



PROPAGANDA

*The Formation of
Men's Attitudes*

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CHAPTER

[II]

THE CONDITIONS FOR THE EXISTENCE OF PROPAGANDA

Why and how does propaganda exist?

We have already noted that propaganda was not the same in the past as it is today, that its nature has changed. We have also said that one cannot simply make any propaganda just anywhere, at anytime, or in any fashion. Without a certain milieu propaganda cannot exist. Only under certain conditions can the phenomenon of propaganda appear and grow. The most obvious of these are accidental or purely historical conditions. Beyond that, it is clear, for example, that the emergence of propaganda is connected with a number of scientific discoveries.

Modern propaganda could not exist without the mass media—the inventions that produced press, radio, television, and motion pictures, or those that produced the means of modern transportation and which permit crowds of diverse individuals from all over to assemble easily and frequently. Present-day propaganda meetings no longer bear any relation to past assemblies, to the meetings of the Athenians in the Agora or of the Romans in the Forum. Then there is the scientific research in all the other fields—sociology and psychology, for example. Without the discoveries made in the past half-century by scientists who “never wanted this,” there would be no propaganda. The findings of social psychology, depth psychology, behaviorism, group sociology, sociology of public opinion are the very foundations of the propagandist’s work.

In a different sense, political circumstances have also been effective and immediate causes of the development of massive propaganda. The first World War; the Russian revolution of 1917; Hitler’s revolution of 1933; the second World War; the further development of revolutionary wars since 1944 in China, Indochina, and Algeria, as well as the Cold War—each was a step in the development of modern propaganda. With each of these events propaganda developed further, increased in depth, discovered new methods. At the same time it conquered new nations and new territories: To reach the enemy, one must use his weapons; this undeniable argument is the key to the systematic development of propaganda. And in this way propaganda has become a permanent feature in nations that actually despise it, such as the United States and France.

Let us also note the influence of doctrines and men. It is clear that a particular doctrine can make propaganda the very center of political life, the essence of political action, rather than merely an accessory or an incidental and rather suspect instrument. Leninism as developed by Mao is really a doctrine of propaganda plus action, indissolubly linked to Marxism, of which it is an expression. As Leninism spreads, propaganda develops with it—by necessity and not by choice. In addition, certain men have greatly helped the development of propaganda: Hitler and Goebbels, for example, had a genius for it. But the role of such men is never decisive. They do not invent propaganda; it does not exist just because they want it to. They are only the pro-

ducers and directors, the catalysts, who profit from the confluence of favorable circumstances. All this is too well known and too obvious to dwell on.

But the sum of certain conditions is still not enough to explain the development of propaganda. The over-all sociological conditions in a society must provide a favorable environment for propaganda to succeed.¹

1. The Sociological Conditions

Individualist Society and Mass Society

For propaganda to succeed, a society must first have two complementary qualities: it must be both an individualist and a mass society. These two qualities are often considered contradictory. It is believed that an individualist society, in which the individual is thought to have a higher value than the group, tends to destroy groups that limit the individual's range of action, whereas a mass society negates the individual and reduces him to a cipher. But this contradiction is purely theoretical and a delusion. In actual fact, an individualist society *must* be a mass society, because the first move toward liberation of the individual is to break up the small groups that are an organic fact of the entire society. In this process the individual frees himself completely from family, village, parish, or brotherhood bonds—only to find himself directly vis-à-vis the entire society. When individuals are not held together by local structures, the only form in which they can live together is in an unstructured mass society. Similarly, a mass society can only be based on individuals—that is, on men in their isolation, whose identities are determined by their relationships with one another. Precisely because the individual claims to be equal to all other individuals, he becomes an abstraction and is in effect reduced to a cipher.

¹ The same factors of influence will have different weight and effectiveness in different contexts. The media employed by the propagandists can work only in a particular sociological structure. This reciprocal influence of propaganda and social structure is precisely one of the problems that need to be studied.

Ernst Kris and Nathan Leites have properly noted that public responses to the impact of propaganda have changed considerably in the past few decades and that this change is the result of trends in the psycho-sociological conditions of twentieth-century life.

As soon as local organic groupings are reformed, society tends to cease being individualistic, and thereby to lose its mass character as well. What then occurs is the formation of organic groups of *elite* in what remains a mass society, but which rests on the framework of strongly structured and centralized political parties, unions, and so on. These organizations reach only an active minority, and the members of this minority cease to be individualistic by being integrated into such organic associations. From this perspective, individualist society and mass society are two corollary aspects of the same reality. This corresponds to what we have said about the mass media: to perform a propagandistic function they must capture the individual and the mass at the same time.

Propaganda can be effective only in an individualist society, by which we do not mean the theoretical individualism of the nineteenth century, but the genuine individualism of our society. Of course, the two are not diametrically opposed. Where the greatest value is attributed to the individual, the end result is a society composed in essence only of individuals, and therefore one that is not integrated. But although theory and reality are not in total opposition, a great difference nevertheless exists between them. In individualist *theory* the individual has eminent value, man himself is the master of his life; in individualist *reality* each human being is subject to innumerable forces and influences, and is not at all master of his own life. As long as solidly constituted groups exist, those who are integrated into them are subject to them. But at the same time they are protected by them against such external influences as 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. For example, it is much more difficult today for outside propaganda to influence a soldier integrated into a military group, or a militant member of a monolithic party, than to influence the same man when he is a mere citizen. Nor is the organic group sensitive to psychological *contagion*, which is so important to the success of mass propaganda.

