How the media brainwash you

by L. Wolfe

There is a popular conceit among most Americans that they consider themselves "very well informed." After all, the average American reads one or more newspapers daily, reads a weekly news magazine such as *Newsweek* or *Time,* and watches more than 20 hours weekly of what is considered television "news" programming, including local and national news programs, and weekend and evening interview "talking heads" shows, such as "Meet the Press" or "Nightline," as well as subscription cable television news networks such as CNBC and CNN.[1] In addition, a sizable number of hours are spent listening to "talk radio." And in the recent period, a sizable and growing number of Americans are hooked into the Internet, which offers an almost unlimited number of so-called news sources, of all kinds.

But while there is certainly a wide variety of news sources available, the mere availability of such sources does not mean that the "news information" that they provide is either accurate, or even useful. As we explain in other sections of this *Feature,* the media operate as a vast cartel, with a single-minded purpose: to manipulate and shape the opinions of the American public, and in so doing, to assign a relative value and weight to these "opinions." In that way, the media steer what is called "public opinion," effectively governing what Americans think about everything from their style of clothes to how they vote for public officials, including their President. The fact is that the more you are exposed to the media, the more manipulated you are, the more deliberately misinformed about the world you live in.

Our "very well informed" Americans would never believe themselves "brainwashed," yet, if by that term we mean that you have been given a set of opinions and values, which are otherwise alien to your thinking, by an outside source, then that is exactly what has been done to you by the media cartel. The vast array of media outlets conceals that the range of information that they offer is tightly controlled.

To locate the importance of any single event, one must place it in a proper context, not merely in the current frame of events, but in relation to events past, and possible impacts on events in the future; there can be no such thing as an "isolated news story"—all stories must be placed in their broad historical context. By restricting or narrowing their context, they are mislocated; if this is done deliberately, then a person has been subjected to *disinformation*.[2] If that disinformation campaign is concealed, then its success becomes likely, and its victims will have their perception of reality thus altered. This is a form of brainwashing; that it is not understood as brainwashing, is itself a product of a media disinformation campaign.

Are you brainwashed?

For most Americans, the image that you have of "brainwashing" comes from Hollywood movies of the 1950s and 1960s about the Korean War. The victim, usually a prisoner of war or political prisoner, is subject to torture, over an extensive period of time, often supplemented by drugs and other agents. He or she is worn down, and finally, his will to resist collapses, and he is ready to undergo "re-education." The zombie-like victim is then shown to the public, speaking gibberish, praising his captors, attacking his former friends and country.

But this is only one type of brainwashing, known as "hard brainwashing." Among people who study the black art of "mind control," it is viewed as a rather crude, if brutally effective method, for a limited purpose, such as the production of a terrorist assassin.[3]

It is impossible to use "hard brainwashing" on large numbers of people. For "mass brainwashing," an entirely different technique is employed, one that conceals the process of brainwashing from its victims, in part because it is carried out over an extended period of time, in the course of everyday life. This so-called soft brainwashing, while not capable of producing zombie-assassins, can change the belief structures of society, and enable a small elite to control what people believe.

One of the most expert practitioners of mind control, Dr.

1. Despite the increase in so-called news programming over the last decade, the "news" content of that programming has not really increased. This is attributable to the packaging of "news stories" as entertainment, with an emphasis on human interest stories, as well as sports, celebrity gossip and entertainment "news," and even weather. There was far more "news"—such as it was—and especially international news, in the 1960s "Huntley-Brinkley Report" than on comparable network nightly news broadcasts today.

2. Such disinformation is also referred to as "gray propaganda," as distinct from "black propaganda," the content of which is outright lies.

3. The 1962 movie *The Manchurian Candidate* describes one such "hard brainwash" victim, programmed as a political assassin.

Press assembles before press conference by President Clinton and Tony Blair, Feb. 6, 1998. The media's function today is to create what Walter Lippmann called "pictures inside the heads of other human beings." The nature of those "pictures" is determined by an oligarchy.

William Sargant, wrote of this "soft brainwashing" in his 1957 book, *Battle for the Mind:* "Various types of belief can be implanted in many people, after brain function has been sufficiently disturbed by accidentally or deliberately induced fear, anger or excitement. Of the results caused by such disturbances, the most common one is temporarily impaired judgment and heightened suggestibility. Its various group manifestations are sometimes classed under the heading of 'herd instinct,' and appear most spectacularly in wartime, during severe epidemics, and in all similar periods of common danger, which increase anxiety and so individual and mass suggestibility."

