

RUNNYMEDE GAZETTE

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CONTENTS

EDITORIAL

PUB TALK AND PILGER

A GLUT OF CHARTERS

NEW MODEL CHARTER

Critical Thinking

GEORGE ORWELL'S 1984 REVISITED [MY WORDS]

John Pilger; via Dave Barnby

**THE MAINSTREAM MEDIA HAS ALWAYS BEEN A PROPAGANDA TOOL OF
THE ESTABLISHMENT**

Steven MacMillan; Activist Post

**BIG MEDIA V SOCIAL MEDIA IN THE GLOBAL, NON-VIOLENT, HUMANIST
REVOLUTION**

Silvia Swinden; Pressenza; via Critical Thinking

**11 TACTICS USED BY THE MAINSTREAM MEDIA TO MANUFACTURE
CONSENT FOR THE OLIGARCHY**

Sigmund Fraud; Activist Post

ATVOD—THE FINAL ALTERNATIVE MEDIA CLAMP-DOWN?

UK Column

SHUTDOWN BY UK INTERNET CENSORSHIP

Julie Beal; via Arlene Johnson

PIRATE RADIO STATION FOR \$55 COULD HELP DECENTRALIZE BIG-TELECOM

Tony Cartalucci; Activist Post

TELL FACEBOOK NOT TO SELL OUR DATA TO AD COMPANIES.

Jon Lloyd, SumOfUs.org

BIG BROTHER WATCH

Emma Carr

THE DISLOYAL

Golem XIV

CENTRAL BANKS IN OTHER COUNTRIES TO REQUIRE BIOMETRICS TO BANK

Melissa Melton; Activist Post

BUYING UP THE PLANET: OUT-OF-CONTROL CENTRAL BANKS ON A CORPORATE BUYING SPREE

Ellen Brown; Global Research; Web of Debt

SEX, DRUGS & THE EU

Mike Gold; Radical Soapbox

POSITIVE MONEY BULLETIN

Positive Money Team

EDITORIAL

PUB TALK AND PILGER

More by accident than design, this edition has come to focus on the role of the corporate mass media.

Of course the innate conformism of (according to research) 90% of humans, makes the task of the corporate media easy. Nietzsche once observed that 'men will always believe what is seen to be strongly believed in'. For the majority an opinion or an outlook is more of an item of clothing than than the result of a critical, intellectual process. Like any fashion, the opinion is the result, not of any inner preference, but of the perception of what others are doing. It is kept in the wardrobe of the mind. worn to please, and be accepted by, one's peers, to be paraded on the catwalk of mutual approval. The non-conformist or counter-conformists who will forensically dissect an issue, and then ... importantly ... be fearless in the pursuit of their argument ... are always a small minority. As Sigmund Freud puts it;-

"The truth is that ideas and opinions are as vastly different as grains of sand on a beach, yet the media intentionally frames every issue in terms of a phony left-right paradigm that has been constructed to pigeon hole complex ideas and interests into a cheapened thought prison. No unorthodox idea or point of view can reach critical mass because everything is automatically framed in a 'with us or against us' mindset, turning people against each other for no reason

other than to appeal to our desire to be on the winning team."

The somatising effect of the corporate mass media presents both a massive obstacle and an opportunity. Not many days ago, I got into a conversation with a person in my local pub, who positively welcomed the prospect of cameras and microphones in every room of his home, and that his every action ... including his most private moments should be meticulously recorded and held on a state database, if that would keep him 'safe' from 'terrorism'. The terminally brainwashed are everywhere.

Yet loathing and distrust of those in the political, business and institutional world has rarely ... in modern times ... been deeper or more widespread. Thus it seems that there are limits to the capacity of celebrity television, bread and circuses and 'managed dissent' to keep the hoi poloi diverted and docile.

At that stage heavier artillery must be deployed. Hence the closure of the UK Column television channel by ATVOD, following on the earlier closure of Press TV. The Gazette has not yet ascertained whether other channels such as RADTV have had similar problems, but such moves must be anticipated sooner rather than later.

Warnings against over-reliance on the internet have been uttered previously in these columns. What if access to the internet is restricted or denied altogether? It seems that the fervent hope of you-know-who is that only 'accredited journalists' will be able to publish and transmit 'news'. 'Accredited journalists', of course, are the hacks and lackeys, whose critical intelligence does not proceed beyond every government, military and corporate press release, and whose behaviour is entirely predictable and reliable. John Pilger ... another of whose thoughtful items is reproduced below ... is one of the rare exceptions. Even he now lives in virtual exile.

Former generations of activists relied on the printed pamphlet. We might find ourselves back in such a place again. We might also need access to the Dark Net. Do do such things requires on-the-ground networks. No apologies for banging on about that yet again.

A GLUT OF CHARTERS

There is much to commend in the *New Model Charter* from *Critical Thinking*, except that it might have presented at least a passing acknowledgement of the importance of civil liberty.

But there is nothing new there either. The library shelves groan under the weight of manifestos, charters, analyses, plans and schemes., mostly covering more or less the same territory *ad nauseam*. What is lacking ... again no apologies for banging on ... is a credible organisational vehicle for translating plans into practice.

Too many furrowed brows are spending too much time and effort focussing on highly detailed contingencies of the distant future ... a future which in any event will never happen unless and until it is made to happen.

An example, in the past couple of weeks an earnest discourse has arisen within London Occupy circles as to whether interest can, or ought to be, abolished.

The speed and degree to which interest can be reduced or even eliminated in any new economic dispensation can only be an essentially practical question. This is a road whose ultimate destination will always be uncertain until we actually start travelling along it.

It is as if the British General Staff were to be found laying down detailed plans for D-Day in the middle of the Dunkirk evacuation.

All that could be agreed now is that interest is in principle undesirable, but may, to a degree which we cannot yet determine, be a necessary evil for some purposes. But, at this stage, that is all that needs to be agreed.

Fine detail is not needed at this stage. What is required is a broad direction of travel. ... of statements of aspiration and general principle.

Really there seem to be five overarching principles which sums up the Democratic Resistance;-

- 1) The redistribution of economic and political power to the lowest possible level.
- 2) That the central purpose of the economy is to provide for the needs of ordinary people..
- 3) That no currency shall be created out of debt or for the benefit of other than the Common Weal.
- 4) The supremacy of Common Law, and the foundation principles of civil liberty.
- 5) The supremacy of sovereignty and self-determination.

For the moment, can we just leave it at that, and focus on more practical matters?

Frank Taylor

NEW MODEL CHARTER

Critical Thinking

Politics and economics do not serve the interests of the majority but increasingly favour those with the most wealth, power and influence. Myopic self-interest and systemic imperatives are driving environmental destruction, inequality, economic instability and escalating conflict while risking the future of our civilisation. The time has come for all people to engage in democracy to secure politics and economics which serve the needs of all rather than those of the detached ruling elites, to change the course of our civilisation.

These four demands go to the heart of abusive, concentrated power and will form the foundation for a freer, fairer world in which politics and economics serve the interests of all rather than the minority.

1. Current political systems are unsustainable, undemocratic, unjust and lead to corruption and collusion among vested interests. We demand participatory democracy in which all interests are represented in decision making communally, regionally, nationally and globally. All decisions should be devolved to communities where appropriate and should only be made at higher levels when it is imperative for the common good to do so.
2. The value of land, resources and other commons (such as water, the radio spectrum, genes, nature and knowledge) cannot be appropriated by individuals, corporations or governments; they are gifts from the universe or are communally created. The value of these must be shared for the good of all and to fund public services and an unconditional citizens dividend.

3. Interest on money systemically drives:

- wealth from the poorest to the richest
- environmental destruction
- conflict
- exponential, unsustainable debt growth.

Debt must be unenforceable in law and usury (lending money at interest) illegal. Debt must revert to a social construct rather than a mechanism for wealth extraction, exploitation and oppression.

4. Increased mechanisation and technology has rendered full employment unachievable, unnecessary and undesirable. The Means to Life cannot be conditional on paid employment but is a right for all and must be provided in the form of an unconditional citizens dividend sufficient for a decent life.