One can say, generally, that nineteenth-century individualist society came about through the disintegration of such small groups

as the family or the church. Once these groups lost their importance, the individual was left substantially isolated. He was plunged into a new environment, generally urban, and thereby "uprooted." He no longer had a traditional place in which to live; he was no longer geographically attached to a fixed place, or historically to his ancestry. An individual thus uprooted can only be part of a mass. He is on his own, and individualist thinking asks of him something he has never been required to do before: that he, the individual, become the measure of all things. Thus he begins to judge everything for himself. In fact he *must* make his own judgments. He is thrown entirely on his own resources; he can find criteria only in himself. He is clearly responsible for his own decisions, both personal and social. He becomes the beginning and the end of everything. Before him there was nothing; after him there will be nothing. His own life becomes the only criterion of justice and injustice, of Good and Evil.

In theory this is admirable. But in practice what actually happens? The individual is placed in a minority position and burdened at the same time with a total, crushing responsibility. Such conditions make an individualist society fertile ground for modern propaganda. The permanent uncertainty, the social mobility, the absence of sociological protection and of traditional frames of reference—all these inevitably provide propaganda with a malleable environment that can be fed information from the outside and conditioned at will.

The individual left to himself is defenseless, the more so because he may be caught up in a social current, thus becoming easy prey for propaganda. As a member of a small group he was fairly well protected from collective influences, customs, and suggestions. He was relatively unaffected by changes in the society at large. He obeyed only if his entire group obeyed. This does not mean that he was freer, but only that he was determined by his local environment and by his restricted group, and very little by broad ideological influences or collective psychic stimuli. 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. Physi-

cally 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 the peasants could be reached only if their structured milieu was shattered; and the difficulties that Lenin experienced in integrating the Russian peasantry into the pattern of the revolution are well known.

Thus, here is one of the first conditions for the growth and development of modern propaganda: It emerged in western Europe in the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth precisely because that was when society was becoming increasingly individualistic and its organic structures were breaking down.

But for propaganda to develop, society must also be a mass society. It cannot be a society that is simply breaking up or dissolving. It cannot be a society about to disappear, which might well be a society in which small groups are breaking up. The society that favors the development of propaganda must be a society maintaining itself but at the same time taking on a new structure, that of the mass society.²

The relationship between masses and crowds has been much discussed, and distinctions have been drawn between masses and massification. The first is the gathering of a temporary crowd; the second, the involvement of individuals in a permanent social cycle. Certainly a crowd gathered at a given point is not, properly speaking, a mass. 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, the individual is part of these collectives, and a certain psychological unity exists. Mass society, moreover, is characterized by a certain uniformity of material life. Despite differences of environment, training, or situation, the men of a mass society have the same preoccupations, the same interest in technical matters, the same mythical beliefs, the same

² Of the innumerable books on the masses, *The Revolt of the Masses*, by José Ortega y Gasset, is still valid despite the criticism of many sociologists.

Elmo Roper's classification of influential groups in the United States is well known: about 90 percent of the population is "politically inert"; they become active only accidentally, when they are set into motion, but they are normally "inactive, inattentive, manipulable, and without critical faculty"—qualities that form the masses. (Roper: "Who Tells the Storytellers?" *Saturday Review*, July 31, 1954.) Throughout we are discussing this mass man, the average man.

prejudices.³ 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.

In contemporary society there actually is a close relation between mass and crowd. Because a mass society exists, crowds can gather frequently—that is, 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. Conversely, the very fact of belonging to crowds turns the individual more and more into a mass man and thus modifies his very being. There is no question that man's psychic being is modified by his belonging to a mass society; this modification takes place even if no propaganda appeal is made to the soul of the crowd or the spirit of the collective. This individual produced by a mass society is more readily available, more credulous, more suggestible, more excitable. Under such conditions propaganda can develop best. Because a mass society existed in western Europe at the end of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth, propaganda became possible *and* necessary.

From mass society emerge the psychological elements most favorable to propaganda: symbols and stereotypes. Of course these also exist in small groups and limited societies, but there they are not of the same kind, number, or degree of abstraction. In a mass society they are more detached from reality, more manipulable, more numerous, more likely to provoke intense but fleeting emotions, and at the same time less significant, less inherent in personal life. The symbols in a primitive society do not permit the free and flexible play of propaganda because they are rigid, stable, and small in number. Their nature is also different: of religious origin at first, they become political (in the broad sense). In mass society, finally, we find the maximum deviation between public opinions and latent private opinions, which are either repressed or progressively eliminated.

Thus the masses in contemporary society have made propaganda possible; in fact propaganda can act only where man's psychology is influenced by the crowd or mass to which he belongs. Besides, as we have already pointed out, the means of

³ A mass society is also a strongly organized society. John Albig makes a profound observation when he says that propaganda is an *inevitable* concomitant of the growth and organization of society.

disseminating propaganda depend on the existence of the masses; in the United States these means are called the mass media of communications with good reason: without the mass to receive propaganda and carry it along, propaganda is impossible.

We must also consider the importance of public opinion in this connection. Public opinion as we presently think of it also needs a mass society. In fact, in the presence of a stimulus or an act there must be exchanges of opinion, actions, and interactions, which are the first steps in the formation of public opinion. There must also be an awareness of existing opinions, of private opinions or implicit public opinions. Finally, there must be a reappraisal of values and attitudes. Only then is there really a crystalized public opinion. It is obvious that in order for this entire process to take place, a very close relationship among a great number of people is necessary. The kind of public opinion we mean, the kind used by propaganda and necessary for it, cannot exist in a community of fifty or one hundred persons, isolated from the outside world (whether it be a monastery or a village of the fifteenth century), or in a society of very low population density in which a man has only very distant contacts with other men. Meeting once a month at the market place, for instance, does not permit the wide dissemination of personal views needed to form public opinion.

Thus, for propaganda to be effective psychologically and sociologically, a combination of demographic phenomena is required. The first is population density, with a high frequency of diversified human contacts, exchanges of opinions and experiences, and with primary importance placed on the feeling of togetherness. The second is urban concentration, which, resulting from the fusion between mass and crowd, gives the mass its psychological and sociological character. Only then can propaganda utilize crowd effects; only then can it profit from the psychological modifications that collective life produces in the individual and without which practically none of the propaganda would "take." Much more, the instruments of propaganda find their principal source of support in the urban concentration.

