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February 11, 1980

Psychological Warfare

Ancient military noisemakers, special headdresses to make a soldier seem taller, and the painting of the human body to inspire dread were all psychological devices. Threats delivered by one nation to another fall into the same category. Messages that are credible, simple and properly timed are weapons when they introduce schism.. Mind bending or brainwashing is psychological warfare, as is cold war and terrorism.

The obvious beginning of mind manipulation started with Ivan Petrovich Pavlov. In innocent experimentation he showed how food could be introduced to a dog at the same time as a light was turned on, thus forming a food-light association, which when repeated enough would cause the dog to salivate with simply a light turned on and no food offered. This was called a conditioned reflex. From here it was not far for the communists to discover how conditioned reflexes could be induced, only instead of a light, words could be used like imperialism, learning, running dog of the imperialists, friend of the people, big brother, and so on, without any relation to their actual meaning. Anything could be made into a stimulus. Pavlov was summoned by Lenin to the Kremlin and ordered to write a summation of his experiments as they applied to man. Though basically a scientist, Pavlov complied with this directive and turned out a 400 page manuscript that has not left the Kremlin to this day. It is told that Lenin exclaimed that Pavlov had saved the Revolution and that his findings guaranteed the future for world communism.

The term perhaps most associated with psychological warfare is brainwashing. Brainwashing was first displayed at the Red purge trials of 1936 when the world was horrified by old Bolsheviks announcing they were traitors to the Bolshevism to which they had given their lives. They were the ones responsible for the Soviet seizure of power. Now they were denouncing themselves as anti-Soviet.

Very much later, in the Korean conflict, a small select group of reporters for the press of Communist China and North Korea interviewed an American pilot-prisoner. Accusations of germ warfare were backed up by every conceivable proof. Peasants saw the containers fall. Reporters were shown the shell cases.

Glass slabs with swarms of bacteria were shown through a microscope. Then the brainwashed American, broken down by fatigue and endless drilling, admitted flying the plane that dropped the bacteria. It was called the "American plague." People were ordered to slay a minimum number of insects and bring the victims in for a count. The horrifying news, germ warfare, was radioed around the world. This was psychological warfare or brain warfare. It was based on the discovery that ultimate victory lay in the conquest of attitudes and feelings, and anything that served this objective was a weapon.

The real laboratory for brainwashing appears to have been Red China under Mao Tsetung. When the Communists took over, brainwashing became the principle activity on the Chinese mainland. Before any one could be considered trustworthy he was brainwashed in order to qualify for a job in the "new democracy." Angus Ward, former American consul arrested by the Reds with several members of his staff and held several months, said if questioned a bit longer he would have confessed to anything "Freely." Guilt or innocence had nothing to do with it. Brainwashing involves two steps, softening up and indoctrination. Brain changing wipes away recollections of past life, and other ideas are implanted in the mind, wearing down resistance with hunger, fatigue, tenseness, threats, violence and occasionally hypnotism and drugs.

Edward Hunter, Brainwashing in Red China, The Calculated Destruction of Men's Minds, wrote that tens of thousands of men, women and children had their brains washed. They ranged from students to instructors and professors, from army officers and municipal officials to reporters and printers and from criminals to church deacons. The writer gives a number of examples from the Chinese he interviewed. One case is of a schoolteacher who helped the Communist army take over his city. He was an enthusiastic supporter of the Red Army, taught he must study Mao's New Democracy to combat imperialism and capitalism. Discussion groups, self-criticism meetings, were the essence of indoctrination; if one did not enunciate the Communist line clearly and ecstatically, he was called to order and corrected by others at

the meeting. One might not just read New Democracy; one had also to explain specific portions and do so in the approved Party manner. When this kind of teaching persisted hour after hour the result created a comatose state in which pat phrases, particularly if they contained long involved words and double talk, were repeated and repeated till a curiously twisted ideology permeated the subconscious like the one track mind brought about by drunkenness. The victim was also encouraged to keep a diary, and the diary was a way the Party could check on people's minds; the person who wrote a daily record of his thoughts in the framework of communist ideology, even if he started out disbelieving, was sure by repetition to absorb part of what he was telling himself and ultimately perhaps the entire dogma. The ominous similarity in the logic followed and examples taught in the discussion groups throughout China, Mr. Hunter writes, show they were centrally directed and devised in a manner to exploit envy and build up suspicion and hatred and to focus those negative attitudes against the United States. The United States was often discussed as a glaring example of what was wrong and evil. It was taught that after the inevitable revolution in the U. S., Communism would take over in that country.