Benefits:

- simplification of economics leading to wider understanding of how the world works facilitating informed democratic participation
- dispersal of concentrated power
- elimination of systemic imperatives to extract resources and damage the environment while placing resources under common control to ensure all needs are reflected in their use
- elimination of systemic drivers of inequality
- elimination of systemic drivers of conflict
- people will be free to act creatively and communally to work for a better life for all unfettered by the need to work to survive – many destructive or meaningless jobs would disappear
- equalised gender relations
- equalised power between employers and workers
- elimination of state pensions and employment taxes

- enterprise can flourish on a manageable scale in the form of private companies, partnerships, cooperatives
- housing, infrastructure and larger projects can be funded, debt free, through the creation of national currency which would form the mechanism to collect the communal value of land, resources and other commons, allowing community and alternative currencies to flourish
- communal, national and global cohesion
- banking will be a technology based utility freeing talented people to work for a better world
- transition from a competitive civilisation of scarcity to a co-operative global community of abundance

GEORGE ORWELL'S 1984 REVISITED [MY WORDS]

John Pilger; via Dave Barnby

The other night, I saw George Orwell's '1984' performed on the London stage. Although crying out for a contemporary interpretation, Orwell's warning about the future was presented as a period piece: remote, unthreatening, almost reassuring. It was as if Edward Snowden had revealed nothing, Big Brother was not now a digital eavesdropper and Orwell himself had never said, "To be corrupted by totalitarianism, one does not have to live in a totalitarian country."

Acclaimed by critics, the skilful production was a measure of our cultural and political times. When the lights came up, people were already on their way out. They seemed unmoved, or perhaps other distractions beckoned. "What a mindfuck," said the young woman, lighting up her phone.

As advanced societies are de-politicised, the changes are both subtle and spectacular. In everyday discourse, political language is turned on its head, as Orwell prophesised in '1984'. "Democracy" is now a rhetorical device. Peace is "perpetual war". "Global" is imperial. The once hopeful concept of "reform" now means regression, even destruction. "Austerity" is the imposition of extreme capitalism [I would call it corporatism] on the poor and the gift of socialism for the rich: an ingenious system under which the majority service the debts of the few.

In the arts, hostility to political truth-telling is an article of bourgeois faith. "Picasso's red period," says an Observer headline, "and why politics don't make good art." Consider this in a newspaper that promoted the bloodbath in Iraq as a liberal crusade. Picasso's lifelong opposition to fascism is a footnote, just as Orwell's radicalism has faded from the prize that appropriated his name.

A few years ago, Terry Eagleton, then professor of English literature at Manchester University, reckoned that "for the first time in two centuries, there is no eminent British poet, playwright or novelist prepared to question the foundations of the western way of life". No Shelley speaks for the poor, no Blake for utopian dreams, no Byron damns the corruption of the ruling class, no Thomas Carlyle and John Ruskin reveal the moral disaster of capitalism. William Morris, Oscar Wilde, HG Wells, George Bernard Shaw have no equivalents today. Harold Pinter was the last to raise his voice. Among the insistent voices of consumer-feminism, none echoes Virginia Woolf, who described "the arts of dominating other people... of ruling, of killing, of acquiring land and capital".

At the National Theatre, a new play, 'Great Britain', satirises the phone hacking scandal that has seen journalists tried and convicted, including a former editor of Rupert Murdoch's News of the World. Described as a "farce with fangs [that] puts the whole incestuous [media] culture in the dock and subjects it to merciless ridicule", the play's targets are the "blessedly funny" characters in Britain's tabloid press. That is well and good, and so familiar. What of the non-tabloid media that regards itself as reputable and credible, yet serves a parallel role as an arm of state and corporate power, as in the promotion of illegal war?

The Leveson inquiry into phone hacking glimpsed this unmentionable. Tony Blair was giving evidence, complaining to His Lordship about the tabloids' harassment of his wife, when he was interrupted by a voice from the public gallery. David Lawley-Wakelin, a film-maker, demanded Blair's arrest and prosecution for war crimes. There was a long pause: the shock of truth. Lord Leveson leapt to his feet and ordered the truth-teller thrown out and apologised to the war criminal. Lawley-Wakelin was prosecuted; Blair went free.

Blair's enduring accomplices are more respectable than the phone hackers. When the BBC arts presenter, Kirsty Wark, interviewed him on the tenth anniversary of his invasion of Iraq, she gifted him a

moment he could only dream of; she allowed him to agonise over his "difficult" decision on Iraq rather than call him to account for his epic crime. This evoked the procession of BBC journalists who in 2003 declared that Blair could feel "vindicated", and the subsequent, "seminal" BBC series, 'The Blair Years', for which David Aaronovitch was chosen as the writer, presenter and interviewer. A Murdoch retainer who campaigned for military attacks on Iraq, Libya and Syria, Aaronovitch fawned expertly.

Since the invasion of Iraq - the exemplar of an act of unprovoked aggression the Nuremberg prosecutor Robert Jackson called "the supreme international crime differing only from other war crimes in that it contains within itself the accumulated evil of the whole" - Blair and his mouthpiece and principal accomplice, Alastair Campbell, have been afforded generous space in the Guardian to rehabilitate their reputations. Described as a Labour Party "star", Campbell has sought the sympathy of readers for his depression and displayed his interests, though not his current assignment as advisor, with Blair, to the Egyptian military tyranny.

As Iraq is dismembered as a consequence of the Blair/Bush invasion, a Guardian headline declares: "Toppling Saddam was right, but we pulled out too soon". This ran across a prominent article on 13 June by a former Blair functionary, John McTernan, who also served Iraq's CIA installed dictator Iyad Allawi. In calling for a repeat invasion of a country his former master helped destroy, he made no reference to the deaths of at least 700,000 people, the flight of four million refugees and sectarian turmoil in a nation once proud of its communal tolerance.

"Blair embodies corruption and war," wrote the radical Guardian columnist Seumas Milne in a spirited piece on 3 July. This is known in the trade as "balance". The following day, the paper published a full-page advertisement for an American Stealth bomber. On a menacing image of the bomber were the words: "The F-35. GREAT For Britain". This other embodiment of "corruption and war" will cost British taxpayers £1.3 billion, its F-model predecessors having slaughtered people across the developing world.

In a village in Afghanistan, inhabited by the poorest of the poor, I filmed Orifa, kneeling at the graves of her husband, Gul Ahmed, a carpet weaver, seven other members of her family, including six children, and two children who were killed in the adjacent house. A "precision" 500-pound bomb fell directly on their small mud, stone and straw house, leaving a crater 50 feet wide. Lockheed Martin, the plane's manufacturer's, had pride of place in the Guardian's advertisement.

The former US secretary of state and aspiring president of the United States, Hillary Clinton, was recently on the BBC's 'Women's Hour', the quintessence of media respectability. The presenter, Jenni Murray, presented Clinton as a beacon of female achievement. She did not remind her listeners about Clinton's profanity that Afghanistan was invaded to "liberate" women like Orifa. She asked Clinton nothing about her administration's terror campaign using drones to kill women, men and children. There was no mention of Clinton's idle threat, while campaigning to be the first female president, to "eliminate" Iran, and nothing about her support for illegal mass surveillance and the pursuit of whistle-blowers.

Murray did ask one finger-to-the-lips question. Had Clinton forgiven Monica Lewinsky for having an affair with husband? "Forgiveness is a choice," said Clinton, "for me, it was absolutely the right choice." This recalled the 1990s and the years consumed by the Lewinsky "scandal". President Bill Clinton was then invading Haiti, and bombing the Balkans, Africa and Iraq. He was also destroying the lives of Iraqi children; Unicef reported the deaths of half a million Iraqi infants under the age of five as a result of an embargo led by the US and Britain.

The children were media unpeople, just as Hillary Clinton's victims in the invasions she supported and promoted - Afghanistan, Iraq, Yemen, Somalia - are media unpeople. Murray made no reference to them. A photograph of her and her distinguished guest, beaming, appears on the BBC website.

In politics as in journalism and the arts, it seems that dissent once tolerated in the "mainstream" has regressed to a dissidence: a metaphoric underground. When I began a career in Britain's Fleet Street in the 1960s, it was acceptable to critique western power as a rapacious force. Read James Cameron's celebrated reports of the explosion of the Hydrogen bomb at Bikini Atoll, the barbaric war in Korea and the American bombing of North Vietnam. Today's grand illusion is of an information age when, in truth, we live in a media age in which incessant corporate propaganda is insidious, contagious, effective and liberal.