Buying a newspaper or a radio set or listening to a broadcast is a social act that presumes a mass structure of society, a total subordination to certain imperatives felt only when one is plunged into a mass in which each person places value on the accomplish-

ment of this social act. Even more, to go to the movies or a political meeting presumes a physical proximity and, therefore, the existence of concentrated masses. In fact, a political organizer will not bother to hold his meeting if he knows he can get together only ten or fifteen people; and individuals will not come readily from a great distance. Because regular attendance is essential for attaining propaganda effects through meetings or films, the mass is indispensable. The "majority effect," so essential as a means of propaganda, can be felt only in a mass society; for example, the argument that "all Frenchmen want peace in Algeria" or, on the other hand, "all Frenchmen want to hold on to Algeria" is valid only if "all Frenchmen" represents an immediate and massive reality. Thus the mass society was a primary condition for the emergence of propaganda; once formed, it evoked the power and functions of propaganda.

Although we shall not go into the matter of individual psychology, we must remember, in Stoetzel's excellent words, that "the conditions of life in mass societies tend to multiply individual frustrations. They produce abstract fragmentary relations between people . . . totally devoid of intimacy. . . . One can show how the feeling of insecurity or anxiety develops; trace the contradictions of our environment—the conflicts between socially accepted competition and the preaching of fraternal love, between the constant stimulation of our needs through advertising and our limited finances, between our legal rights and the shackles of reality."

Propaganda responds psychologically to this situation. The fact that propaganda addresses itself to the individual but acts on the mass explains, for example, the unity between the types of propaganda that are apparently diverse—such as propaganda based on the prestige of the leader (of the hero, or even of the expert) and propaganda based on the prestige of the majority. Of course in the exercise of propaganda both types have specific functions. But it is important to emphasize here that these two types are not very different from each other.

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 leader must be a sublimation of the "ordinary man." He must not seem to be of a different quality. The ordinary man must not feel that the leader transcends him. This quality of the average men in the Hero

(actor, dictator, sports champion) has been clearly demonstrated in the history of the past thirty years. It is what E. Morin emphasizes in his study of the deification of film stars.

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. Moses is dead on the propaganda level; all we have left is a "Johnson" or "De Gaulle," stripped of individual characteristics and clad in the aura of the majority.

Some may raise objections to this analysis, which sees a fundamental requirement for the development of propaganda in the creation of an individualist society *and* a mass society, because only in that combination can the material means and dictatorial will of the state take shape. The first objection is based on the emergence in our society of new local organic groups—for example, political parties and labor unions, which seem to be contrary to the existence of the individualist structure and the mass structure. The answer to this is, first, that such groups are still far from having the solidity, the resistance, the structuring of old organic groups. They have not had time to consolidate themselves. One has only to look at their fragility, their fluctuations, their changes. They are not really groups of resistance against mass influence, though, like a party that exchanges a democratic for a monolithic form, they try to be by taking on authoritarian structures.

Second, such new groups cannot be real obstacles to total propaganda. They can resist *one* particular propaganda, but not the general phenomenon of propaganda, for the development of the groups takes place simultaneously with development of propaganda. These groups develop inside a society propagandized to the extreme; they are themselves *loci* of propaganda; they are instruments of propaganda and are integrated into its techniques. We are no longer in a sociological situation comparable to that of traditional societies in which there was barely any mass propaganda and almost nothing other than local psychological influences. And when propaganda did enter into such societies, it had to fight existing local groups and try to influence and modify them; and these organic groups resisted.

At present we are witnessing the emergence of organic groups in which individuals tend to be integrated. These groups have

certain traits of the old organic groups, but their collective life, their intellectual, emotional, and spiritual life is determined by propaganda, and they can no longer maintain themselves without it. They become organic groups in the mass society only if they subject themselves to, and serve as agents of, propaganda. Our society has been completely transformed: when we left the purely individualist stage, which permitted propaganda to develop, we arrived at a society in which primary group structures could still exist, but in which total propaganda was established and the group no longer could be separated from such propaganda. It is curious to see how the few remaining organic groups, such as the family and the church, try at all costs to live by propaganda: families are protected by family associations; churches try to take over the methods of psychological influence. They are now the very negation of the old organic groups. And what is more, the new primary groups (such as political parties or unions) are important relay stations in the flow of total propaganda; they are mobilized and used as instruments and thus offer no fulcrum for individual resistance. On the contrary, through them the entrapped individual is made ready for propaganda.

Another objection comes to mind immediately. Propaganda has developed in societies that were neither individualist nor mass: the Russian society of 1917, present-day China, Indochina, the Arab world. But the point here is precisely that these societies could not and cannot be captured, manipulated, and mobilized by propaganda, except when their traditional structures disintegrate and a new society is developed which is both individualistic and massive. Where this fails to happen, propaganda remains ineffective. Therefore, if the new society does not constitute itself spontaneously, it is sometimes formed by force by authoritarian states, which only then can utilize propaganda. In the Soviet Union, the Caucasus and Azerbaijan were the nursery of agitprop in 1917 because the cosmopolitanism of the region, the great currents of population displacement (Russian and Moslem), the uprootings, the vigor of a nationalist myth, tended to shape mass society. In Soviet Russia, propaganda has progressed exactly in line with the destruction of the old organic groups and the creation of mass society.⁴

⁴ We know too that the establishment of the Viet-Minh organization in Indochina permitted the structuring of a complete administrative society imposing itself on

We also find this true in Communist China, which attained in three years, through violence, what the Soviet Union took twenty years to attain and what developed naturally in the West in 150 years: the establishment of sociological conditions specific to an environment in which propaganda can be completely effective. It seems that the Chinese government understood perfectly the need to structure a new society. When the French wondered whether the methods of propaganda which had succeeded in Indochina could be applied in Algeria, they faced problems of the same sociological order.⁵ We find in the ultra-rapid, forced, and systematic transformation of these societies a dramatic confirmation of our analysis showing that a certain "massification" of society is required for propaganda to be able to develop.