Translated for the layman: Sargant tells us that if you can frighten a person enough, or otherwise keep him in a state of anxiety, he or she becomes an "easy mark" for someone who might want to alter his or her belief structure. The operative concept here is the deliberate creation of a state of anxiety; in "soft brainwashing," rather than accomplishing this through torture, drugging, etc., it is done through a manipulation of social circumstances, as well as the individual's perceptions of those circumstances, with the intent of inducing a fear-dominated, and highly predictable response to those events. That response can be further controlled through regulation of the intensity of the anxiety-creating tension, and alternately, regulating the ability of the targetted individual or group of individuals to seek release from that tension.

The Tavistock 'mother'

Sargant was part of a global network of brainwashers linked to the Tavistock Clinic, later known as the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations. Tavistock, located in a suburb of London, serves as the psychological warfare directorate of the intelligence and other networks controlled by the British royal family.[4] Since its founding in the 1920s, it has studied the means to control the minds of large numbers of people. Theirs is the thinking that underlies the principle of soft brainwashing. Using Freudian psychological parlance, they argue that what happens to a brainwash victim is that he or she is reduced to a regressive or infantile psychological state; in this condition, cognitive powers are impaired and suggestibility is heightened. The best way to induce such a regression is through the introduction of tension, preferably administered in the form of "shocks" that disorient, and therefore frighten, the victim or victims.

Not surprisingly, Tavistock's researchers demonstrated, starting in the 1930s, that the best means to create an all-encompassing controlled environment was through the dis-

4. The Tavistock Clinic was established in the aftermath of World War I, under the patronage of Duke George of Kent, under the direction of Dr. John Rawlings Rees. Some of its earliest studies dealt with the breakdown of soldiers under the stress and terror of battlefield conditions. Rees and his cadre of Freudians proceeded to create theories of how such breakdowns might be induced, absent the terror of war. During World War II, Rees, who led Tavistock through the 1940s, headed the Psychological Warfare Directorate of the British Army, where he held the rank of brigadier general. By the beginning the 1950s, Tavistock had a worldwide network of several thousand people located at several major U.S. universities. At this point, its global network, involves tens of thousands. The LaRouche movement undertook groundbreaking work on the Tavistock network in 1973-74 and published the result of those investigations in *Campaigner* magazine (Winter 1973, Spring 1974). Additional work has been published in *EIR,* including "Tavistock's Imperial Brainwashing Project," May 24, 1996, and "The Media Cartel That Controls What You Think," Jan. 17, 1997.

semination of managed news through the media. During World War II, a whole section of Tavistock's operatives studied—and implemented—news management techniques for mass propaganda/brainwashing on targetted sections of the U.S., Allied, and Axis populations.[5] Tavistock's operatives have continued to use these wartime mass brainwashing methods to this day.

Aside from containing a carefully arranged array of "massaged" news, the mass media also convey a range of acceptable responses to these stories. Often, all of those choices appear to be "bad," or to have "bad" consequences. Here, the instruction implied by the media is to choose the least "bad" of the responses. In Tavistock parlance, this is called a "critical choice," and it is a most effective means of controlling large numbers of people. It relies on another Tavistock-promoted fiction—the notion of "public opinion," usually transmitted through various types of opinion-polling information. The polls themselves, through the structure of their questions, and in many cases, through outright doctoring of results, can shape a desired outcome. Thus, polls, as Tavistock studies in the 1940s demonstrated, can be used to create public opinion and keep people from straying outside the range of critical choices.[6]

Pictures in your head

In 1922, Walter Lippmann defined the term "public opinion" as follows: "The pictures inside the heads of human beings, the pictures of themselves, of others, of their needs and purposes, and relationship, are their public opinions. Those pictures which are acted upon by groups of people, or by individuals acting in the name of groups, are Public Opinion, with capital letters."

Lippmann, who was the first to translate Sigmund Freud's works into English, was to become one of the most influential of political commentators.[7] He had spent World War I at the British psychological warfare and propaganda headquarters in Wellington House, outside of London, in a group that included Freud's nephew Eduard Bernays.[8] Lippmann's book *Public Opinion,* published one year after Freud's *Mass Psychology,* which touched on similar themes, was a product of his tutelage by the same networks that had created Tavistock. It is through the media, Lippmann writes, that most people come to develop those "pictures in their heads," giving the media "an awesome power."[9]

Lippmann observes in his book that people are more than willing to reduce complex problems to simplistic formulas, to form their opinion by what they believe others around them believe; truth hardly enters into such considerations. Appearance of reports in the media confer the aura of reality upon those stories: If they weren't factual, then why would they be reported? People whose fame is in turn built up by the media, such as movie stars, can become "opinion leaders," with as much power to sway public opinion as political figures have.

