

The Media in Power

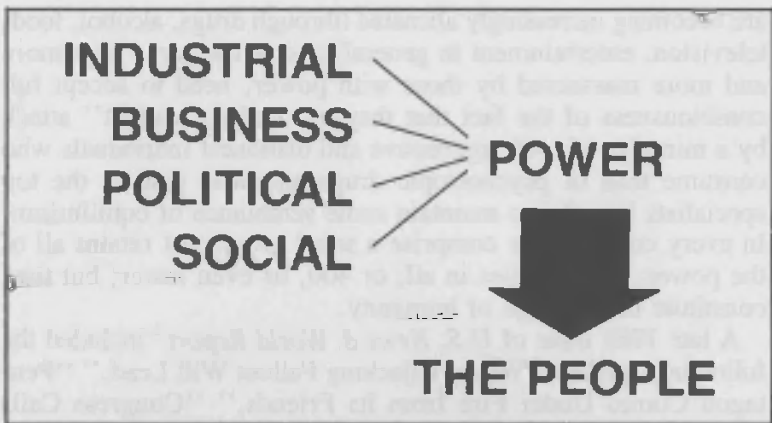
Large corporations buy out the media in order to control the market. Gulf and Western, for example, bought out Paramount, Exxon bought out Metro Goldwyn Mayer, and Murdoch is known to own a chain of television stations. Such facts show that the people are manipulated in conformity with the economic interests of these groups. Even though the law guarantees freedom of the press, the media obviously report only the news that favours these companies. Such being the case, to say that there is freedom of communication is an absolute lie. The people who work in this area are forced to follow the self-seeking orientation of their companies, however opposed they may be to it. This creates enormous tension among them, which explains why there is such a great turn-over of reporters, journalists and newscasters. The contrary is likewise true; that is, employees of long standing are generally those who have sold out to their employers.

We must pay close attention to the way in which the modern means of communication are being utilized. Humanity has entered the age of information — an era that may be the most dangerous of all, since it enables paranoid individuals to engage in the “art” of knowing all that goes on in order to control society. Chaplin’s *Modern Times* and Orwell’s *1984*, in which Big Brother uses a special television screen to keep constant watch over the people, are finally becoming reality. The idea of giving a number to each citizen, whose record would be kept on file at some police station so that he could be watched day and night, actually exists. As society is dominated by those sickest individuals who control socio-economic power, we are all in danger. The people, who

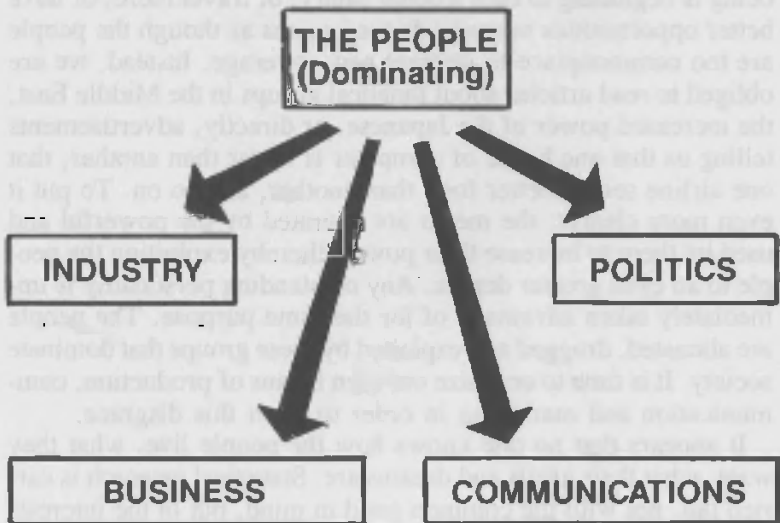
are becoming increasingly alienated (through drugs, alcohol, food, television, entertainment in general) and at the same time more and more massacred by those with power, need to accept full consciousness of the fact that they are under "violent" attack by a minority of cold, aggressive and dishonest individuals who consume tons of psychotropic drugs and who consult the top specialists in order to maintain some semblance of equilibrium. In every country they comprise a small group that retains all of the power: 500 families in all, or 400, or even fewer; but they constitute the scourge of humanity.