Opinion

We must add to all this the problem of public opinion. We have already said that, on the one hand, propaganda is no longer primarily a matter of opinion, and that, on the other, the existence of a public opinion is connected with the appearance of a mass society.⁶ We would like to stress here that opinion formed in primary groups, or small groups, has other characteristics than that which exists in large societies. In small groups, with direct

traditional groups. The Lien-Viet, with its independent and centralized hierarchy, artificially provoked a new splitting of the traditional groups of inhabitants, upsetting families, villages, and neighborhoods, and exploding the old forms in order to integrate individuals into new groups. A person is classified according to his age, sex, and occupation. The family group is thus destroyed; children do not belong to the same groups as their parents. Each group thus created is an approximately homogeneous bloc of members with the same needs, the same tastes, the same functions; propaganda can then easily develop and capture individuals forced into these artificial groups. There can be sessions of directed discussion (the themes in the youth groups will be very different from those in the adult groups); sessions of self-criticism (youth can engage in sincere and easy self-criticism when not under parental control). French propaganda in Indochina failed partly because it respected traditional society and its structured small groups.

⁵ The attempt of the F.L.N. (*Forces de Libération Nationale*) to imitate the North Vietnamese, coupled with the establishment of a million Arabs in relocation camps by the French authorities, brought about—each in its turn, each by its particular methods—this same sociological transformation. These operations are conducted simultaneously, and in both cases the desire to create a fertile ground for propaganda is not overlooked (far from it).

⁶ The conditions under which a group changes its opinion have often been analyzed; we know the problems of ambiguity, opinions based on prejudices, appearances that suddenly collapse, majority effects, and so on. Many limited studies on such local conditions have been made, but their findings have little value by themselves when considered outside the setting of mass society.

contacts between individuals, interpersonal relations are the dominant relations, and the formation of public opinion depends on these direct contacts. Opinion in these is determined by what has properly been called the "preponderant" opinion, which imposes itself automatically on the group as a whole. Interpersonal relations lead to a dominant opinion because, first of all, leadership in such groups is recognized spontaneously. Also, group opinion is called on to regulate concrete situations or common experiences that bring into play the common interests of all the individuals in the group. Moreover, the social level of individuals in such groups is generally the same.

Thus, such primary groups are spontaneously democratic. In fact, opinion is formed directly, for the individuals are directly in contact with the events that demand their participation. Once formed, this opinion is expressed directly and known to everybody. The leaders of the group know what the group opinion is and take it into consideration; they have contributed amply to its formation. But these groups are by no means liberal; minorities within them appear as foreign bodies—for in a relationship such as this, opposition weakens inter-group communication. Sanctions are generally diffuse but energetic. There is no equality; the members accept *leadership*, and of course small groups also recognize instituted authorities (the father of the family, for example). Dominant personalities play a considerable role, and often group opinion will be formed by individuals who are known to all the members of the group, and whose authority is accepted.

Secondary or large societies obviously have a totally different character. In these societies (generally the only ones considered by public opinion studies) individuals do not know and have no direct contact with each other. Moreover, they do not share the direct experience of problems on which they must make decisions. Interpersonal relations do not exist, only over-all relations—those of the individual with the group as a whole. To some extent, the opinion that prevails in such groups will be a majority opinion (which is not to say that public opinion is that of the majority).

In such groups, the formation of public opinion is very complex, and a host of theories exists on the subject. In any event, public opinion has three characteristics. It can shape itself only in a society in which institutionalized channels of information give the people the facts on which they will take a position. Thus,

some steps intervene between fact and opinion. The information reaching the people is only indirect, but without it there would be no opinion at all. Moreover, to the extent that we are dealing with information disseminated by intermediaries, opinion does not form itself by simple personal contact. And nowadays, opinion depends to a large extent on such intermediate channels of information.

A second characteristic of public opinion is that it cannot express itself directly, but only through channels. A constituted public opinion is as yet nothing, and does not express itself spontaneously. It will express itself in elections (when electoral opinion and public opinion coincide), through political parties, associations in the newspapers, referenda, and so on. But all that is not enough.

The third characteristic of public opinion is that this opinion is formed by a very large number of people who cannot possibly experience the same fact in the same fashion, who judge it by different standards, speak a different language, and share neither the same culture nor the same social position. Normally, everything separates them. They really should not be able to form a public opinion, and yet they do. This is possible only when all these people are not really apprised of the facts, but only of abstract symbols that give the facts a shape in which they can serve as a base for public opinion. Public opinion forms itself around attitudes and theoretical problems not clearly related to the actual situation. And the symbols most effective in the formation of public opinion are those most remote from reality. Therefore, public opinion *always rests on problems that do not correspond to reality.*

We have pointed out several times before that original small groups are obstacles to propaganda. The opinion structure of these primary groups is opposed to action outside the group (of course, we do not call the group leader's actions propaganda, but this does not mean that the group members are free from propaganda; on the contrary, we have already noted that they are not). Because direct experience, immediate grasp of facts and problems, and personal acquaintance between individuals exist in the small group, propaganda cannot function in such a group. Only in "second-hand" opinion can propaganda play its role; in fact, it cannot fail to play it there. In order for public opinion to form

itself in large groups, channels of information and manipulation of symbols must be available. Where public opinion exists, propaganda crystalizes that opinion from the pre-conscious individual state to the conscious public state. Propaganda can function only in secondary groups in which secondary opinion can form itself. But we must remember that we cannot simply juxtapose those two types of groups, because a whole society is also composed of multiple groups. A conflict between primary and secondary opinions will arise. One will dominate the other. Propaganda can exist only in societies in which second-hand opinion definitely dominates primary opinion and the latter is reduced and driven into a minority position; then, when the individual finds himself between the two conflicting types of opinion, he will normally grasp the general, public opinion. This corresponds to what we have said about the mass society.