In examining how this process works, Lippmann turns to a study of the newspaper-reading habits of college students. He observes that, while each of the respondents claims to be "well read," they have little recollection of anything but the most superficial content of even important news stories. The students, in general, have the same recollections of these superficial "facts" of news stories, remembering the same details, despite that they may have received the news from different papers. Finally, the study seems to indicate that the more stories were recollected, the less the respondents seemed to recall about any individual story. Few respondents seemed to question that what they had read was a truthful account of events.

Lippmann also reports that the addition of "human interest," sports, or racy crime stories, to a mix of more serious news stories, tends to cause a lowering of attention paid to those more serious stories, especially complicated stories about international affairs. If this is the case for educated populations, it must even be more so the case for the less educated "mass of absolutely, illiterate, feeble minded, grossly neurotic, and frustrated individuals" who make up the majority of society. Such people, he states, can easily be misled by Popular Opinion, into believing what they think other people will believe. If even the educated display a lack

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5. In the United States, these studies were conducted as a response to the war bond drive, and dealt with, among other topics, the effect of media reports on morale and war bond sales; as such they provided the basis for a psychological profile of the American population, under conditions of extreme stress. Other studies were conducted of the effect of Allied terror bombing, and related propaganda efforts, on the German population.

6. The major polling services, such as Roper and Gallup, were developed out of the Tavistock networks. From the outset, they were funded by the same oligarchical networks for whom Tavistock's brainwashers work; their various offshoots today remain under the control of the media cartel. For more on this see L. Wolfe, "For Whom the Polls Toll," *EIR,* Jan. 17, 1997.

7. Lippmann, who migrated from Fabian socialist networks to the circles of the Dulles brothers, became a spokesman for an American "imperialist" faction that was effectively controlled by the British; as such, he was often deployed against both the spirit and content of the anti-imperialist policy outlook of President Franklin D. Roosevelt. See Lyndon LaRouche, *The Case of Walter Lippmann* (New York: Campaigner Publications, Inc., 1977).

8. Bernays later became one of the most successful American advertising executives, effectively creating "Madison Ave.," using the tricks of Freudian psychological manipulation.

9. Freudian psychology in general, including Tavistock's "brand" of it, proceeds from the image of man as a sensate beast. It explicitly rejects, with great malice, the Judeo-Christian view of man as created in the image of God, distinguished from all other creatures in that he alone has creative cognitive powers, giving him the ability to deliberately, and creatively, alter the universe. Tavistock "experts" claim that all creativity derives solely from neurotic or erotic impulses (or both); they see the human mind as merely a slate on which they can draw and redraw their desired "pictures."

of critical judgment and only a superficial recollection of what the media report, the great mass of people cannot possibly do better.

And who shapes this Popular Opinion? Lippmann observes that it is ultimately determined by the desires and wishes of an elite "social set." That set, he states, is a "powerful, socially superior, successful, rich urban social set [which] is fundamentally international throughout the Western Hemisphere and in many ways, London is its center. It counts among its membership the most influential people in the world, containing as it does the diplomatic sets, high finance, the upper circles of the army and navy, some princes of the church, the great newspaper proprietors, their wives, mothers, and daughters who wield the scepter of invitation. It is at once a great circle of talk and a real social set."[10]

The Nazi example

Lippmann was writing at the beginning of a technological revolution in mass communication. By the early 1930s, more Americans could be reached at one time by radio than could be reached by all print media over the course of days: The era of "mass media" had truly arrived. Through the decade of the 1930s, researchers, many either directly or loosely affiliated with Tavistock networks, worked on a mass media with the ability to present information simultaneously across the nation, and ultimately around the world. They discovered that the very thing that made it "mass" media—the awareness of the population that they were sharing a common experience and common news—enlarged the power of the media itself to mold "public opinion." If a story or report were broadcast, the studies found, it was more likely to be believed than if reported in the print media; in fact, the studies found that there was a *predisposition* to believe a radio report.[11]

Each of the networks, led by the Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) and William Paley, developed their own news department, eventually creating their own news bureaus, separate from the wire services[12]; supplementing this, were the commentators and "news personalities," such as H.V. Kaltenborn, and later Edward R. Murrow. Techniques of conveying urgency—and also fear—were developed, such as the news "bulletin."[13]