In his 1859 essay 'On Liberty', to which modern liberals pay homage, John Stuart Mill wrote: "Despotism is a legitimate mode of government in dealing with barbarians, provided the end be their improvement, and the means justified by actually effecting that end." The "barbarians" were large sections of humanity of whom "implicit obedience" was required. "It's a nice and convenient myth that liberals are

peacemakers and conservatives the warmongers," wrote the historian Hywel Williams in 2001, "but the imperialism of the liberal way may be more dangerous because of its open-ended nature: its conviction that it represents a superior form of life." He had in mind a speech by Blair in which the then prime minister promised to "reorder the world around us" according to his "moral values".

Richard Falk, the respected authority on international law and the UN Special Rapporteur on Palestine, once described a "a self-righteous, one-way, legal/moral screen [with] positive images of western values and innocence portrayed as threatened, validating a campaign of unrestricted political violence". It is "so widely accepted as to be virtually unchallengeable".

Tenure and patronage reward the guardians. On BBC Radio 4, Razia Iqbal interviewed Toni Morrison, the African-American Nobel Laureate. Morrison wondered why people were "so angry" with Barack Obama, who was "cool" and wished to build a "strong economy and health care". Morrison was proud to have talked on the phone with her hero, who had read one of her books and invited her to his inauguration.

Neither she nor her interviewer mentioned Obama's seven wars, including his terror campaign by drone, in which whole families, their rescuers and mourners have been murdered. What seemed to matter was that a "finely spoken" man of colour had risen to the commanding heights of power. In 'The Wretched of the Earth', Frantz Fanon wrote that the "historic mission" of the colonised was to serve as a "transmission line" to those who ruled and oppressed. In the modern era, the employment of ethnic difference in western power and propaganda systems is now seen as essential. Obama epitomises this, though the cabinet of George W. Bush - his warmongering clique - was the most multiracial in presidential history.

As the Iraqi city of Mosul fell to the jihadists of ISIS, Obama said, "The American people made huge investments and sacrifices in order to give Iraqis the opportunity to chart a better destiny." How "cool" is that lie? How "finely spoken" was Obama's speech at the West Point military academy on 28 May. Delivering his "state of the world" address at the graduation ceremony of those who "will take American leadership" across the world, Obama said, "The United States will use military force, unilaterally if necessary, when our core interests demand it. International opinion matters, but America will never ask permission..."

In repudiating international law and the rights of independent nations, the American president claims a divinity based on the might of his "indispensable nation". It is a familiar message of imperial impunity, though always bracing to hear. Evoking the rise of fascism in the 1930s, Obama said, "I believe in American exceptionalism with every fibre of my being." Historian Norman Pollack wrote: "For goose-steppers, substitute the seemingly more innocuous militarisation of the total culture. And for the bombastic leader, we have the reformer manqué, blithely at work, planning and executing assassination, smiling all the while."

In February, the US mounted one of its "colour" coups against the elected government in Ukraine, exploiting genuine protests against corruption in Kiev. Obama's assistant secretary of state, Victoria Nuland, personally selected the leader of an "interim government". She nicknamed him "Yats". Vice President Joe Biden came to Kiev, as did CIA Director John Brennan. The shock troops of their putsch were Ukrainian fascists.

For the first time since 1945, a neo-Nazi, openly anti-Semitic party controls key areas of state power in a European capital. No Western European leader has condemned this revival of fascism in the borderland through which Hitler's invading Nazis took millions of Russian lives. They were supported by the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA), responsible for the massacre of Jews and Russians they called "vermin". The UPA is the historical inspiration of the present-day Svoboda Party and its fellow-travelling Right Sector. Svoboda leader Oleh Tyahnybok has called for a purge of the "Moscow-Jewish mafia" and "other scum", including gays, feminists and those on the political left.

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the United States has ringed Russia with military bases, nuclear warplanes and missiles as part of its Nato Enlargement Project. Reneging on a promise made to Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev in 1990 that Nato would not expand "one inch to the east", Nato has, in effect, militarily occupied eastern Europe. In the former Soviet Caucasus, Nato's expansion is the biggest military build-up since the Second World War.

A Nato Membership Action Plan is Washington's gift to the coup-regime in Kiev. In August, "Operation Rapid Trident" will put American and British troops on Ukraine's Russian border and "Sea Breeze" will send US warships within sight of Russian ports. Imagine the response if these acts of provocation, or intimidation, were carried out on America's borders.

In reclaiming Crimea - which Nikita Krushchev illegally detached from Russia in 1954 - the Russians

defended themselves as they have done for almost a century. More than 90 per cent of the population of Crimea voted to return the territory to Russia. Crimea is the home of the Black Sea Fleet and its loss would mean life or death for the Russian Navy and a prize for Nato. Confounding the war parties in Washington and Kiev, Vladimir Putin withdrew troops from the Ukrainian border and urged ethnic Russians in eastern Ukraine to abandon separatism.

In Orwellian fashion, this has been inverted in the west to the "Russian threat". Hillary Clinton likened Putin to Hitler. Without irony, right-wing German commentators said as much. In the media, the Ukrainian neo-Nazis are sanitised as "nationalists" or "ultra nationalists". What they fear is that Putin is skilfully seeking a diplomatic solution, and may succeed. On 27 June, responding to Putin's latest accommodation - his request to the Russian Parliament to rescind legislation that gave him the power to intervene on behalf of Ukraine's ethnic Russians - Secretary of State John Kerry issued another of his ultimatums. Russia must "act within the next few hours, literally" to end the revolt in eastern Ukraine. Notwithstanding that Kerry is widely recognised as a buffoon, the serious purpose of these "warnings" is to confer pariah status on Russia and suppress news of the Kiev regime's war on its own people.

A third of the population of Ukraine are Russian-speaking and bilingual. They have long sought a democratic federation that reflects Ukraine's ethnic diversity and is both autonomous and independent of Moscow. Most are neither "separatists" nor "rebels" but citizens who want to live securely in their homeland. Separatism is a reaction to the Kiev junta's attacks on them, causing as many as 110,000 (UN estimate) to flee across the border into Russia. Typically, they are traumatised women and children.

Like Iraq's embargoed infants, and Afghanistan's "liberated" women and girls, terrorised by the CIA's warlords, these ethnic people of Ukraine are media unpeople in the west, their suffering and the atrocities committed against them minimised, or suppressed. No sense of the scale of the regime's assault is reported in the mainstream western media. This is not unprecedented. Reading again Phillip Knightley's masterly 'The First Casualty: the war correspondent as hero, propagandist and mythmaker', I renewed my admiration for the Manchester Guardian's Morgan Philips Price, the only western reporter to remain in Russia during the 1917 revolution and report the truth of a disastrous invasion by the western allies. Fair-minded and courageous, Philips Price alone disturbed what Knightley calls an anti-Russian "dark silence" in the west.

On 2 May, in Odessa, 41 ethnic Russians were burned alive in the trade union headquarters with police standing by. There is horrifying video evidence. The Right Sector leader Dmytro Yarosh hailed the massacre as "another bright day in our national history". In the American and British media, this was reported as a "murky tragedy" resulting from "clashes" between "nationalists" (neo-Nazis) and "separatists" (people collecting signatures for a referendum on a federal Ukraine). The New York Times buried it, having dismissed as Russian propaganda warnings about the fascist and anti-Semitic policies of Washington's new clients. The Wall Street Journal damned the victims - "Deadly Ukraine Fire Likely Sparked by Rebels, Government Says". Obama congratulated the junta for its "restraint".

On 28 June, the Guardian devoted most of a page to declarations by the Kiev regime's "president", the oligarch Petro Poroshenko. Again, Orwell's rule of inversion applied. There was no putsch; no war against Ukraine's minority; the Russians were to blame for everything. "We want to modernise my country," said Poroshenko. "We want to introduce freedom, democracy and European values. Somebody doesn't like that. Somebody doesn't like us for that."