The Mass Media of Communication

Finally, one more condition is basic for propaganda. We have just stated again that an opinion cannot form itself in entire societies unless mass media of communication exist. This much is evident: without the mass media there can be no modern propaganda. But we must point to a dual factor necessary if the mass media are really to become instruments of propaganda. For they are not such instruments automatically or under just any conditions. They 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. As long as a large number of independent news agencies, newsreel producers, and diverse local papers function, no conscious and direct propaganda is possible. This is not because the reader or viewer has real freedom of choice—which he has not, as we shall see later—but because none of the media has enough power to hold the individual constantly and through all channels. Local influences are sufficiently strong to neutralize the great national press, to give just one example. To make the organization of propaganda possible, the media must be concentrated, the number of news agencies reduced, the press brought under single control, and radio and film monopolies established. The effect will be still greater if the various media are concentrated in the same hands.

When a newspaper trust also extends its control over films and radio, propaganda can be directed at the masses and the individual can be caught in the wide net of media.

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 is in the making in the United States, France, and Germany—the fact is well known. The number of newspapers decreases while the number of readers increases. Production costs constantly increase and necessitate greater concentration; all statistics converge on that. This concentration itself keeps accelerating, thus making the situation increasingly favorable to propaganda. Of course, one must not conclude from this that the concentration of mass media *inevitably* produces propaganda. Such concentration is merely a prerequisite for it. But that the media be concentrated is not enough; it is also necessary that the individual will listen to them. This seems to be a truism: Why produce a propaganda paper if nobody will buy it?

Buying a paper, going to the movies are unimportant acts in an individual's life; he does them easily. But reception must be equally assured by radio or TV; here we encounter the problem of distributing sets—here the propagandee must take a very positive step: he must buy a set. Only where enough sets are installed can propaganda be effective. Obviously, where not enough TV sets are in use, it makes no sense to conduct propaganda via TV; this happened in 1950 to the TV propaganda of the Voice of America beamed to some Communist countries. But the act of acquiring a set brings up a point that we will discuss at considerable length: the *complicity* of the propagandee. If he is a propagandee, it is because he wants to be, for he is ready to buy a paper, go to the movies, pay for a radio or TV set. Of course, he does not buy these *in order* to be propagandized—his motivations are more complex. But in doing these things he must know that he opens the door to propaganda, that he subjects himself to it. Where he is conscious of this, the attraction of owning a radio is so much greater than the fear of propaganda that he voluntarily agrees to receive propaganda. This is even more true where transmission is by collective receiving sets, as in Communist countries. The hearers gather, even though they know that what

they hear is necessarily propaganda. But they cannot escape the attraction of the radio or the hypnotism of TV.

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, as we shall see.

Let no one say: "This reader does not submit to propaganda; first he has such and such ideas and opinions, and *then* he buys the paper that corresponds to them." Such an argument is simplistic, removed from reality, and based on liberal idealism. In reality, propaganda is at work here, for what is involved is a progression from vague, diffuse opinion on the part of the reader to rigorous, exciting, active expression of that opinion. A feeling or an impression is transformed into a motive for action. Confused thoughts are crystalized. Myths and the reader's conditioned reflexes are reinforced if he reads *that* paper. All this is characteristic of propaganda. The reader is really subject to propaganda, even though it be propaganda of his choice. Why always fall into the error of seeing in propaganda nothing but a device to *change* opinions? 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.

We have said that no propaganda can exist unless a mass can be reached and set into motion. Yet, the peculiar and remarkable fact is that the mass media really create their own public; the propagandist need no longer beat the drum and lead the parade in order to establish a following. This happens all by itself through the effects of the communication media—they have their own power of attraction and act on individuals in such a fashion as to transform them into a collective, a public, a mass. The buying of a TV 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 doors to propaganda. Where this dual process of concentration of the *sources* of propaganda and wide diffusion of its *recipients* does not take place, no modern propaganda can function in a society.

2. *Objective Conditions of Total Propaganda*

The Need of an Average Standard of Living

Just as there are societies not susceptible to propaganda, there are individuals not susceptible to it. We have just seen, for example, that it takes an individual to read the newspaper and buy a radio or TV set—an individual with a certain standard of living. Modern integration propaganda cannot affect individuals who live on the fringes of our civilization or who have too low a living standard. In capitalist countries, the very poor, who have no radio or TV and rarely go to the movies, cannot be reached by propaganda. Communist countries meet this problem with community receivers and free movies. Thus even the poorest can be reached by propaganda.

But other obstacles intervene. 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 by propaganda, kept in hand, channeled, and oriented.

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. We shall come back to that.

One must also keep in mind that propaganda must concentrate on the densest mass—it must be organized for the enormous mass

of individuals. This great majority is not found among the very rich or the very poor; 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. But, one might say, in the very poor countries, such as India or the Arab nations, propaganda is addressed to another mass, to the very poor, the *fellahin*. Well, the point is that these poor react only very little and very slowly to any propaganda that is not pure agitation propaganda. The students and merchants react—the poor do not. This explains the weakness of propaganda in 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.

Conversely, 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 because its members rarely have the means of educating themselves (even in the U.S.S.R.); more important, 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.