A late 1985 issue of *U.S. News & World Report*¹ included the following articles: "Where Hijacking Fallout Will Lead," "Pentagon Comes Under Fire from Its Friends," "Congress Calls Reagan's Hand on Budget Arts," "Reagan to Marcos: Shape Up Before It's Too Late" — all of them issues having to do with political, military and economic power, in no way related to the people. There was not one single article reporting that the human being is beginning to earn a better salary, or travel more, or have better opportunities to study. It even seems as though the people are too commonplace to warrant new coverage. Instead, we are obliged to read articles about fanatical groups in the Middle East, the increased power of the Japanese, or directly, advertisements telling us that one brand of computer is better than another, that one airline serves better food than another, and so on. To put it even more clearly: the media are operated by the powerful and used by them to increase their power, thereby exploiting the people to an even greater degree. Any outstanding personality is immediately taken advantage of for the same purpose. The people are alienated, drugged and exploited by these groups that dominate society. It is time to organize our own means of production, communication and marketing in order to avert this disgrace.

It appears that no one knows how the people live, what they want, what their ideals and dreams are. Statistical research is carried out, not with the common good in mind, but in the interests of the powerful. If the people are asked what they think of a certain power, it is only so that such power can be increased. If asked what they think of certain cars, for instance, it is only to increase the power of the manufacturers. This is why it is important to build our society now, to isolate the old corrupt power.



The diagram above shows how the old society is organized, with the people at the service of the powerful. A true society would be structured as in the diagram below.



Society can be reorganized by creating small communications companies: newspapers, magazines, radio and television, that cater to the people, who could then boycott the powerful media and eventually neutralize them.

Ronald J. Wilkins, in his book *Achieving Social Justice*, puts the problem this way:

*Over 85 percent of the people of the world suffer the humiliating and degrading effects of discrimination. Most women and most minorities (the minorities are the majority, in my opinion) in the United States and around the world are discriminated against... More than 70 percent of the people of the world are poor. In Latin America, South America, Asia and Africa over 400 million people, 40 percent of whom are children, suffer from severe malnutrition. Nearly 65 percent of the people of the world do not enjoy political freedom. People all over the world suffer the threat of nuclear war. For now, it is important to understand the causes of such social injustices.*²

*Many inequities continue to exist, however, because too many people are graspingly selfish.*³

Note that Wilkins sees selfishness as the cause of this calamitous situation; that is, he considers the cause psychopathological. I notice that these sick individuals who dominate the economy have all possible legal backing to act as they do. Issues of this type are generally not reported or discussed in the media because this would entail critical evaluation of the interests of the powerful who control the newspapers, magazines, radio and television.

When a newspaper publishes a story, its aim is to orient the powerful as to the way they act so that they can increase their power or recover the power they may have lost. Today, however, such power is the socio-economic power of a few; the power to deceive, lie and take for themselves what belongs to all mankind. Early this year, for example, *U.S.A. Today* ran a front-page story entitled "Oil 'panic' cunts gas, heat costs."⁴

"It is great news for consumers," said William Randal. "Monday, Occidental Petroleum fell 1/4 to \$28 1/3; Exxon lost 1/4 to \$52; Chevron fell 3/4 to \$35 5/8; Texaco slipped 1/4 to \$29 5/8."

Commented columnist Charles Koshetz:

As consumers happily wait for falling oil prices to flow to the gas pump, investors cross their fingers. The Dow Jones industrial average lost 7.57 points to 1,529.13 Monday. At one point, the average was off 14 points. Wall Street's fear is that falling oil prices could weaken the world's financial system.

I ask then: Is what is good for the consumer bad for the financial system? In other words, do the people always have to be jeopardized for the economy or finances of a nation to do well? This proves that the economic system harms the citizen in any part of the world, at least the way the system is organized today. And if it makes life difficult for the people as a whole, it is because it benefits only a few.

