We can see before our eyes how a world of closed minds establishes itself, a world in which everybody talks to himself. A world in which nobody listens to anybody else, everybody talks and nobody listens. And the more one talks, the more one isolates oneself.

Nationalist propaganda results in building a barrier against other nations; however, domestically, it respects the isolation of inferior groups, but still affects them by making them join a common collective movement.

The propagandist looks upon the mass of potential voters as objects. He manipulates them, works on them, tests them, changes them psychologically or politically. They no longer have any personal importance. The masses are merely an instrument for attaining some objective.

They are treated as such. Propagandists have a profound contempt for the mass - even for the sympathizers. Propaganda is a menace to democracy when parties use propaganda. Propaganda almost inevitably leads to a two-party system.

Where there is propaganda, we find fewer and fewer nuances and refinements of detail or doctrine. Rather, opinions are more incisive, there is only black and white, yes and no. Such a state of public opinion leads directly to a two-party system and the disappearance of a multi-party system.

It is improbable that contributions alone would enable a party to pay for the increasingly expensive propaganda media. The parties are therefore forced to look for aid either to capitalists, and thus indenture themselves to a financial oligarchy, or to a government. One can conceive of a State that would suppress all parties and live by itself: that was the classic pattern of dictatorship. However, that is no longer possible.

It is impossible to imagine that a modern state could command acceptance without working through a party establishing contact between those who govern and public opinion. The party's fundamental role becomes to make propaganda for the government.

Socialism has claimed that the worker's condition was the fruit of capitalism and of the exploitation of workers by finance capital. This does to some extent explain both the depressed condition of the worker and undoubtedly, the class struggle and certain of its elements.

The problem of profits has not been solved, and the worker still is not paid properly. The workers put their hearts into their work, abandon themselves to their work, no longer wish to engage in slowdowns or strikes.

It is the worker's hope that the coming world will be a just world or, more precisely, a world in which the worker certainly will occupy first place. In capitalist countries work serves only to produce a wage and profits only for the capitalist.

There the worker experiences only frustration; under Socialism, he experiences a feeling of fulfillment. Only in Socialism can the worker, rid of his complexes and resentments, attain the psychological freedom that permits him to dedicate himself to his work.

We must wait to see whether a profound transformation of the working class by Public Relations is possible. As in all propaganda, the point is to make man endure, with the help of psychological narcotics, what he could not endure naturally, or to give him, artificially, reasons to continue his work and to do it well.

This is the task of propaganda, and there is no doubt that if it is done well, it will make possible the integration of the working class and make it accept its conditions happily. First of all the material conditions of the worker must improve. We have constantly stressed the link between propaganda and true reforms.

The improvement of material conditions of the worker can become a springboard for better revolutionary agitation, as history shows. As long as the worker is enclosed in such organizations as parties or unions, which subject him to propaganda, partitioning takes place.

When the union hits on successful propaganda, it wins the public opinion over to the cause of labour, alerts it to problems of social injustice, and mobilizes people. Union membership will grow. But the more the union grows the less revolutionary, the less active, the less militant it becomes.

The mass union becomes peaceful and bureaucratic; its moves become less and less spontaneous; a gap opens up between its members and its general staff. Propaganda leads a union to become a “have” rather than a “have-not” organization, to present itself as a constituent member of society, to play the social game.

Its opposition becomes purely apparent and fictitious. Church members are caught in the net of propaganda and react pretty much like everyone else. Propaganda faces the church with the following dilemma:

Either not to make propaganda or to make propaganda. People manipulated by propaganda become increasingly impervious to spiritual realities, less and less suited for the autonomy of a Christian life. If a church wants to use propaganda in order to be effective, it must use the entire system with all its resources; it cannot pick what it likes.

Propaganda is a total system that one must accept or reject in its entirety. Christianity disseminated by propaganda is not Christianity. The Christianity is reduced to the level of all other ideologies or secular religions. Everytime a church tries to act through propaganda, the truth and authenticity of Christianity are debased.