The range of propaganda *influence* is larger and encompasses the lower middle class and the upper working class as well. But by raising people's living standard one does not immunize them against propaganda—on the contrary. Of course, if everybody were to find himself at the upper-middle-class level, present-day propaganda might have less chance of success. But in view of the fact that the ascent to that level is gradual, the rising living standard—in the West, as well as in the East and in Africa—makes the coming generations much more susceptible to propaganda. The latter establishes its influence while working conditions, food, and housing improve, and while at the same time a certain standardization of men, their transformation into what is regarded as normal, typical people, sets in.⁷ But whereas the emergence of such

⁷ This is what Lenin said when he called for a total cultural transformation, with changes in medicine, in the relations between men and women, in the use of alcohol, and so on. This transformation of the entire way of life was linked to agitprop.

a "normal" type used to be automatic and spontaneous, it now becomes more and more a systematic creation, conscious, planned, and intended. The technical aspects of men's work, a clear concept of social relations and national goals, the establishment of a mode of common life—all this leads to the creation of a type of normal man, and conveniently leads all men toward that norm via a multitude of paths.

That is why *adjustment* has become one of the key words of all psychological influence. Whether it is a question of adaptation to working conditions, to consumption, or to milieu, a clear and conscious intent to integrate people into the "normal" pattern prevails everywhere. This is the summit of propaganda action. For example, there is not much difference between Mao's theory of the "mold" and McCarthyism. In both cases the aim is normalcy, in conformance with a certain way of life. For Mao, normalcy is a sort of ideal man, the prototype of the Communist, who must be shaped, and this can be done only by pressing the individual into a mold in which he will assume the desired shape. As this cannot be done overnight, the individual must be pressed again and again into the mold; and Mao says that the individual himself is fully aware that he must submit to the operation. Mao adds that this normalcy does not take shape "except at a certain level of consciousness—that is, at a certain standard of living."⁸ We are face to face here with the most total concept of propaganda.

On the other side, and with other formulas, there is McCarthyism. McCarthyism is no accident. It expresses, and at the same time exploits, a deep current in American opinion against all that is "un-American." It deals less with opinions than with a way of life. To find that belonging to a milieu, a group, or a family in which there are Communists is regarded as reprehensible in the United States is surprising, because what matters here is not ideas but a different way of life. This leads to the association of alcoholism and homosexuality with Communism in the literature on un-American activities, and to the rules, promulgated in 1952, which established the "poor security risk" and led to the screening of 7,000 functionaries. No reason for this identification existed other than that the Communist is "abnormal" because he fails to accept the "normal"—that is, the American—way of life. These "abnormal" persons must, of course, be treated as such, relieved of all

⁸See below, Appendix II.

responsibility, and re-educated. Thus American prisoners in the Korean War who appeared to have been contaminated by Communism were hospitalized after their release and given psychiatric and medical treatment in a hospital at Valley Forge. In current American opinion, all efforts to root out what fails to correspond to the American Way of Life and endangers it, are necessarily regarded as good works.

To sum up: The creation of normalcy in our society can take one of two shapes. It can be the result of scientific, psycho-sociological analysis based on statistics—that is, the American type of normalcy. It can also be ideological and doctrinaire—that is, the Communist type. But the results are identical: such normalcy necessarily gives rise to propaganda that can reduce the individual to the pattern most useful to society.

An Average Culture

In addition to a certain living standard, another condition must be met: 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; some primitive tribes are surely intelligent, but have an intelligence foreign to our concepts and customs. A base is needed—for example, education; 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 still celebrate the decline of illiteracy as a great victory; they condemn countries with a large proportion of illiterates; 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. Outside of that, reading has no meaning (and even destroys certain automatic qualities of memory and observation). But to talk about critical faculties and discernment is to talk about something far above primary education and to consider a very small minority. The vast majority of people, perhaps 90 percent, know how to read, but do not exercise their intelligence beyond this. They attribute authority and eminent value to the printed word, or, conversely, reject it altogether. As these people do not possess enough knowledge to reflect and discern, they believe—or disbelieve—in *toto* what they read. And as such people, moreover,

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.

Let us not say: "If one gave them good things to read . . . if these people received a better education . . ." Such an argument has no validity because things just are not that way. Let us not say, either: "This is only the first stage; soon their education will be better; one must begin somewhere." First of all, it takes a very long time to pass from the first to the second stage; in France, the first stage was reached half a century ago, and we still are very far from attaining the second. There is more, unfortunately. This first stage has placed man at the disposal of propaganda. Before he can pass to the second stage, he will find himself in a universe of propaganda. He will be already formed, adapted, integrated. This is why the development of culture in the U.S.S.R. can take place without danger. One can reach a higher level of culture without ceasing to be a propagandee as long as one was a propagandee *before* acquiring critical faculties, and as long as that culture itself is integrated into a universe of propaganda. Actually, the most obvious result of primary education in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was to make the individual susceptible to super-propaganda.⁹ 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 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 masses 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

⁹ Because he considered the newspaper the principal instrument of propaganda, Lenin insisted on the necessity of teaching reading. It was even more the catchword of the New Economic Policy: the school became the place to prepare students to receive propaganda.

1938 showed that in remote areas, where people hardly knew how to read, propaganda had no effect. The same holds true for the enormous effort in the Communist world to teach people how to read. In Korea, the local script was terribly difficult and complicated; so, in North Korea, the Communists created an entirely new alphabet and a simple script in order to teach all the people how to read. In China, Mao simplified the script in his battle with illiteracy, and in some places in China new alphabets are being created. This would have no particular significance except that the texts used to teach the adult students how to read—and which are the only texts to which they have access—are *exclusively* propaganda texts; they are political tracts, poems to the glory of the Communist regime, extracts of classical Marxism. Among the Tibetans, the Mongols, the Ouighbours, the Manchus, the only texts in the new script are Mao's works. Thus, we see here a wonderful shaping tool: The illiterates are taught to read only the new script; nothing is published in that script except propaganda texts; therefore, the illiterates cannot possibly read—or know—anything else.