According to his report, the Guardian's reporter, Luke Harding, did not challenge these assertions, or mention the Odessa atrocity, the regime's air and artillery attacks on residential areas, the killing and kidnapping of journalists, the firebombing of an opposition newspaper and his threat to "free Ukraine from dirt and parasites". The enemy are "rebels", "militants", "insurgents", "terrorists" and stooges of the Kremlin. Summon from history the ghosts of Vietnam, Chile, East Timor, southern Africa, Iraq; note the same tags. Palestine is the lodestone of this unchanging deceit. On 11 July, following the latest Israeli, American equipped slaughter in Gaza - 120 people including six children in one family - an Israeli general writes in the Guardian under the headline, "A necessary show of force".

In the 1970s, I met Leni Riefenstahl and asked her about her films that glorified the Nazis. Using revolutionary camera and lighting techniques, she produced a documentary form that mesmerised Germans; it was her 'Triumph of the Will' that reputedly cast Hitler's spell. I asked her about propaganda in societies that imagined themselves superior. She replied that the "messages" in her films were dependent not on "orders from above" but on a "submissive void" in the German population. "Did that include the liberal, educated bourgeoisie?" I asked. "Everyone," she replied, "and of course the intelligentsia."

THE MAINSTREAM MEDIA HAS ALWAYS BEEN A PROPAGANDA TOOL OF THE ESTABLISHMENT

Steven MacMillan; Activist Post

“Think of the press as a great keyboard on which the government can play.”

Joseph Goebbels, German Minister of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda (1933-1945)

The mainstream media has long been used as a tool of a dominant minority who use communication systems to influence and control the masses through techniques which are now perfected today. As George Orwell, the former BBC propagandist during the Second World War and author of the infamous 1984 stated:

The people will believe what the media tells them they believe.

Propaganda has evolved over centuries to take the form of a more subtle and sophisticated art than in previous ages. In 1965, Konrad Kellen crystallised the nature of modern propaganda in the introduction to a book titled Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes by French sociologist and philosopher, Jacques Ellul:

But modern propaganda has long disdained the ridiculous lies of past and outmoded forms of propaganda. It operates instead with many different kinds of truth – half truth, limited truth, truth out of context. Even Goebbels always insisted that Wehrmacht communiqués be as accurate as possible.

Kellen served with the US Army where he was a leading scholar in psychological operations, who also worked for the RAND Corporation and held senior positions at Radio Free Europe for years. He worked closely with Ellul on numerous projects and translated many of his books into German. Ellul wrote extensively on the environment in which modern propaganda can flourish and concluded that the presence of a mass media is first of all a prerequisite for modern propaganda to exist; and secondly there has to be a “centralised control” over that mass media for propaganda to take root:

Without the mass media there can be no modern propaganda. But we must point to the dual factor necessary if the mass media are really to become instruments of propaganda.... They must be subject to centralised 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 new 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 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.... To make the organisation of propaganda possible, the media must be concentrated, the number of news agencies reduced, and 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. (Ellul, 1965, p.102).

The media in America has become increasingly centralised in recent years, with 90% of the media in 2012 being controlled by just 6 corporations; News-Corp, Disney, Time Warner, Viacom, CBS and Comcast, compared to 50 companies in 1983. News-Corp and Time Warner are both affiliate corporate members at the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) along with the news site Bloomberg.

The British sister organisation of the CFR, the Royal Institute of International Affairs (RIIA), also has a concentration of media companies as part of the institute. The majority of the mainstream British press all publicly belong to the RIIA, including; ITN, the BBC, the Guardian, the Economist, the Daily Mail, the Telegraph, as well as Reuters and CBS News.

Governments have used the mainstream media to control the perceptions of viewers through a technique the US military calls “perception management”. In 2008, The New York Times published an

article titled Behind TV Analysts, Pentagon's hidden hand. The article details a Pentagon operation which used a team of former military officers – who were briefed by White House, State Department and Justice Department officials – to appear as analysts on mainstream radio and TV, in an campaign to inculcate Pentagon “talking points” and “memes” in addition to engineering a positive flow of news concerning the US government's actions. The irony is striking considering the New York Times is by no means immune from this practice and has been accused by a former employee of being a “propaganda megaphone for those who run the world”, but the article still demonstrates the power of the state in influencing public discourse.

The Pentagon operates as one arm of the US ‘Ministry of Truth’ which manipulates and often coordinates mainstream news coverage of politically sensitive issues. Ellul quantifies how a modern state employs “technicians of influence” to conduct propaganda operations in order to utilise the mass media “correctly”:

To begin with, propaganda must be organized in several ways. To give it the above-mentioned characteristics (continuity, duration, combination of different media), an organisation is required that controls the mass media, is capable of using them correctly, of calculating the effect of one or another slogan or of replacing one campaign with another. There must be an administrative organisation; every modern state is expected to have a Ministry of Propaganda, whatever its actual name may be. Just as technicians are needed to make films and radio broadcasts, so one needs “technicians of influence” – sociologists and psychologists. (Ellul, 1965, p.20).

Jimmy Carter's National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski is a major advisor to the ruling elite and an expert on the techniques which are used to control vast populations. A CFR member – along with his daughter Mika Brzezinski who also hosts MSNBC's morning show – Z. Brzezinski explains in his 1970 book Between Two Ages how the mass media can be used to court the masses:

The courtship of the press and the mass media is a necessary concomitant of courting the masses, since the masses are influenced not only by direct appeal but also through the intermediary of an “image”, which is part built up by the media themselves. (Brzezinski, 1970, p.216).

Brzezinski proceeds in Between Two Ages to discuss the possible emergence of a scientific elite ruling over a “highly controlled society” through the “exploitation of the mass media” and by “using the latest modern techniques for influencing public behaviour”:

More directly linked to the impact of technology, it involves the gradual appearance of a more controlled and directed society. Such a society would be dominated by an elite whose claim to political power would rest on allegedly superior scientific know-how. Unhindered by the restraints of traditional liberal values, this elite would not hesitate to achieve its political ends by using the latest modern techniques for influencing public behaviour and keeping society under close surveillance and control..... Persisting social crisis, the emergence of a charismatic personality, and the exploitation of the mass media to obtain public confidence would be the steppingstones in the piecemeal transformation of the United States into a highly controlled society. (Brzezinski, 1970, p.252 & p.253)

Sources:

Jacques Ellul, Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes (Introduction by Konrad Kellen) (1965)
Zbigniew Brzezinski, Between Two Ages: America's Role in the Technetronic Era (1970)

Additional Reading:

Truth, War Propaganda, CIA and Media Manipulation – Global Research
Is Media another word for Control – John Pilger

Steven MacMillan is a Scottish researcher and writer who founded The Analyst Report, where this article first appeared.

'They (land laws) are founded upon the most absurd of all suppositions, the supposition that every successive generation of men have not an equal right to the earth, and to all that it possesses, but that the property of the present generation should be restrained

and regulated according to the fancy of those who died perhaps five hundred years ago'
(Chap II, Book 3)

Adam Smith; *The Wealth of Nations*; thanks to David Dewhurst

BIG MEDIA V SOCIAL MEDIA IN THE GLOBAL, NON-VIOLENT, HUMANIST REVOLUTION

*Silvia Swinden; **Pressenza**; via **Critical Thinking***

In 1999, the film *Matrix* presented a false cyber-world, in which those included take it for “reality”. The image of a computer generated space taking over daily life resonated with millions as an allegory of their own existence, but instead of a computer the source of such false reality appeared to be the Media.

*Noam Chomsky: **Manufacturing Consent***

(This is not new, in fact it is the same thing Shakespeare did for the Tudors, keen as they were not to appear as the usurpers of the English throne, with the play *Richard III* which greatly exaggerated this king’s physical deformity and blamed him for heinous acts of violence most probably committed by others)

Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media (1988), by Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky

An analysis of the news media, arguing that the mass media of the United States “are effective and powerful ideological institutions that carry out a system-supportive propaganda function by reliance on market forces, internalized assumptions, and self-censorship, and without overt coercion”.

This is carried out through Editorial bias via five filters

Size, Ownership, and Profit Orientation: large firms run for profit. They must cater to the financial interest of their owners – often corporations or particular controlling investors.