Christianity ceases to be an overwhelming power and spiritual adventure and becomes institutionalized in all its expressions and compromised in all its actions. It serves everybody as an ideology with the greatest of ease, and tends to be a hoax.

Reduced to nothing more than an ideology, Christianity will be treated as such by the propagandist. The church will be able to move the masses and convert thousands of people to its ideology, but this ideology is no longer Christianity. It will become just another doctrine.

Through propaganda, the church acquires power and influence that are of this world, and through them integrates itself into this world. From the moment the church uses propaganda successfully, it becomes a purely sociological organization.

It loses the spiritual part, for it now transmits only a false Christianity. It subordinates the essence of its being to social determination, it submits to the laws of efficiency in order to become a power in the world, and at that moment it has chosen power over truth.

When the church uses propaganda, it always tries to justify itself by saying that it puts efficient media in the service of Jesus Christ. This means nothing. What is in the service of Jesus Christ receives its character and effectiveness from Jesus Christ.

The media cannot be put in the service of Jesus Christ. They obey their own rules, and this cannot be changed in the slightest by theological reasoning. A statement by the church that it is placing the media in the service of Christ is a pious formula without content.

Propaganda is one of the most powerful factors of de-Christianization in the world. And this de-Christianization through propaganda is much greater than through all the anti-Christian doctrines.

Democracy depends on public opinion and competition between parties, so in order to come to power, parties make propaganda to gain voters. During World War 1 we saw the combined use of the mass media for the first time; the application of publicity and advertising methods to political affairs, the search for the most effective psychological methods.

It was democracies, not authoritarian regimes that were the first to use propaganda. This statement should make us think about the relationship between democracy and propaganda. A conflict exists between the principles of democracy, particularly its concept of the individual, and the process of propaganda.

The rational man, capable of thinking for himself is opposed to the secret influences of propaganda. To think that democracy must triumph because it is the truth leads man to be democratic and to believe that when the democratic regime is opposed to regimes of oppression, its superiority will be clear at first sight.

The trend everywhere is in the direction of a very few, very powerful companies controlling all the media propaganda. What happens when a powerful private propaganda organization denies facts and falsifies information. Who can tell where truth lies?

On whom can the citizen rely to judge the debate? It may be entirely legitimate for the State to suppress or annex such a propaganda competitor. One must ask oneself what freedom of expression still means in a democracy where the corporations own almost all of the media.

Propaganda that is based on truth is more effective than any other. Hitler's famous statement on the lie is not typically a trait of propaganda. There is no strict rule - except in time of war - about Good on one side and Bad on the other.

For the propagandist in a democracy to throw himself fully into his task it is necessary that he believe that propaganda is the right thing to do. If the propagandist retains his respect for the individual, he will deny himself the very penetration that is the ultimate aim of propaganda. Therefore, a feeling of contempt toward the propagandee is more common.

If the propagandist has a bad conscience, he cannot do good propaganda. Nor can he do good propaganda when he believes it himself. The true propagandist must be as cold, lucid, and rigorous as a surgeon. A propagandist who believes in what he says lets himself become a victim of his own game.

The combination of good propaganda and respect for the individual is impossible. Propaganda is totalitarian in its essence, not because it is the handmaiden of the totalitarian state, but because it has a tendency to absorb everything.

Propaganda in democracies does not have a democratic character. It is fruitless to expect anything from straight information: the bare fact, the truth, can accomplish nothing against psychological barriers.

Propaganda must have an emotional character that leads to the allegiance of the entire being, without thought. That is, it must be a myth.

Mythical propaganda in no way prepares its listeners for democracy, but strengthens their totalitarian tendencies. Democracies use the myths of peace, of Freedom, and of justice and so on. To the extent that democracy is presented, constructed, and organized as a myth, it can be a good subject of propaganda.

Ellul, Jacques (1965). *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes*. Vintage Books. NY.