Also, one of the most effective propaganda methods in Asia was to establish "teachers" to teach reading and indoctrinate people *at the same time*. The prestige of the intellectual—"marked with God's finger"—allowed political assertions to appear as Truth, while the prestige of the printed word one learned to decipher confirmed the validity of what the teachers said. These facts leave no doubt that the development of primary education is a fundamental condition for the organization of propaganda, even though such a conclusion may run counter to many prejudices, best expressed by Paul Rivet's pointed but completely unrealistic words: "A person who cannot read a newspaper is not free."

This need of a certain cultural level to make people susceptible to propaganda¹ is best understood if one looks at one of propa-

¹ We also must consider the fact that in a society in which propaganda—whether direct or indirect, conscious or unconscious—absorbs all the means of communication or education (as in practically all societies in 1960), propaganda forms culture and in a certain sense *is* culture. When film and novel, newspaper and television are instruments either of political propaganda in the restricted sense or in that of human relations (social propaganda), culture is perfectly integrated into propaganda; as a consequence, the more cultivated a man is, the more he is propagandized. Here one can also see the idealist illusion of those who hope that the mass media of communication will create a mass culture. This "culture" is merely a way of destroying a personality.

ganda's most important devices, the manipulation of symbols. The more an individual participates in the society in which he lives, the more he will cling to stereotyped symbols expressing collective notions about the past and the future of his group. The more stereotypes in a culture, the easier it is to form public opinion, and the more an individual participates in that culture, the more susceptible he becomes to the manipulation of these symbols. The number of propaganda campaigns in the West which have first taken hold in *cultured settings* is remarkable. This is not only true for doctrinaire propaganda, which is based on exact facts and acts on the level of the most highly developed people who have a sense of values and know a good deal about political realities, such as, for example, the propaganda on the injustice of capitalism, on economic crises, or on colonialism; it is only normal that the most educated people (intellectuals) are the first to be reached by such propaganda. But this is also true for the crudest kind of propaganda; for example, the campaign on Peace and the campaign on bacteriological warfare were first successful in educated milieus. In France, the intellectuals went along most readily with the bacteriological warfare propaganda. All this runs counter to pat notions that only the public swallows propaganda. Naturally, the educated man does not *believe* in propaganda; he shrugs and is convinced that propaganda has no effect on him. This is, in fact, one of his great weaknesses, and propagandists are well aware that in order to reach someone, one must first convince him that propaganda is ineffectual and not very clever. Because he is convinced of his own superiority, the intellectual is much more vulnerable than anybody else to this maneuver, even though basically a high intelligence, a broad culture, a constant exercise of the critical faculties, and full and objective information are still the best weapons against propaganda. This danger has been recognized in the U.S.S.R., where so much importance is attached to political indoctrination and education, and has frequently been expressed there: too much discussion, too much depth of doctrine risk creating divergent currents and permitting the intellectual to escape social control.

Finally, propaganda can have an effect on the masses who lack any culture. Examples: the Leninist propaganda directed at the Russian peasantry and the Maoist propaganda directed at the Chinese peasantry. But these propaganda methods, are basically

the creation of conditioned reflexes on the one hand, and the slow creation of the necessary cultural base on the other. To illustrate the creation of the conditioned reflex: after several months of propaganda in Honan in 1928, children at play would call their opponents "Imperialists."

As noted earlier, 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 into a rebel movement. But to go beyond this, to do a more profound propaganda job on him, one must educate him. This corresponds to the need for "political education." Conversely, an individual of the middle class, of good general culture, will be less susceptible to agitation propaganda but ideal prey of integration propaganda. This has also been observed by Lipset, who holds that ignorance in politics and economics makes the conflicts in these spheres less clear and therefore less intense to the observer, and for this reason the ignorant are less susceptible to propaganda on such questions.

Information

Of course, basic education permits the dissemination not only of propaganda but of information in general. But here we meet with a new condition for propaganda. Contrary to the simplistic differentiation between propaganda and information, we have demonstrated a close relationship between the two. In reality, to distinguish exactly between propaganda and information is impossible. Besides, information is an essential element of propaganda; for propaganda to succeed, it must have reference to political or economic reality. Doctrinal or historical argument is only incidentally effective in propaganda; it has power only in connection with the interpretation of events. It has an effect only when opinion is already aroused, troubled, or oriented in a certain direction by a political or economic event. It grafts itself onto an already existing psychological reality. Such psychological reactions are generally of brief duration, and must be systematically sustained and renewed. To the extent that they will be prolonged and renewed, they will create an "informed opinion."

This informed opinion is indispensable for propaganda. Where we have no informed opinion with regard to political or 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; it was not designed for the masses indifferent to such questions—indifferent because they were uninformed. The masses cannot be interested in political and economic questions or in the great ideological debates based on them, until mass media of communication disseminate information to the public. We know that the most difficult to reach are the peasants, for a variety of reasons already pointed out; but another essential reason is that they are uninformed. Studies of rural milieus have shown that propaganda begins to “bite” among peasants at the exact moment when information is promulgated there, when facts become known and attention to certain questions is aroused. Obviously, if I do not know that war is being waged in Korea, or that North Korea and China are Communist, or that the United States occupies South Korea and that it represents the UN in Korea, any Communist propaganda on alleged American biological warfare means nothing to me. Propaganda means precisely nothing without preliminary information; therefore propaganda to politically ignorant groups can be made only if preceded by extensive, profound, and serious information work.² The broader and more objective the information, the more effective subsequent propaganda will be.

Once again, propaganda does not base itself on errors, but on exact facts. It even seems that the more informed public or private opinion is (notice I say “more,” not “better”), the more susceptible it is to propaganda. The greater a person’s knowledge of political and economic facts, the more sensitive and vulnerable is his judgment. Intellectuals are most easily reached by propaganda, particularly if it employs ambiguity. The reader of a number of newspapers expressing diverse attitudes—just because he is better informed—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

² This is why in the Soviet Union one does not distinguish between the tasks of information and propaganda. The agitator is, above all, a dispenser of information; radio and the press are, above all, media of propaganda. Mr. Palgounov, director of the Tass agency, said in 1956: “Information should be didactic and educative.” Not to mention the fact that pure information is an excellent medium of propaganda; bald information without commentary can lead to acceptance of a whole propaganda line.