The Advertising License to Do Business: Most of the revenue of major media outlets derives from advertisers, who become the “de-facto licensing authority” with their political prejudices and economic desires of their advertisers, weakening working class media

Sourcing Mass Media News: “the large bureaucracies of the powerful subsidize the mass media by reducing the media’s costs of acquiring and producing, news”, also blocking other sources

Flak and the Enforcers: “Flak“, negative responses to a media statement, (e.g. letters, complaints, lawsuits, or legislative actions organised by the powerful) can be expensive to the media and act as deterrent for reporting about certain issues 5]

Anti-Communism: This was included as a filter in the original 1988 edition of the book, but Chomsky argues that since the end of the Cold War (1945–91), anticommunism was replaced by the “War on Terror”, as the major social control mechanism.

“Manufacturing dissent”: the anti-globalization movement is funded by the corporate elites (the people’s movement has been hijacked), by Michel Chossudovsky, *Global Research* 2010

“Under contemporary capitalism, the illusion of democracy must prevail. It is in the interest of the corporate elites to accept dissent and protest as a feature of the system inasmuch as they do not threaten the established social order...”

To maintain their legitimacy, the economic elites favor limited and controlled forms of opposition, ... as a “safety valve”, which protects and sustains the New World Order.

To be effective, however, the process of “manufacturing dissent” must be carefully regulated

and monitored by those who are the object of the protest movement.

“Funding Dissent, e.g.: The anti-globalization movement is opposed to Wall Street and the Texas oil giants controlled by Rockefeller, et al. Yet the foundations and charities of Rockefeller et al will generously fund progressive anti-capitalist networks as well as environmentalists (opposed to Big Oil) with a view to ultimately overseeing and shaping their various activities.

Whereas the mainstream media “manufactures consent”, the complex network of NGOs (including segments of the alternative media) are used by the corporate elites to mould and manipulate the protest movement.”

Arundhati Roy interviewed by Democracy Now!

“Martin Luther King made the forbidden connections between Capitalism, Imperialism, Racism and the Vietnam War.

As a result, after he was assassinated, even his memory became toxic to them, a threat to public order. Foundations and Corporations worked hard to remodel his legacy to fit a market-friendly format.

The Martin Luther King Center for Nonviolent Social Change, with an operational grant of \$2 million, was set up by, among others, the Ford Motor Company, General Motors, Mobil, Western Electric, Procter & Gamble, U.S. Steel and Monsanto.

The Center maintains the King Library and Archives of the Civil Rights Movement. Among the many programs the King Center runs have been projects that “work closely with the United States Department of Defense, the Armed Forces Chaplains Board and others”.

It co-sponsored the Martin Luther King Jr. Lecture Series called “The Free Enterprise System: An Agent for Non-violent Social Change.”

The Media’s influence on the sensibility of the epoch

Silo in “Conditions of Dialogue”, Silo Speaks, points out that there exist “pre-dialogical elements [which] are also pre-logical, and act within the horizons of the era and of the society, even though individuals often mistake these simply as products of their own personal experiences and observations. And this creates a barrier that cannot easily be overcome until the sensibility of the age—that is, the historical moment in which we live—has changed. It is precisely for this reason that many contributions in the field of science and other areas of human activity have become accepted as being completely obvious and true only later on. But until we have arrived at that “later on,” those who offer these ideas and activities find themselves in a dialogic vacuum, and not infrequently facing a wall of hostility raised even at the possibility of their publicly discussing these new points of view. Once the initial turbulence has passed, and one or perhaps several new generations have made their way onto the stage of history, the importance of those contributions that were “ahead of their time” comes to be recognized by everyone, and people are surprised that those contributions were ever rejected, their importance ever denied or minimized.”

E.g., in the past the Earth as the centre of the universe, the inhumanity of slavery. Nowadays the belief that money is the most important value, that the present system can be sorted out with a few piecemeal tweaks, etc.

This echoes Tony Benn’s quote: “The way change occurs to begin with, if you come up with a good idea, like healthcare, you’re ignored. If you go on you must be mad, absolutely stark-staring bonkers. If you go on after that you’re dangerous. Then, if the pressure keeps up there’s a pause. And then you can’t find anyone at the top who doesn’t claim to have thought of it in the first place. That’s how progress is made.” It is the role of social media to promote the new sensibility that will make conditions of dialogue (the core of nonviolence as a methodology for change) possible and prepare the epoch for ideas “ahead of their times”.

The Fourth Estate

This expression was coined by Edmund Burke in 1787. He would have been making reference

to the traditional three estates of Parliament: The Lords Spiritual, the Lords Temporal and the Commons. It implies acknowledgment of the media as one of the Powers in society.

The Media exerts its power by creating an illusion of the “real world”. But it is itself an illusion, that power resides with the media, when in reality it’s the power of the big corporations and the plutocracy, who own Big Media.

“Tell me something I don’t know!” We all know!

But what can we do?

Social, Alternative Media, e.g., Pressenza et al. A direction and ethos away from the dehumanisation of the corporate world, contributing to the global, humanist, nonviolent revolution, based on the Humanist Attitude, information at the service of:

The human being rather than money (and celebrities) as the central value

Affirming the equality of all human beings, (e.g., celebrities opinions are not more important than the opinions of ordinary people)

Recognising personal and cultural diversity, rejecting discrimination, promoting the convergence of diversity

The continuous development and free dissemination of human knowledge away from established “absolute truths”, (e.g., the neoliberal mantra “this system is not perfect but is the only one possible”)

Sustaining freedom of ideas and beliefs, (media containing different views)

Rejecting violence in all its forms: physical, economic, psychological, sexual, racial, religious, ecological, moral, etc. (violence may sell papers but newspeople have to live in this world!).

Social media and consciousness

Human consciousness is active, intentional, open to the world and moved by profound inspirations, always searching for ever increasing freedom. The role of Social media’s is to support such search for freedom:

To detect and echo the new sensibility in social movements working towards the Universal Human Nation, nonviolent and diverse, based on cooperation and compassion.

To acknowledge a new spirituality already present in these social movements as a source of inspiration, based on human experience, rejecting dogma and fanaticism

To denounce Big Media’s intention to send human consciousness into a slumber with propaganda instead of information and the culture of celebrity as a substitute for meaningful aspirations, in order to serve Big Business

The alternative media’s role is also to awaken, inspire and provide tools to elevate the level of consciousness of the population, the only way to differentiate information from propaganda

Mainstream Media

1. In general it is unidirectional (although now trying to emulate social Media through blogs, readers opinions, etc, to give room for, or (an appearance of) facilitating participation)
2. All or nothing, pragmatic view (only successful actions are worth reporting on: e.g., it has declared that the Arab Springs, Indignados and Occupy “have all failed”)
3. Idealises super-leaders (Obama, Pope Francis, Malala) beyond any realistic possibilities.
4. The population remains uneducated and manipulated
5. If it doesn’t sell papers it is not news! (and violence sells more)
6. On the other hand, their bias is generally well known, people choose what to read by affinity

Social Media

1. Multiple feedback, includes citizen-journalism and networking across borders, cultures and models

2. Understanding processes that build movements over the years, moving ahead with successes and learning from failures, the voice of the voiceless
3. Reports on and promotes bottom up activism, everyone a leader, “nobody in charge”
4. Growing population awareness and intentionality in action
5. Focus on what’s important for people (room for nonviolence)
6. However, false flag journalism and astroturfing become easier (Views expressed by the establishment posing as the opposite faction or ordinary “concerned” citizens)

True media independence from manipulation by the System

1. Funding: Funded and run by volunteers (e.g., Pressenza), crowdfunding, or following very carefully the money trail and reject editorial conditions attached to funding or advertising
2. Creative Commons License
3. Decentralisation
4. Internationality
5. Diversity of views
6. Networking and partnerships: A resonance box that can give alternative media the same level of influence as corporate media

In Sum

There is a, humanist, nonviolent global revolution beginning to emerge in many points of the planet:

It is social, psychological, political, cultural and spiritual

The Human Being has a direction that pushes from the most profound in consciousness towards overcoming pain and suffering, finding inspiration and meaning

Corporate Big Media is, for the most part, an integral part of the dehumanised system that enslaves people into a money and celebrity worshipping meaningless existence

Social, alternative Media is increasingly showing its power to counteract misinformation and propaganda, putting itself at the service of the humanist revolution through networking, citizens journalism, self-funding and remaining open to diversity as well as promoting its convergence

Its role, not just as a source of unsuppressed information but also as a tool to elevate the level of consciousness of the population and echo the arising new sensibility puts it at the centre of the budding new society, the Universal Human Nation.