But the most advanced experimentation in the use of mass media, especially radio, for mass brainwashing purposes, was taking place in Nazi Germany, under the direction of the Hitler machine that London and Wall Street had helped place in power. While various public figures decried the use of German media for "mass propaganda," the British-run Tavistock networks carefully studied successes and shortcomings of the Nazi propaganda machine in order to find ways to improve its efficiency.[14]

The Nazis were brought to power in a German society driven by economic collapse into chaos, violence, and insanity; to the fear-stricken German population, anything was better than the uncertainty and disaster of continued social chaos.[15]. Once in power, the Nazi police state apparatus maintained the controlled environment of terror, in a heavy-handed way that was found to be abhorrent to generally accepted norms of Western society. Was there a way to accomplish the same result, without the "jackboots"? Tavistock was asked. The answer came back from the networks of U.S.-based Kurt Lewin[16]: the constant bombarding of a population with fearful images, supported by threats, from alleged enemies, both internal and external, could produce the kind of "chaotic social

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10. This is the social set that controls the media cartel (see *EIR,* Jan. 17, 1997). In recent years, there has been an attempt to create the impression among the general public that the media cartel is a power unto itself, that its prominent members, such as Rupert Murdoch, are themselves capable of shaping policy. In that way the celebrity of such figures conceals the fact that they serve much higher masters among an international policy elite dominated by a London-centered European oligarchy. The image of the late media mogul Robert Maxwell floating face down in the waters off his yacht, the victim of a staged "suicide," provides evidence of the disposable character of such "titans" of the media as Murdoch, Ted Turner, et al.

11. The Princeton-based Radio Project, conducted by a network associated with the Frankfurt School, then relocated to the United States, produced the most prominent body of research on radio programming and its mass effects on the U.S. population. Much of this work was later incorporated into the World War II propaganda operations, run by Tavistock. For more on the Radio Project and the Frankfurt School, and its role in shaping media policy and cultural warfare, see Michael Minnicino, "The New Dark Age: The Frankfurt School and 'Political Correctness,' " *Fidelio,* Winter 1992.

12. The radio news departments, especially their foreign bureaus, have had a historic relationship with the intelligence services. The case of William Paley is exemplary.

13. The use of the news bulletin as a tension-creating and attention-grabbing device became widespread during the 1938 Munich crisis. Its effects were further studied by the Radio Project in its analysis of the Orson Welles Mercury Theater play on H.G. Wells's "War of the Worlds"—his famous 1938 "invasion from Mars" broadcast, which was aired in the form of a series of news bulletins. For more on this, see Minnicino, op. cit.

14. There has been a common myth that the Nazi media were so tightly run from the top down, that their lying was transparent, and therefore hardly effective. The Nazis allowed for a large number of seemingly privately run media outlets, as well as with official government press. While the information that comprised the "news" was carefully leaked, its reporting was not all that different in form from what Americans find in the media today. There were dozens of different angles presented for any given story, with "sources" cited that were often deliberately conflicting. The various media outlets were able to simulate an illusion of "accuracy" and "truthful" reporting, and were even allowed to challenge certain facts presented by the Nazis.

15. The terror and fear in the German population of the early 1930s is not dissimilar to that of the Russian population today, creating the possibility that the failed International Monetary Fund policies might lead to the imposition, with the connivance of Britain and allied continental assets, of a "Hitler solution" in Russia.

16. The German emigré Lewin was perhaps the most influential of Tavistock's theorists. His work became the basis for group dynamics brainwashing and mass psychological profiling. For more on this, see L. Wolfe, "How Tavistock Helped the ADL Make the Jews 'Victims,' " *EIR,* April 26, 1996.

field" that would leave the mass of people in an easily manipulable state; control of information through the mass media offered the opportunity to outdo even the "Big Lies" of Josef Goebbels, Hitler's Propaganda Minister.

The one-eyed babysitter

It was another technological breakthrough that gave the "mass brainwashers" their most effective tool.

Television was first experimented with by the Nazis in the 1936 Berlin Olympics. It made its flashy domestic debut at the New York World's Fair in 1939. From the end of World War II in 1945, television began its forced march through American life; what was a community oddity in 1946, by 1952 had mass penetration into American households, especially in urban areas.