Mr. Hunter gives the case of John D. Hayes, an American missionary teacher born in North China of missionary parents, educated at Princeton and Oxford, a master of Mandarin and thoroughly at home among the Chinese. He had finally been arrested and worked on from three to nine hours a day for forty days by interrogators and indoctrinators. His inquisition really began when he saw close friends and old colleagues arrested and executed. When he spoke out, Hayes began to feel the cords tighten. First he was put under house arrest and subjected to continual hard core Communist line. Next came subtle pressures, reducing his food supply, interrupting his sleep, directing his life and the people he was allowed to see. Then he was accused of spying and all his friends were considered agents. He was arrested and thrown into a prison cell where he suffered forty days of interrogation. Physical pressures were added to the mental ones. He was constantly hungry, on a diet calculated to be insufficient. He felt drugged from lack of sleep. Humiliation was another

corrosive influence. "I felt humiliated," he said, "that my affection for the Chinese people was not getting across and that I was being accused of being a spy in a land I loved."

"The brainwashing chamber," writes Mr. Hunter, "was a downstairs room in the prison, about twelve by eighteen feet, where he faced anywhere from one to seven people. Their functions, like brainwashing itself, ranged all over the field, from examiner to indoctrinator, prosecutor to judge, inquisitor to torturer. Brainwashing victims from East Europe have described similar courts to me," the writer continues, "with hypnotists and psychiatrists on the staff."

Hayes was accused of being head spy for all Southwest China and demanded to fill in the details by confession. "They gave him thinking assignments in which he had to write or report. The tension of daily going through (The) same points was like a drill piercing his mind. 'Worse than physical suffering,' Hayes told me. Each day he was called and each day the accusation was gone over in minute detail, from every conceivable angle. 'I'd rather be whipped than have this questioning continue,' Hayes cried out to them one day."

"Questioning was rarely ordinary questioning. The correct term for it would be 'suggestive interrogation,' with the desired answers implied in the wording. The brainwashers alternated this with a barrage of denunciation and accusation to make their victim cringe. Then they would make their statement in question form and expect Hayes to agree to it. When the accused or the witness failed to agree, it took on the appearance of defiance of the court."

"This type of questioning went on for a month without Hayes appearing to give way, although he felt thoroughly fatigued all the time now, as if drugged. 'If I could only have eaten one square meal,' he said... 'If I could only have had one day's break'...

"Hayes was given plenty of homework to do in his cell. They gave him some of Mao's books and urged him to write any questions that might arise as he studied them. Hayes filled pages with questions that were never answered--neither did they give him any more of such dialectical literature. They had him write a long autobiography, summaries of long past conversations and, as he

was known as a liberal, a paper on the third-party movement. They pressed him for a self-criticism, making it obvious they sought criticism of missionaries as 'tools of the State Department'..."...

"They were constantly putting stress on some very inconsequential detail and harping on it interminably, jumping from one detail to another with dreamlike inconsistency until the whole matter would be abruptly dropped and something else, equally irrelevant, leaped upon"...

At last realizing he had told the whole truth and could not do any more, a change occurred. Hayes felt relaxed, even slightly exhilarated. He felt good. At this juncture he hallucinated, "remembering" something clearly which he had been endlessly questioned on and which had never happened.

The author questioned Hayes: "Was there any radio? Were there any messages?"

"No," he said, "None of any of that existed except in my tired head. The brainwashers, of course, knew it was all a fake.

On September 20, 1952, John D. Hayes was finally released and two weeks later put across the border at Hong Kong. "The more I think of it," he said..."the surer I am that the mind is influenced to a great extent by its environment and training, but that the really decisive, controlling factor is the spirit. You can't crack that if it is sound."

The author continues, "I thought back over the cases I knew of the many brainwashed in the p.o.w. camps in Korea, those who had broken and those who hadn't. Without doubt, this additional force--spirit--had been the most important weapon for those who had successfully resisted. For the lack of it, others had miserably broken."

Another writer, Margaret O. Hyde, cites Dr. William Sargeant, Britain's foremost expert on brainwashing. Dr Sargeant..."believed the last war showed that thirty days was the maximum period of tension and stress that a normal person could endure before breakdown...After release from captivity, when a person is in new circumstances where the imposed values are no longer rewarded, the effects of brainwashing usually fade away."

In an official statement before the United Nations, Dr.

Charles W. Mayo, a leading American physician and government representative, explained brainwashing thus..."the tortures used although they include many brutal physical injuries, are not like the medieval torture of the rack and the thumbscrew. They are subtler, more prolonged, and intended to be more terrible in their effect. They are calculated to disintegrate the mind of an intelligent victim, to distort his sense of value, to a point where he will not simply cry out 'I did it' but will become a seemingly willing accomplice to the complete disintegration of his integrity and the production of an elaborate fiction."