About The Author

Silvia Swinden - Author of “From Monkey Sapiens to Homo Intentional: The Phenomenology of the Nonviolent Revolution” – Adonis & Abbey, London 2006

11 TACTICS USED BY THE MAINSTREAM MEDIA TO MANUFACTURE CONSENT FOR THE OLIGARCHY

Sigmund Fraud; Activist Post

The mainstream media is aging and collapsing under the weight of its own hubris and arrogance. Now entirely formulaic in presentation and predictable in substance, the ‘major’ outlets of news, which are monopolized under only a small handful of corporations, serve the purpose of misleading the public on important issues and manufacturing consent for government and the oligarchs.

The public is still largely numb to this reality, and in a wicked catch-22 for modern man, many people are still addicted to the very media that serves as the primary weapon of social control against

them.

The tide is turning, however, and to help break the spell we bring you this comprehensive list of 11 tactics used against the public by the mainstream media to coerce consensus, divide, conquer, ridicule and stifle truthful or meaningful conversation about the state of our world.

1. Lying by Omission – What is not on the nightly news? This is the most important question to ask when consuming mainstream media. The average hour-long broadcast consists of 48 minutes or less of actual news programming, minus, of course, the chit-chatting, the expensive motion graphics and the bumpers, highlights and story recaps. With a formula like this, full of pomp and grandstanding, the impression given is that if it does not make it on the nightly news, then it is not of significance. The most obvious way in which the mainstream media manufactures consent for policy makers and advertisers is by omitting from the news reel those stories and perspectives which may compromise the broadcasters' agenda, whatever that may be.

2. Controlling the Debate – Who is arguing, and for what cause? News programs are businesses just like anything else and, as such, news executives keep a go-to list of contacts to fulfill any necessary role in a program or segment. If the government needs credibility, they roll out an ex-president and remind you that he has 'gravitas.' If the military-industrial complex needs a voice, then they roll out a familiar think-tanker to interject in a debate with a common-sense perspective in favor of national security. If something is too complicated for public consumption, then they open the Rolodex to the 'experts' page and shuffle some know-it-all in front of the camera. The media is laden with groomed pundits, so-called opinion leaders, and commentators, and each one has a definite reputation, each one resonates with a specific target audience, and each one fills a predictable role in a conversation. Program guests are very well vetted, and news is a science, a very lucrative science that excels in giving the impression of a diversity in ideas while keeping the debate sequestered in a very well-constructed box. The characters in this box make all the difference.

3. Selecting the Right Anchors, Casters and Presenters – Our lives have been pegged to the dollar, and as such, a 'good job' is valued above many genuine virtues. People like to keep their jobs, as do news anchors and newscasters, and since news is, again, a business, the voices and faces on news programs are hired to perform a role, a job description, a task. They are not employed to pursue morally driven journalism for the benefit of society. If they perform as they are required, they advance and gain more exposure. If they rock the boat, there are a thousand other hungry job-seekers champing at the bit to replace them and do exactly they are hired to do. News anchoring is a job like anything else, and those at the forefront are the best at playing the role.

4. Scripting and Synchronizing News – One of the creepier and more blatant efforts to homogenize thought and manufacture consent is to script the news at high level, then distribute these scripts to many different locales and anchors to read verbatim, while they feign authenticity. This is partially a result of the business decision to save money by employing as few actual news gatherers as possible, but is also a key part of the strategy to achieve conformity amongst people of different backgrounds and interests. The government has also been known to interject itself into the chain of command for selecting which news scripts are to be disseminated to the public. This is the most fundamental characteristic of propaganda, and is rather embarrassing to witness once you realize just how disingenuous your local news presenters are and just how easily duped most people are.

5. Politicizing Everything – Language is the greatest weapon of social control, and with mainstream media, powerfully debilitating language is pushed into every corner of our consciousness. Conservative vs. Liberal. Democrat vs. Republican. Right-winger vs. Left-winger. Good vs. Bad. Left vs. Right. Right vs. Wrong. White vs. Black. And so on. Ad nauseam. The truth is that ideas and opinions are as vastly different as grains of sand on a beach, yet the media intentionally frames every issue in terms of a phony left-right paradigm that has been constructed to pigeon hole complex ideas and interests into a cheapened thought prison. No unorthodox idea or point of view can reach critical mass because everything is automatically framed in a 'with us or against us' mindset, turning people against each other for no reason other than to appeal to our desire to be on the winning team. The mainstream media is the chief party responsible for creating the constructs of 'left' and 'right,' which have been tightly integrated into our social consciousness as a means of achieving divisiveness and disagreement

among the populace. This is the chief tactic of divide and conquer, and when people are compelled on any issue to 'pick a team' and fight the rivalry to its bitter end, many opportunities for true progress are lost and the populace is easily goaded into a position favourable to the elite.

6. Using the Language of Separation and Labels – Sometime in the 1990s, the mainstream media stopped referring to people as 'people' or even as 'citizens' and began calling everyone 'consumers.' Once again, language is important to shaping reality, and as 'consumers' our role in the affairs of business and state are reduced to hapless bystanders whose job it is to choose and reject, not interject and affect. We've all heard the label 'conspiracy theorist,' which is the most popular label used when an idea or story is unfavourable to the mainstream media and the interests that back them up. You are a 'conspiracy theorist' if you ask questions, assimilate facts in a logical manner, or pursue justice outside of the main flow of public discourse on a popular issue. This type of language is also part of the process of politicizing everything, and by also labelling people in accordance with their country of origin, religion, skin color, economic class, or whatever else, more wedges of division are driven into the populace, deflating our inherent power in numbers.

7. Asking the Wrong Questions – Press access to 'important' people in our society is tightly regulated, and the powers-that-be don't like to be confronted with unexpected and hard questions. For this, the mainstream media dutifully uses its access to people in high places to ask softball, trivial, nonsensical, ignorant questions about irrelevant and superfluous issues. Independent media is winning the long race against corporate/fascist propagandized media because people are naturally inclined to resonate with common sense and truth, which is not at all what corporate mainline media is involved with. White House correspondents shouldn't waste our time and insult our intelligence by asking a war-time president about his pet dog or a recent golfing trip. But they do, all the time.

8. Closing the Book Too Soon – Moving an important or complicated issue from the front page as quickly as possible is a common strategy to remove touchy subjects from the public conversation. Sadly, our national attention span is at an all-time low, mostly because we've been trained to move from issue to issue with lightening speed, never soaking up any one thing for too long. With such a short-term memory, it is easy to protect a politician, forget a genocide, ignore the long-term effects of a bank bailout, and so on, just by moving onto to something new. Once the media has signaled that a story has been resolved or adequately discussed, then any afterthought, individual investigation, or further inquiry is labeled as extremist and ignored.

9. Triviality and Distraction – With all of the important decisions being made daily by powerful people, decisions that genuinely affect quality of life for many people, the news outlets are steadfastly devoted to engaging in gossip, entertainment, murders and acts of violence, car accidents, disasters and other pablum. The body politic is kept confused by celebrity happenings, endless sports contests and other such pageantry, and the media uses these many forms of distractions to fill time and brain space so that important issues are seen as a drag or as a downer, and never given proper reflection. This is so ubiquitous in our society nowadays that there really is no escape.

10. Outright Lying – When all else fails, just lie, make it up as you go along, sell your air time to the highest bidder, and never look back. In the Internet age, people are pretty keen on fact checking, rebutting, arguing, and gathering stats, and there are enough facts available to prove any side to any story. In fact, this has become an art form for major media, and the ability to gather facts in accordance with an agenda is a profitable skill for the mainstream media. Lying has always worked, and the bigger the lie, the more likely it is to be believed.

11. Bonus – Eye Candy and Mind Melting – This one is a bonus and part of the new era of network news. Rather than employ virtuous gumshoes and hardcore reporters of truth, mainstream media instead invests in graphic artists to make each frame of the broadcast an over-designed motion collage of brain-melting info overload. Staying focused on what the anchor or guest is actually saying is impossible. By design, the news is presented in a mad shotgun blast of competing signals, and your attention is split in ten directions with tickers, bubbles, stock footage, gyrating lights and special effects. The point here is to exhaust the mind with over-stimulation so that the brain cannot function methodically and cannot process an issue beyond the shallow surface. This is also known as hypnotism, or mind-control.