As a tool for mass brainwashing, television represents an exponential increase in potential effect over radio. It provides the simultaneity of radio—the capability of delivering instantaneously, a message to a vast audience; but, by combining sound with images, it confers an even greater authenticity to what it broadcasts. In so doing, a *virtual reality* renders the mind incapable of distinguishing what is real.[17]

James Fallows, in his limited, but useful attack on the media's assault on the American republic, *Breaking the News* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1996), says that this process has turned all news events into "spectacles," and reduced everything to a surreal "nowness":

"For TV the ideal world is one in which whatever is on the screen at this moment is entirely engrossing. One event is not necessarily more important than another, because they are all supposed to claim our attention in the brief *now* in which they exist. . . . TV's natural tendency is to see the world in shards. It shows us one event with an air of utmost drama, then forgets about it, and shows us the next."

Even the earliest clinical studies of television (some of which were conducted in the late 1940s and early 1950s by Tavistock operatives) showed that viewers, over a relatively short period of time, entered into a trance-like state of semi-awareness, characterized by a fixed stare; the longer one watched, the more pronounced the stare. In such a condition of twilight-like semi-awareness, people became susceptible to messages both contained in the programs themselves, and through transference, in the advertising. They were being brainwashed.[18]

The children of the World War II veterans, the Baby Boomers, became the first generation to be weaned on what Lyndon LaRouche calls "the one-eyed babysitter." And it was television that played a key role in shaping the personality of that generation, and their parents. It was television that had terrorized and humiliated the nation through its broadcast of the political witch-hunt led by Sen. Joe McCarthy; then, once "Tailgunner Joe's" usefulness was over, it was television that helped destroy him. Through the decade of the 1950s, and into the 1960s, parents and their children watched, with terror, as the world was brought to the apparent brink of nuclear annihilation several times, including that most terrifying confrontation and showdown over Soviet missiles in Cuba in October 1962. As the terrified Baby Boomers grew up, the nightly news brought home the bloody images of a senseless war in the jungles of Southeast Asia, made all the more real by the proliferation of a new technology—*color* television.

Global shock therapy

The events described above, along with others of the same period, including the assassinations of President Kennedy, Robert Kennedy, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the latter two in the space of two months in 1968, had an effect similar to that of electroshocks administered in a hard brainwashing torture; in this case, they were being administered simultaneously, through the power of mass media, to an entire society—a global shock therapy.

In the 1970s, twenty years after television became the dominant means of mass brainwashing, two top Tavistock operatives, Eric Trist (who, until his death in 1993, headed Tavistock's operations in the United States) and Fred Emery, surveyed the mental wreckage.[19] They made a startling observation: The content of programming was not as important to the brainwashing process as the medium itself. Television had achieved a drug-like, addictive status for the population, with the average American watching more than six hours per day (and the figures have risen since the Trist-Emery studies were taken); this meant that Americans spend more time in front of their television sets than doing anything else except working and sleeping.[20] They observed that this level of viewing had succeeded in effectively turning off key cognitive centers of the mind; the zombie-like trance observed in most viewers was just that—a non-thinking state, in which emotional reaction replaced critical thought. Viewers chose their programming according to what made you "feel good," and usually in accord with what they thought their neighbors were

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17. One is reminded of the story of the man who was run over by a bus on a city street; refusing hospital treatment, he picked himself up, and made his way over to the nearest bar to watch himself on the local evening news, to check out "what happened." An early advertising campaign for an audiotape used to ask, "Is it 'live' or is it Memorex?" The answer now is, "It doesn't matter. It's all virtual reality anyway."

18. For more on television and its role in brainwashing the American population see the 16-part series, "Turn Off Your Television," by this author in *The New Federalist,* 1991-93. It is available in reprint from *EIR* for $25. While there is nothing inherently evil about radio, television, or any form of communication technology, what can make them evil and dangerous is their control by oligarchical networks, whose intent is to manipulate habituated or addicted listeners, viewers, or users, whose critical capacities are seriously impaired.

19. See Eric Trist and Fred Emery, *A Choice of Futures* (1972), and Fred Emery, *Futures We Are In* (1975).

20. With the advent of cable television, with its channel for every perversion, the amount of viewing time per household has risen considerably.

watching. The same was true about "news programming"—you watched it because you thought that "everyone" watched, but you cared little about what the content was.

Television viewing, the two brainwashing theorists reported, was part of a "maladaptive" response to a fearful reality—a "reality" for which the principal reference points were provided by the mass media, and especially television. They found society moving through a progressively degenerative social process. By regulating the "social turbulence" of the global order—i.e., by creating a controlled environment of economic and political shocks—the degeneration would take a predictable path. In other words, Trist and Emery claimed that they could reliably predict the response of a majority of any population influenced by a mass media-dominated environment to most administered shocks, in much the same way that a "hard brainwasher," administering a psychotropic drug to a victim, can anticipate the victim's response to that drug.