Chief tool of brainwashing and of any sort of mind alteration is propaganda. Where does it begin and where does it end? Where is it a seemingly innocent advertisement and where an insidious device of psychological warfare? Propaganda, according to the Encyclopaedia Britannica, is the systematic effort to manipulate other peoples beliefs, attitudes or actions by means of various symbols--words, gestures, banners, monuments, music, clothing, insignia, etc.

Think. Liberty for all. Winston Churchill's V for Victory. The Swastika. A young boy with long hair. Symbols can convey a message more effectively than an entire book.

The propagandist, continues the Encyclopaedia, has a specific goal or set of goals. The person reacting to the propaganda and believing it to be self-evident truth may think of it as educational. Education for one may be propaganda for another.

Related to the word propaganda is propaganda of the deed, that is staging an atomic test or public torture of a criminal for its presumably deterring effect on others or giving foreign economic aid primarily to influence the opinions or actions of the recipients. Psychwar is the prewar or wartime use of propaganda, directed primarily at confusing or demoralizing enemy populations or troops, putting them offguard in the face of coming attacks or inducing them to surrender. Hiroshima. Nagasaki.

When the propagandist aims to convert great numbers of people to a religion or new social order or to induce war or revolution, the definition of goals is highly complex. The rank and file are remarkably passive until aroused by quasi-parental leaders whom they admire and trust. It is hard to imagine the Gallic wars

without Caesar, the psychoanalytic movement without Freud, the Nazis without Hitler, the major Communist revolutions without Lenin and Mao Tse-tung. The contemporary propagandist tries to find out the formative experiences and styles of education of his audience, which of all publicity, TV shows, leaders and role models they pay attention to and by which of these they are most influenced. In most cases people pay attention to the models with whose views they already agree! Even the most skilful propagandist can introduce only a small bit that is new and which may be psychologically threatening. By influencing key members of a reference group such as family, church, trade union and so on, the propagandist establishes a social relay channel that can amplify his message.

Probably the spread of all complex political systems and religions has been due very largely to a combination of earnest conviction and the deliberate use of propaganda. Communist China used plays which were frankly propaganda, yet effective. The picture story books became sharp weapons of propaganda, possibly the most effective media the Communists had among the masses. All were very anti American. Education was considered fundamental, and education meant of course a strong Party line. Scholars were belittled and to be a Party member was considered the most worthy goal one could attain.

Terrorism is a systematic attempt to induce fear and anxiety among people expressly for some political purpose. The roots of modern terrorism are traced to nineteenth century Russia, when a group of Russian populists chose a strategy of terror to transform Russia. There are two types of terrorism, direct terrorism against actual tenets of power and indirect or pure terrorism designed to produce severe psychological reaction. Each of these types attempts to achieve political change as well as the terrorists' own goals. There are five general aims of terrorist activity: 1. To spread a message or specific doctrine, 2. To gain official recognition from a government, 3. To broaden the base of power, 4. To undermine morale and prestige of authorities, and 5. To drive a wedge between government and citizens. Terrorist activity is encouraged by a sense of deprivation, the appeal of violence, and the low risks in terrorist operation.

The same article ("The Decade of the Terrorist," by Thomas H. Smith, Intellect, June 1978) states: "The U. S. government refuses to negotiate or provide concessions to any terrorist group. At a worldwide level, if strictly adhered to, this would remove some of the incentives to terrorism. However, there is also the problem of loss of human life in the short run to provide for long term world security. Any government would face a real dilemma when it had to let a group of hostages die...Only through international cooperation and an intensified effort can the U. S. or any other government effectively fight the political terrorist."

"The terrorist underground is worldwide and plotting more savagery," wrote Claire Sterling in The Atlantic Monthly, November, 1978, "kidnappings, assassinations, atomic blackmail raids on nuclear bomb depots--in the cause of violent Marxist revolution... terrorist international has troops all over Europe...from Sweden and North Ireland to Holland, France, Spain, Switzerland, Austria, Greece and Turkey, they are variously inclined toward nationalism, separatism, anarchism, Trotskyism, Maoism, Leninism or just communist proletarianism, but they share the same radical left Marxist views on armed revolution...have for some time been hooked into an underground circuit passing not only through West Germany and Italy but right on around the globe to the Middle East, Asia and South America." So far there is no unified high command though the Red Brigade--Italy--is in favor of this. To be a Red Brigadier is to cut every tie with home and family. The Red Brigades are immensely rich, as is Germany's Baader-Meinhof. The terrorists have periodic summit meetings to coordinate their efforts, and their most spectacular hits have been pointedly multinational, but far from bringing Europe to its knees the Schleyer and Aldo Moro cases strengthened the collective will to resist. ©

"In the dangerous days ahead," continues Miss Sterling, "it must never be forgotten that virtually all the terrorists have one thing in common: a commitment to armed Marxist revolution, and a willingness to kill and be killed for that cause."

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