Conclusion

News is a commodity just like everything else these days, and although many still believe the point of news is to inform, it is important to accept the hard truth that the purpose of the news is really just to sell something, be it a product, an idea, a candidate, a public image, a war, or whatever. For this, the mainstream media is focused on first deciding which issues are to be discussed in the public forum, then by using a bagful of tricks to shape people's perceptions of an issue, the media divides us and pits us against each other while leading us into consent for an underlying and hidden agenda.

Sigmund Fraud is a survivor of modern psychiatry and a dedicated mental activist. He is a staff writer for WakingTimes.com, where this first appeared, and where he indulges in the possibility of a massive shift towards a more psychologically aware future for mankind.

ATVOD—THE FINAL ALTERNATIVE MEDIA CLAMP-DOWN?

UK Column

The UK government has finally moved to directly regulate YouTube content and internet freedom of speech.

On the 2nd February 2014, the UK Column received a letter from Authority for Television On Demand (ATVOD). ATVOD is a subsidiary of Ofcom, the UK government's communications regulator. The ATVOD letter gave notice to the UK Column that as the result of a Statutory Instrument amendment to the 2003 Communications Act, the UK Column was required to notify ATVOD that it was running an 'on demand pro-programme service' and to pay a fee, to submit to regulation.

ATVOD mainly chooses organisations to regulate based upon whether or not they are perceived to produce 'television-like' pro-programmes. In several conversations between the UK Column and ATVOD, seeking clarification about the exact meaning of the expression 'television-like' programmes, an ATVOD representative admitted that there is no fixed definition for what constitutes 'television-like' video content, and that their determinations are made on purely arbitrary opinion.

During the House of Lords Select Committee on Communications Inquiry on Media Convergence and Its Public Policy Impact, held on the 5th February 2013, Ruth Evans Chairman of ATVOD, was asked if AT-VOD had trouble defining television-like services, she replied, 'yes. It is an evolving art.' It is on the basis of the 'evolving art' statement that ATVOD's claims of a 'light regulatory burden' should be seen. At present ATVOD claims to exist in order to prevent harmful material becoming available to children and to prevent hate speech. It is clear, though, that anyone submitting to the current 'light regulatory framework' joins a fluid and evolving regulatory framework with potentially draconian financial penalties. The penalties allowed for through the Communications Act 2003 amount to 5% of the regulated organisation's turnover or £250,000, whichever is the greater amount.

Following discussion with ATVOD, the UK Column made the decision that ATVOD's requirements would be detrimental to their freedom of speech and expression on the internet, and we would not submit to regulation by ATVOD.

ATVOD subsequently issued an 'enforcement notice' giving the UK Column ten working days to comply with their demands. Having carefully considered their options, they decided to cease the activity which ATVOD describes as an 'on demand television service', and removed all UK Column video on demand content from the internet.

UK Column co-editor Brian Gerrish says, "This represents an immediate and dangerous attack on free speech on the internet and should be of massive concern to all YouTube users, as the government seems to be moving to censor individuals directly, putting them on the same regulatory footing as global corporations like the BBC and CNN. As a government agency, ATVOD's clearly flawed working practices and their alignment to the corporate media pose a direct threat to our personal liberty and freedoms."•

UK Column co-editor Mike Robinson says, "It used to be that to produce high quality 'studio based' video content, the financial barrier to entry was very high. Today, with a 'television studios in a box' costing as little as a few hundred pounds, ATVOD seems to be attempting to extend its remit to even the one man band producer operating out of his bedroom. This is a dangerous road to tread."•

British Constitution Group PRESS RELEASE - ATVOD: A Major Risk To Freedom of Speech on the Internet

Not The UK Column News - ATVOD Exposed

The following press release has been issued by the UK Column. If you can help spread this to anyone you know in the media, politicians or other interested parties, it would be greatly appreciated. There is a pdf version available for download on the UK Column website - <http://www.ukcolumn.org/article/where-have-all-uk-column-videos-gone-upd...>

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For editors: Further detail can be found at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p0zP0ATo15w>

The UKColumn is a self funded voluntary community news organisation receiving no commercial advertising or sponsorship. It particularly focuses on the exposure of fraud, corruption and crime within the UK's political and banking arena, and the interwoven stealing, trafficking and abuse of children facilitated by paedophiles at the highest level of the political and establishment society. UKColumn has been fearless in exposing the subversive activity of the political charity Common Purpose, the BBC and other major mainstream media, and has led publicity of several unique cases of child stealing and abuse by the British State. Working alongside the British Constitution Group, the UK Column has also continued to track and expose the wider subversive Westminster attack on the British Constitution and Bill of Rights - two vital foundation stones of our freedoms and liberties. UK Column has also been at the forefront of the campaign to reinstate the Bradbury Pound as our debt free national currency.

The UK Column's Brian Gerrish and Mike Robinson can be contacted by telephone on +44 1752 478050, or by email at editor@ukcolumn.org

ATVOD is the independent co-regulator for the editorial content of UK video on demand services that fall within the new statutory definition of On Demand Programme Services.

SHUTDOWN BY UK INTERNET CENSORSHIP

Julie Beal; via Arlene Johnson

Can Activism Be Regulated?

Well, guys, the time is now, cos they're grabbing us by the short and curlies, and trying to take down us activists; they're coming at us from all sides now. This is the Quickening. From threats to regulate the press, to Internet censorship, the powers-that-be are finding many ways to control dissent. The Internet is being militarized, laws are being worked over, and political activists are the next target.

One of the biggest activist groups here in the UK, the UK Column, has been targeted by an organisation called ATVOD, an offshoot of Ofcom. ATVOD (Authority for Television on Demand) has singled out the UK Column, and insisted they must submit to being regulated, simply for being 'television like'. ATVOD's current directory of regulated groups is mainly made up of porn sites, and big players in the video-on-demand sector, such as CBS, 4OD, and the BBC.

After being threatened with a fine of £250,000 for non-compliance, the UK Column decided to take a stance against ATVOD by removing all of its videos from YouTube. Now we get to watch Mike and Brian sitting in a car, or at their kitchen table, doing all they can to not be at all 'television like'.

Yeah, 'television like'. There are thousands (millions?) of videos on YouTube which could be classed as being 'television like'.

There's the rub: almost every conceivable format has been shown on TV. So how can any production not be deemed to be 'television like'? The UK Column were forced to chat to each other in a car, to not look at the camera too much, to not use techniques used by TV producers. If only ATVOD could clearly define what 'TV like' actually means ... You see, they have described it as a "dynamic" and evolving concept, so it seems this is a concept which can only be understood by ATVOD, or a team of lawyers. The definition of 'TV like' evolves along with what TV is actually like, but these days, much of the (linear) programming is 'reality TV', just like most of YouTube. Perhaps there is no format which could not be classed as 'like TV' unless it is very short, or poorly produced!

Ofcom spawned ATVOD to "create a level playing field" between video-on-demand services which compete with linear TV services, and to regulate content, but the UK Column are not competing with linear TV in any way, and the last thing any activist wants is for their editorial to be monitored and regulated by a government quango.

This is a huge red alert! The Internet is supposed to allow free speech, and it is where activism has flourished. Now, however, any opposition to the prevailing paradigm is being classed as 'extremism', or 'radicalism'; even old-age pensioners have been roughly man-handled and arrested under terrorism laws, simply for protesting against cuts to their rail fares.

Have you ever wondered why we're allowed to say what we want on the Internet? It's quite simply because it takes time to take control, erecting fences, passing laws. The Internet has been the equivalent of the Wild, Wild West, but bit by bit, we're being reined in.

Maybe I, and thousands (millions?) of others, won't even be able to write articles like this for much longer. Both the UK and the US are busy cracking down on whistleblowers, and journalism. The Leveson Inquiry into the 'phone hacking scandal' is being steered into regulation of the press. Likewise with the Media Shield law proposed by Feinstein in the US, and attempts to define 'real journalists' as only those in the paid employ of a regulated press.