Trist and Emery proceed to offer a number of possible "futures," based on levels of and intensity of the "social turbulence" in the global field. Putting aside the possibility of the most extreme turbulence—a nuclear war—they anticipate that, should the world economy break down into a chaotic collapse, the population, with its choices and range of action manipulated by the media, would likely choose a maladaptive response of intense *dissociation*. Society would, under these circumstances, become psychotic; a small elite might survive as masters and rulers, protected by private armies. It would resemble, they state, the world of Anthony Burgess's 1962 novel *A Clockwork Orange,* where urban areas are terrorized by gangs of deranged youth who rush home to view their daily dirty work on the evening news broadcasts. The mass media help keep the society terrorized, while conveying a sense that this insanity is "normal." The citizen, too scared to travel the streets in even late afternoon, can at least turn on the TV set to be entertained.[21]

Trist and Emery are themselves insane, in the same way that the Nazi doctor who oversees the slaughter of thousands speaks of his work as furthering "science." Such insanity is also expressed in the hubris of a whole breed of practitioners of mind control such as the Futures Group's Hal Becker, who told this author in a 1981 interview: "I know the secret of making the average American believe anything I want him to. Just let me control television. . . . You put something on the television and it becomes reality. If the world outside the TV set contradicts the images, people start trying to change the world to make it like the TV set images. . . . Americans don't really think—they have opinions, feelings. Television creates opinion, then validates it. Are they brainwashed by the tube? It is really more than that. I think that people have lost their ability to relate the images of their own lives without television intervening."[22]

Becker went on to rave about the future of mass media, and its power to control what people think. Back in 1981, people like Becker longed for the moment when most of mankind would be "wired" in a single network—an interactive "wired society," capable of pouring out instantaneously a myriad of "information" that would keep people confused and controlled. In such a degraded "Clockwork Orange" society, people sit at home and participate in "mass democracy," expressing their opinion through computer mice on the Internet or in interactive cable television "instant" polls. The wire (or, fiber optic cable) that binds this new society together becomes, according to Becker and others, the road to "true freedom," effectively replacing what they consider to be the "outmoded" nation-state means of governance.

Less than two decades later, the "wired society" has become a reality, as hundreds of millions of miles of cable and fiber optics span the globe. The world is "connected" through the vast "Information Highway," the Internet, with its access to unlimited sources of "information." As powerful as television has been as a soft brainwashing medium, the Internet has the potential to be even more effective.[23]

The reality is, that in the hands of the powerful media cartel, controlled by a handful of oligarchical interests, the cable and phone lines of the "wired society" have replaced the "hard brainwasher's" electroshock wires, numbing and distorting the minds of millions, and shaping your opinions.

Example: the Lewinsky affair

Let us now briefly look at the Monica Lewinsky affair, as a classic case of *attempted* media mass brainwashing.

The operation was set up long before the first information of the scandal made its way into the press in January 1998. From the moment he took office, and even before, during the 1992 campaign, Bill Clinton has been under a constant press assault focussed on his personal life. There has been one report after another about alleged sexual affairs, of which the Paula Jones case is only the most prominent. In each case, the media "food chain," as the White House has labelled the mechanism for the production of scandals against the Presi-

21. Burgess, a linguist, creates a degraded language for his beast-like youth, not unlike the rap and other grunt-like dialects that are celebrated by today's youth culture. But that butchering of the English language is only more noticeable than the destruction that takes place daily in the broadcast and print media, in general, which is far less literate than what could be found in the popular media even 35 years ago.

22. Becker was one of the Futures Group, a private think-tank that was among the first organizations to specialize in the use of computer interfaces in psychological manipulations of corporate executives and world political leaders, with contracts from the State Department and major multinational corporations. It also conducted extensive "market research" profiling of the U.S. population.

23. Although the Internet is a relatively new development, early studies have shown that its use is even more addictive and habituating than television. It is producing a large number of Internet junkies, whose interpersonal and creative capacities are severely impaired.

dent, has carried the reports, usually with leaks from the agencies involved in the scandalizing or related legal cases. This entire array of "bimbo eruptions," is the equivalent of an artillery barrage, intended, in this case, to soften up the mind of the population to accept the idea that the President is "immoral."