The way that the media speaks and writes gives the impression that the world of the powerful is a world apart, a world far removed from everyday life — which in fact it is — a parallel, schizophrenic kind of existence. When we hear tell of someone with power (economic, artistic or political), the idea we get is that they are not people like us. And in reality they are not, because their lives run on an artificial, illusory plane, prefabricated by those who have deviated from the normal. What I am saying is that that universe is strange because it is elaborated for the most part on fantasy and because it exists only as long as it is nourished in this pathological manner.

If the reader thinks about it he will realize that all of the individuals positioned in the universe of power either die under unusual circumstances or they have extremely bizarre habits. Worst of all is the fact that this type of thing is encouraged by the media, which shows it as an ideal way of being, as though a pathological mode of life were the best. I believe that it is extremely important to conscientize this phenomenon, to become fully aware of it, in order to avoid getting involved in this pathological social milieu which destroys those who take the same path. Consider, for instance, how many famous politicians, clergymen and influential people in high positions have died at an early age. The purpose of this work is precisely to awaken the human being to this reality so that he can reverse the situation.

The School of Frankfurt (Horkheimer, Haberman) holds that modern technology harms the human being. Analytical Trilogy maintains that the present system of promotion and advertising is extremely subtle and dishonest. For example, shoes displayed in a window or advertised in a magazine are quite different when you put them on, for however attractive they may be, after being worn for an hour they prove to be exactly like all others. The same holds true for ninety-nine percent of all advertised products.

Yet most distressing of all is the human being's belief that his worth is determined by what he owns: a luxurious home, a good car, fine clothes, jewels. In general, people fail to evaluate their qualities (and defects), preferring instead that their "value" derive from property and material goods, things that have nothing to do with a person's real capacity.

The media today form a very strong barrier to consciousness, and for this reason they have become extremely harmful for people, nations and humanity on the whole. Formerly this was not so, because political power predominated. Today economic power has taken over the means of communication in order to curry favor with political power, so that what we see is continual eulogizing of the powerful and of any idea or person who can increase this power.

We should not, however, forget mankind's great communicators who, in fact, bring glory to the companies they work for and credibility to this field of endeavor. I know that there are individuals of great worth in the media and that not only are they deceived by the companies that employ them, but also that they lack the means to really develop. Indeed, they need to fight so that freedom of the press will again prevail, for this is the only way they can preserve their own work.

Journalists, broadcasters and television and movie personalities must realize that it is they who provide the power within the media and that it is they who are being exploited and prevented from developing by the economic powers that control the companies they work for. It is time for these people to wake up and see that they must be the consciousness of society, that they cannot be silenced, under penalty of destroying civilization itself. Journalists have long been an exploited class because, first, it is they who take the risks in gathering the news and in covering events in

battle zones; and second, everything that they write is filtered through the editorial chiefs, whose position requires them to defend the philosophy of the company for which they work. Furthermore, as we know, what dominates is economic power, which sees to it that the news and information transmitted safeguards its power. That is why it is important for groups of professionals in this area to unite and form companies of their own which would cater to the interests of the people. These small firms could gradually begin to boycott those newspapers, magazines, radio and television stations that are not serving the interests of the people.

- The humiliated, the offended, the oppressed and the persecuted must join hands to break this invisible but enormous barrier that mercilessly strangles civilization and suffocates our most beautiful aspirations. Very little is lacking — only that decisive step to break this strange respect that is shown to the sick individuals and the devils who keep us imprisoned because we allow them to have power. Indeed, even the politicians believe they depend on them!

Many people may think it strange that I speak of liberating the people and may ask: Liberate the people from what? My reply is brief and to the point: liberate them from the devil, from social injustice, from exploitive work, or from economic power. In other words, the cause of all human difficulties is to be found in the control that the powerful exert in every way by means of money and of domination over society as a whole.

References

1. *U.S. News & World Report*, October 28, 1985.
2. Ronald J. Wilkins, *Achieving Social Justice: A Christian Perspective* (New York: Wm. C. Brown & Co., 1981), p.11.
3. Wilkins, p.12.
4. Charles Koshetz, "Oil 'panic' cuts gas, heat costs," *U.S.A. Today*, January 21, 1986.