Propaganda appeals to belief: it rebuilds the drive toward the lost paradise and uses man's fundamental fear as its tool. Democracy was not meant to be a myth. To make a myth of democracy is to present the opposite of democracy. One must clearly realize that the use of ancient myths and the creation of new ones is a regression toward primitive mentality, regardless of material progress.

The evocation of mystical feelings is a rejection of democratic feelings. When we use propaganda on foreign nations we do not prepare them to become democratic nations because we continue the methods of their own authoritarian government.

The "democratic idea" when spread by means of propaganda leads to non-democratic behaviour and only hardens the totalitarian man in his mold. The myth of democracy as a propaganda subject is very fragile. The objects of propaganda tend to become totalitarian because propaganda itself is totalitarian.

Propaganda is a weapon of war but we must realize that when we use it that we simultaneously destroy the possibility of building true democracy. A democratic government cannot present to the outside world a radically inexact and mendacious picture of its policies. A totalitarian government can.

A myth can stand no dilution, no half-measures, no contradictions. Once believes it or does not. In order for the democratic myth to be effective abroad, it must not be contradicted at home. No other voice must arise at home that would reach the foreign propaganda target and destroy the myth.

Propaganda is by itself a state of war; it demands the exclusion of opposite trends and minorities. All propaganda develops the cult of personality. Propaganda must create these personalities. The democratic masses will reject the personality in uniform, but idolize the personality in the suit if it is well presented.

The minority is not heard because the myth, inflated by propaganda, is always the same and always antidemocratic. Democratic peoples are not except from what is called vaguely "psychoses". But propaganda, if it is effective, predisposes people to or even causes psychoses.

Once democracy becomes the object of propaganda, it also becomes totalitarian, authoritarian, and exclusive as dictatorship. The term "un-american" is a totalitarian term. To exalt such a myth really means to give people feelings and reflexes incompatible with life in a democracy.

If democracy is a way of life, composed of tolerance, respect, degree, choice, diversity and so on, all propaganda acts on behaviour and feelings and turns man into someone who can no longer support democracy because he no longer follows democratic behaviour.

The democratic State, even if it does not want to, becomes a propagandist State because of the need to dispense information. A democracy becomes more religious. It does not remain secular when it spreads propaganda. Besides, the creation of a religion is one of the indispensable elements of effective propaganda.

When one speaks to us of "massive democracy" and "democratic participation" these are only veiled terms that mean "religion". Democracy wants to control the mental and psychological state of the people who serve it, according to the notion of the Security Risk.

The civic virtues created by the mass media will guarantee the maintenance of democracy. But what becomes of liberty? With propaganda, an aristocratic category of men arises which has no common bond with democracy. The propagandist is a member of an aristocracy of technicians that establishes itself

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above the institutions of a democracy and acts outside its norms. The employment of propaganda leads the propagandist to cynicism, disbelief in values and contempt for the propagandee and elected representatives. The propagandist knows how public opinion is fashioned.

When democracy wants to use the television film for propaganda, it can think of nothing but military parades, which cannot be presented too often in a democracy. Television has the shock effect of the picture, which is much greater than that of sound.

When faced with two competing propagandas, man suffers severely from the psychological influences and distortions. Man modified in this fashion demands simple solutions, catchwords, certainties, continuity, commitment, a clear and simple division of the world into Good and Evil.

And additional effect of contradictory propagandas is that the individual will escape either into passivity or into total and unthinking support of one of the two sides. This is the point of departure of totalitarian politics and it is beginning to take hold in the United States.

These two different reactions - passivity or total commitment - are completely antidemocratic.

Propaganda ruins not only democratic ideas but also democratic behaviour. What gives propaganda its destructive character is the instrument of propaganda itself.

Democratic propaganda creates a man who is suited to a totalitarian society, who is not at ease except when integrated into the mass, who rejects critical judgements, choices and differentiations because he clings to clear certainties.