The sexual charges were accompanied by allegations pertaining to the Whitewater land deal, and further allegations of corruption, none of which were ever proven. However, the combined effect of the mass circulation of the charges was to give general credence to the idea that the "President is corrupt."

The American people did not think any of these things were all that important; however, the persistence of the media, especially in the period of the Starr investigation, kept the allegations against the President alive and in the minds of Americans. There are some people who will say that the media were just doing their job; but examine the volume of coverage of the alleged scandals, over the same period, against coverage of the ongoing economic collapse and troubles in the international financial system, and the disproportionate weight given to the story becomes obvious.

As we indicated, there is no such thing as an isolated "news story." But what is the proper context in which to locate the Lewinsky-Starr affair? Is it part of a series of interrelated scandals and cover-ups—sex, lies, and videotapes—that have engulfed the White House, as *all* the media reports (other than those of this news service) would have one believe? Or, is there something else going on? Have forces decided to "take out" this President through a "political character assassination" precisely at the moment that the President's leadership is needed to deal with the worst financial collapse in history? What has been concealed by the media portrayal of the "sex scandals" is their potential relation to anything, but especially to the financial collapse; in fact, the soap opera quality of the scandal provides an excuse to reduce reporting of the international financial collapse, unless events on Wall Street and elsewhere are so calamitous as to force such discussion.

Polls showed that the Whitewater scandal did not "grab" the average American; its only "inflamed constituency" was the hard core of Clinton-haters. The sex scandals had a greater pull. The Lewinsky story reinvigorated the media assault on the President. But despite all the various "ins and outs" of the scandal, people still didn't bite at the media's attempt to convince people that it was all that important.

The Starr report and its release to the public by the U.S. Congress became the "last best hope" for the promotion of the scandal. No holds were barred to drag the American people into the gutter. From the dramatic dropping off of the "boxes" at the Congress on Sept. 10, all media outlets devoted seemingly endless volumes of newsprint and hours of broadcast time to the story. For the first time in history, a scandalous legal brief was made available instantaneously to everyone in the world through the Internet; several papers printed in its entirety the Starr-written summary, which read like the pornography that it was, while others featured major excerpts.

This total media immersion overwhelmed the American public. At first, the reactions from the average citizens seemed to indicate that this soft brainwashing offensive was achieving its desired effect. Polls showed that many Americans were starting to shift from the view that Starr was nothing more than a venal prosecutor on a witch-hunt, to the belief that there might be something to his charges, after all. The media barrage around the report was intended to convey an aura of truth to the salacious garbage in the document; clearly, no one but an obsessed idiot or a pornography addict, would have the desire to pick their way through the entire report. With the media providing the "reviews," its readers were being effectively asked behave like viewers of porno videos and to "fast forward" to the "good stuff"—thereby overlooking the weakness of Starr's overall legal argumentation.

But for all the use of soft brainwashing method and capabilities, and the deployment of novel means of mass distribution, the effort may have backfired. Despite the continued push to force a Clinton resignation, and the ongoing "serious" coverage of the clownish efforts of the GOP leadership to conduct impeachment proceedings, the American people aren't buying it—at least not yet. There has been what psychiatrists might call an abreaction to the filth that has poured in endless stream from Starr through the media spigots. But, perhaps even more disturbing to the brainwashers, the vast array of mind-bending propaganda surrounding the Starr report has exposed the brainwashing function of the media itself. As several reports indicate, including some taken by the brainwashers' own pollsters, the American people suspect that the scandal is being rammed down their throats by a media "elite" who serves something other than the national interest.[24]

They won't give up

With the brainwashing effort around the Starr report faltering, and even backfiring, the media machine shifted tactics

24. Typical is the moaning of the *Washington Post* and *Newsweek* magazine on this issue. "For months now, many media commentators have been saying . . . that the public would come to share their outrage about President Clinton soon enough," the *Post*'s media commentator Howard Kurtz wrote on Sept. 15. "Once ordinary Americans learned the seamy details of Clinton's conduct, once the independent counsel's findings became public, the president's poll ratings would surely plummet." Yet, in the days since the release of the Starr report, "there has been no such public explosion. . . . The contrast with the media's collective sense of betrayal has never been greater," Kurtz wrote, noting the number of newspapers which have editorially called for Clinton to resign, plus that "the weekend talk shows were filled with indignant questions and harsh commentary. . . ." *Newsweek* columnist Jonathan Alter wrote, "The greatest surprise in this whole story is the ongoing gap between the elites—who now almost uniformly despise Clinton—and the people, who have stuck with him so far."