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 a government, a party, or a man can begin to develop fully by magnifying that problem on the one hand and promising solutions for it on the other. But propaganda cannot easily create a political or economic problem out of nothing. There must be some reason in reality. The problem need not actually exist, but there must be a reason why it *might* exist. For example, if the dispensation of daily information leads a man into the labyrinth of economic realities, he will find it difficult to understand these complicated and various facts, and he will therefore conclude that some problems of an economic nature exist. But this takes on an entirely different and much more pronounced aspect when this opinion is in any way connected with personal experience. If he were ignorant of what went on in the nation and in the world, and if his only sources of information were equally uninformed neighbors; in that case propaganda would be impossible, even if that man were actually to suffer personal difficulties as a result of certain political or economic situations. Propaganda had no effect on the populations of the nineteenth century, even when a village was plundered by an army, because in the face of personal experiences people respond spontaneously or by group reflexes, but in any event only to a local and limited situation. They would find it very difficult to generalize the situation, to look upon it as a generally valid phenomenon and to build a specific response to such a generalization—that would demand a considerable amount of voluntary intellectual labor. Thus propaganda becomes possible only when people develop a consciousness of general problems and specific responses to them.

The formation of such responses is precisely what the promulgation of information creates in individuals who have only limited personal contact with social reality. Through information, the individual is placed in a context and learns to understand the

reality of his own situation with respect to society as a whole. This will then entice him to social and political action. Take, for example, the problem of the standard of living: The worker who knows nothing about prices and salaries, except from personal experience (or those of his neighbors), may in the event of sharp discontent experience feelings of rebellion, and may eventually rebel against his immediate superiors. And it is well known that such rebellion leads nowhere; that was the great discovery of the nineteenth century. But information will teach this worker that he shares his fate with millions of others, and that among them there can be a community of interest and action. Information allows him also to put his situation into the general economic context and to understand the general situation of management. Finally, information will teach him to evaluate his personal situation. This is what led to the class consciousness of the nineteenth-century workers, a process which—as the socialists rightly maintain—was much more one of information than one of propaganda. 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.

From the moment when that sort of information is acquired, propaganda finds the doors open. The elementary form of propaganda in which a few leaders address a few rebels is then replaced by the complex modern propaganda based on mass movements, on knowledge of the great politico-economic realities, and on involvement in certain broad currents fed everywhere by identical information.³

Thus information prepares the ground for propaganda. To the extent that a large number of individuals receive the same information, their reactions will be similar. As a result, identical “centers of interest” will be produced and then become the great

³ Moreover, the newer the problems raised, the more vulnerable men will be. The role of information is to introduce individuals to knowledge of new facts and problems. Specialists in opinion research are well aware that the individual is easier to influence by propaganda when he is in new situations, when he is not familiar with possible solutions, when he cannot relate to previous patterns—when, in brief, opinion is “non-structured.” The task of information is to put the individual in this situation of non-structured opinion and thus make him more susceptible to influence.

questions of our time made public by press and radio, and group opinions will be formed which will establish contact with each other—one of the essential processes in the formation of public opinion. Moreover, this leads to the formation of common reflexes and common prejudices. Naturally, there are deviationists—individuals who do not share the same responses to the same information, because they already hold other prejudices, because they are “strong personalities,” or simply because of habitual contrariness. But their number is much smaller than is generally believed. They are unimportant, and the polarization of attention on certain questions, and on certain aspects of these questions singled out by information, rapidly creates what has been called mass psychology—one of the indispensable conditions for the existence of propaganda.

The Ideologies

Finally, the last condition for the development of propaganda is the prevalence of strong myths and ideologies in a society. At this point a few words are needed on the term *ideology*.

To begin with, we subscribe to Raymond Aron's statement that an ideology is any set of ideas accepted by individuals or peoples, without attention to their origin or value. But one must perhaps add, with Q. Wright, (1) an element of valuation (cherished ideas), (2) an element of actuality (ideas relating to the present), and (3) an element of belief (believed, rather than proved, ideas).

Ideology differs from myth in three important respects: first, the myth is imbedded much more deeply in the soul, sinks its roots farther down, is more permanent, and provides man with a fundamental image of his condition and the world at large. Second, the myth is much less “doctrinaire”; an ideology (which is not a doctrine because it is *believed* and not proved) is first of all a set of ideas, which, even when they are irrational, are still ideas. The myth is more intellectually diffuse; it is part emotionalism, part affective response, part a sacred feeling, and more important. Third, 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 myth does not leave man passive; it drives him to action. What myth and ideology have in common, however, is that they are collective phenomena and

their persuasive force springs from the power of collective participation.

Thus one can distinguish: the fundamental myths of our society are the myths of Work, Progress, Happiness; the fundamental ideologies are Nationalism, Democracy, Socialism. Communism shares in both elements. It is an ideology in that it is a basic doctrine, and a myth in that it has an explanation for all questions and an image of a future world in which all contradictions will be resolved. Myths have existed in all societies, but there have not always been ideologies. The nineteenth century was a great breeding ground of ideology, and propaganda needed an ideological setting to develop.

Ideology in the service of propaganda is very flexible and fluid. Propaganda in support of the French Revolution, or of United States life in the twenties, or of Soviet life in the forties, can all be traced back to the ideology of democracy. These three entirely different types and concepts of propaganda all refer to the same ideology. One must not think, for this reason, that ideology *determines* a given propaganda merely because it provides the themes and contents. Ideology serves propaganda as a peg, a pretext. Propaganda seizes what springs up spontaneously and gives it a new form, a structure, an effective channel, and can eventually transform ideology into myth. We shall return later to the connection between ideology and propaganda.