He is a man assimilated into uniform groups and wants it that way. One can do almost anything with propaganda but one cannot create free men or democratic men. A man who lives in a democratic society and who is subjected to propaganda is being drained of the democratic content itself.

Understanding of others, respect for minorities, re-examination of his own opinions, absence of dogmatism; all these characteristics are opposed to propaganda. The only difference between him and a Nazi is that he is a totalitarian man with democratic convictions, but those convictions do not change his behaviour in the least. The citizen can repeat indefinitely "the sacred formulas of democracy" while acting like a storm trooper.

The belief in propaganda's harmlessness and the spreading of this belief are ultimately detrimental to man. If the propagandee takes that attitude, he is in the most favorable position to obey without knowing it, to drift into the routine of propaganda while claiming to be supremely superior.

Effectiveness of Propaganda

The propagandist may seek to sustain the morale of his troops, to reinforce their courage, to excite them, to get them to sacrifice their lives. Mobilized troops have already been propagandized to some extent.

Election campaigns are the simplest most imperfect forms of modern propaganda. The objective is insufficient, the methods are incomplete, the duration is brief, pre-propaganda is absent, and the campaign propagandist never has all the media at his disposal.

The propagandist may also aim at the destruction of micro-groups, labour unions for example. Given the diversity of effects sought by the propagandist, one can draw absolutely no conclusions about the effectiveness of his propaganda with regard to any of his objectives.

One cannot determine with any degree of accuracy how many people are being reached by a propaganda campaign. Many psychologists, particularly the Americans, reach the conclusion that propaganda is ineffective.

Stereotypes are impervious to personal experience and hard facts, and if propaganda cannot budge them, information can budge them even less. But it cannot be denied that certain stereotypes are the result of propaganda.

The undecided in elections do not make their decisions in consonance with pre-existing tendencies, but according to where they are being pushed by propaganda. No-one believes that pre-established attitudes will resist a real propaganda that surrounds the individual morning to night, from childhood to old age. Marxism readily takes a critical attitude with regard to the effectiveness of propaganda. With regard to the democracies, we know from the experience of group dynamics how false is the assertion that propaganda is ineffective.

Even if it were impossible for propaganda to get people to believe in Marxism, propaganda was very successful in China in making the people act in accord with the government's wishes. The "great leaps forward" and the communes are admirable examples of propaganda's efficiency.

All politicians and all big businessmen agree that psychological action, propaganda, advertising, human relations, and public relations are indispensable and definitely produce results. All those who have lived in a strongly propagandized environment and have been subjected to the effects of propaganda, are agreed that propaganda is effective.

Those who deny it live in countries that are still liberal and not subjected to intense propaganda. Marx is perfectly right when he says that the actual condition of the proletariat is nothing unless the proletariat is aware of that condition; that such awareness is simultaneously the creator of the labor class and the revolutionary will, and that it cannot occur spontaneously or individually.

Without propaganda nothing would happen. It really starts the engine. And once the movement is underway, propaganda keeps it going, directs it, and ensures its success. Every month new products appear for which there is no prior need, but which take their place in the market without much resistance. That is exclusively the result of propaganda.

New needs are created from the day a new product appears. After a few months of getting used to a product, its absence will be felt because an effective need will have been created. But the need was created exclusively by advertising. If the product were presented without advertising, nobody would buy it.

Seeking mass effects, propaganda determines only collective behaviour, and that shows why propaganda has so little effect on private conduct. In the beginning, propaganda cannot move except within the framework of pre-existing attitudes, which it can modify only very slowly.

Propaganda cannot reverse fundamental trends in a society. For example, in the United States, propaganda that would be against democracy and in favour of a monarchy would not work. Propaganda cannot prevail against facts that are too massive and definite.

Propaganda is most effective, most dangerous, and least noticed inside a group. Psychological warfare is of passionate interest to people, thought is the least convincing type of propaganda. Propaganda can be fully effective only in the hands of nationals addressing themselves to their fellow citizens.

A man may be in agreement with the propagandist and yet not act as the propagandist would have him act.