somewhat. Media coverage now sought to narrow the range of possible choices for Congressional action to two—either impeachment (which remained in the polls an unacceptable choice to most Americans) or censure (for which the polls claimed greater support). This classic "critical choice" presentation of options eliminated as "unthinkable" the idea that *any* Congressional action against the President was both uncalled for and unnecessary, and that instead of such action, a Congressional attack on the illegal Starr operation should be launched. The media have pulled out all the stops in this "critical choice" debate, from editorials, to "talking heads" commentary, to "man-in-the-street" interviews and polling reports. And while most people still believe that the Starr report is garbage, many seem to have accepted the "critical choices" offered, choosing "censure" over "impeachment"—at least for the moment.[25]

Despite these obstacles, the media brainwashing machine still believes that it can achieve its desired outcome: the political assassination of President Clinton and his removal from office. Following the release of the Starr report, nearly all the talking heads and other media sources were putting out a uniform line: The November Congressional election is a "referendum" on the President and "the people will decide his fate." Nearly every media source—including many "favorable" to the President—is saying that should the Democrats lose a significant number of Congressional races on Nov. 3, then the President would likely be forced to resign, or face an almost certain impeachment.

In that way, the media intend to lead the electorate into participating in an unconstitutional parliamentary coup. It is totally against the principles of our Republic, as defined by the Constitution, that the fate of the President should rest on the outcome of any election for the Legislative branch of government. That is what occurs in parliamentary systems, when governments live or die on the outcome of parliamentary votes and numbers of seats held by various parties. If the outcome of the so-called Clinton Crisis is to foster belief or support for a parliamentary system, then its effect would be ultimately destructive to our form of government. (Not coincidentally, a parliamentary government is even more susceptible to manipulation by the media cartel.)

Those behind the impeachment drive are responsible for putting this bilge in the media sewer; they are counting on a low voter turnout and the treasonous activities of the Democratic leadership to assure a big loss for the President's party on Election Day. Right now, hardly anyone is campaigning around the issue of the President; it is the media which are doing the "campaigning," and calling for a "Clinton referendum" on Nov. 3. No doubt, some Gingrichite lunatics might pick up this tactic, but it remains a "Big Lie" that the election is any kind of referendum on President Clinton.

The President's and party leadership's support for disastrous and failed economic policies, such as the Welfare Reform Act, cost the Democrats control of the Congress in 1996. Should the Democrats lose seats on Nov. 3, the media are primed to analyze the loss as "devastating" for the President. The environment for an impeachment or resignation will be revved up. And, our media-addicted population might finally succumb to the brainwashing offensive: "Hey, the Democrats lost, didn't they? Maybe I was wrong about what I thought about Starr." At least, that's what those behind the brainwashing offensive hope. And if that doesn't work, they still have the spectacle of Congressional hearings, an impeachment vote, and trial, to try to win the day. They do not plan to give up.

Harlow's monkeys

The key to resisting brainwashing, is to seek to know truth, through questioning one's own assumptions, and testing them. The truth is not found by adding up the number of news sources that say it is so.

Back in 1981, Tony Lentz, an assistant professor of speech at Pennsylvania State University, observed that he had witnessed destruction of oral and written skills, by the mass media and television; not only could most students not write coherently, but they could not even speak intelligently. This was not merely a function of miseducation, he stated in a paper, "The Medium Is Madness," but also because they had no desire to think. Arguing that Plato states that our knowledge of the world must be based on knowing the mind of someone who knows something about it, Lentz said that television has left people with the idea that mere images represent knowledge. There is no questioning, no effort to get inside the mind of someone, merely dialogue and image.

"Allowing ourselves to be influenced by the subtle but powerful illusions presented by television," wrote Lentz, "leads to a kind of mass madness that can have rather frightening implications for the future of the nation. . . . We will have begun to see things that aren't there, giving someone else the power to make up our illusions for us. The prospect is frightening, and given our cultural heritage we should know better."

The worst fear of the people who run the media, is that somehow, people will see through the haze and lies to the truth. Then, there could be the equivalent of a Harlow's monkey rebellion against the media and the people who run them, just as Harlow's psychologically tormented experimental animals turned on him and gave him a thorough drubbing. That happy moment in history might not be too far off.

25. There are indications that the President is himself a target of this critical choice brainwashing. His political handlers, especially those people associated with Vice President Al Gore, have been pressing him to make a deal for censure, rather than risk impeachment. This keeps President Clinton in a box, and away from a vigorous counterattack against the Starr apparatus and what stands behind it.