The future for 'the news', it seems, will be vetted and embedded journalists, combined with automated AI-produced news stories, and an even more tightly controlled mainstream media. So far, we activists have had the 'luxury' of being able to read and speak relatively freely. But now, the stranglehold is getting serious, and it's time to take action; instead of just reading and speaking, we need to step away from the

Internet and come together.

Start work on a placard or two, ready to walk the streets with those who also got off their seats.

But wait - could it be that all protestors are classed as domestic extremists? Jenny Jones, who is a Peer (House of Lords), and a member of the Green Party, has been put on the domestic extremist list, and surveilled. All she did was stick up for a pensioner who didn't want to be on the list just for being a protestor! The Domestic Extremism Unit here in the UK has compiled a huge watchlist, but what constitutes a domestic extremist?

"Domestic Extremism relates to the activity of groups or individuals who commit or plan serious criminal activity motivated by a political or ideological viewpoint"

(Viewpoints which include opposition to FRACKING, capitalism, and austerity!)

Was it something I said? ... 'cos I certainly hope so!

NetPol, the Network for Police Monitoring, has identified the problem with this definition of domestic extremism; it comes down to the way 'serious crime' is defined:

"The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA), which regulates the powers of public bodies to carry out surveillance, says that one of the tests of a 'serious crime' is whether someone with no previous convictions could reasonably be expected to be sentenced to imprisonment for a term of three years or more."

However section 81(2b) of RIPA also includes this alternate test:

"That the conduct involves the use of violence, results in substantial financial gain or is conduct by a large number of persons in pursuit of a common purpose."

It's that last bit that gives serious cause for concern, does it not? And a wry nod to the twist on the term 'common purpose'....

Can you believe it has come to this?

The voice of the resistance cannot be quelled, for dissent cannot be regulated.

It's high time we all became active activists, by getting away from the Internet! NetPol are "encouraging activists to submit subject access requests "to find out who is on the secret police databases, and Brian and Mike suggest phoning ATVOD to seek clarification on the definition of 'television like', and to raise awareness of the issue generally.

Internet activism is not enough. Spread the word and do something!

About the Author:

Julie Beal, independent researcher trying to raise awareness of identity management who will be appearing as a guest on a future Episode of 'Humanity vs Insanity'

Call ATVOD on 01753 860498. Let ATVOD know what you think about the Censorship of UK based Internet & YouTube Channels

Apropos of the World War I anniversary; The Wisdom of Clemenceau

After World War I, French Prime Minister Georges Clemenceau (serving in that position twice: from 1906 to 1909 and from 1917 to 1920) was quoted thus:

"War is too serious a matter to entrust to military men".

"America is the only nation in history which miraculously has gone directly from barbarism to decadence without the usual interval of civilization"

"Military justice is to justice what military music is to music"

"War is a series of catastrophes that (sometimes) results in a victory"

"It is easier to make war than make peace."

Thanks to Dr Kohls writing in Global Research

PIRATE RADIO STATION FOR \$55 COULD HELP DECENTRALIZE BIG-TELECOM

Tony Cartalucci; Activist Post

Make Magazine recently featured a tutorial on constructing a FM pirate radio transmitter using a Raspberry Pi board. Raspberry Pis are single board computers that go for about \$55 and are regularly used as the centerpiece for a wide variety of projects ranging from art installations to automation and everything in between.

The FM transmitter will broadcast stored media within a limited range to any FM radio receiver nearby. It is a versatile proof of concept that can be used as is to "cover your home, DIY drive-in movie, a high school ball game, or even a bike parade." In the comment sections below the entry, readers could already be seen expanding the parameters of the project to add more options and increase its utility.

Pirate Radio & Decentralizing Big-Telecom

As reported before, while open source software and hardware, as well as innovative business models built around collaboration and crowd-sourcing have done much to build a paradigm independent of current centralized proprietary business models, large centralized corporations and the governments that do their bidding, still guard all the doors and carry all the keys.

The Internet, the phone networks, radio waves, and satellite systems still remain firmly in the hands of big business. As long as they do, they retain the ability to not only reassert themselves in areas where gains have been made against them, but can impose preemptive measures to prevent any future progress.

Internet that circumvents NSA surveillance and big-business rules and regulations.

With the advent of hackerspaces, increasingly we see projects that hold the potential of replacing, at least on a local level, much of the centralized infrastructure we take for granted - that is until disasters or greed-driven rules and regulations upset the balance. It is with the further developing of our local infrastructure that we can leave behind perpetual activism that reacts to provocations from big-business and their control over telecom infrastructure and enjoy a permanently altered telecommunications landscape that favors our peace and prosperity.

In this way, accessible pirate radio transmitters built from Raspberry Pi boards can join projects like PirateBox, Project Byzantium, Serval, and other tools to create local communication networks. While PirateBox and Project Byzantium create localized Internets and Serval connects mobile phones without the need for network coverage, pirate radio stations create localized radio content that can be used to connect us to our neighbors and greater community for entertainment and useful information - and help during dire emergencies when centralized infrastructure fails.

While many appear frozen in perpetual fear of Internet "kill switches," the growing surveillance state, and a creeping Orwellian control grid, others are building alternatives that circumvent, undermine, and will eventually replace the increasingly unappealing nature of big-telecom. Indeed "kill switches" and invasive surveillance are problems, which is precisely why communities must unite and build alternatives that eliminate dependency on compromised infrastructure in the first place.

What to Do Now...

For those interested in tackling this project, if you are interested in it but feel you do not have the technical competence to do it, find your local hackerspace and ask for help. It is probably a project they have either done already, or would be interested in doing, and they most likely have a Raspberry Pi board to work with lying around.

While a single pirate radio transmitter will not change the tide in the information war, each small step taken moves people forward, together in much greater strides. The demonstrated ability to create cheap radio transmitters with open source hardware and broadcast media across a given local range has great implications. There is no single solution to solving the problem, and no single problem has

created the paradigms we find increasingly unacceptable today. But solutions like this are another step toward decentralizing big-telecom and putting technology long the monopoly of a handful of special interests into the hands of everyone else. What we do with that power and if it can be used to help build a better tomorrow is entirely up to us.

Tony Cartalucci's articles have appeared on many alternative media websites, including his own at Land Destroyer Report, Alternative Thai News Network and LocalOrg.

TELL FACEBOOK NOT TO SELL OUR DATA TO AD COMPANIES.

Jon Lloyd, SumOfUs.org

(Another reason not to use social networking - Ed)

Facebook is threatening our privacy again. In a creepy move, the company just stated it will sell our private data to advertisers.

Facebook just announced that it's going to sell our data to big ad companies. This is a massive and dangerous breach of privacy, for us and the 1.2 billion other Facebook users out there.

Facebook says it's doing this so that users can enjoy a more relevant "ad experience," but in reality it's because our data is like gold -- and Facebook is ready to make millions in profit selling our personal information.

The social media giant has been getting a lot of heat lately for not respecting its users' right to privacy. The addition of this feature to its website and mobile app is set to come out in the next few weeks. The clock is ticking, but if we act now, we can stop Facebook before it starts.

This development comes at a time when the most famous social media company is facing the heat for doing experiments on how to manipulate its users' emotions. It's high time Facebook respects our rights as users.

Until now, Facebook has steered clear from directly selling our data to advertisers. The ads we see in the Facebook sidebar come through third-party companies that pilfer our browsing history and populate Facebook with relevant ads. If you just searched for a new pair of sandals, for instance, sandal ads from major shoe companies will probably start to pop up in your sidebar.

That's annoying, but things are about to get downright creepy. Facebook will be able to track our every move online thanks to a little tracking beacon that works even when you're logged out of Facebook -- it will give it a treasure trove of information about you that advertisers have been dying to get their hands on. And we won't be able to ignore these new ads, because now they'll show up right in our news feeds.

Facebook is insisting that the ad feature is an opt-out, but it's a rather tedious process: you have to opt-out on several advertisers websites, and the opt-out is not always working. Plus, when you log into Facebook in another browser or on a new computer, you will have to go through the lengthy opt-out process again.

The company also claims that users want to see ads that "are more relevant to their interests," but we can't help but think that most users would rather not be stalked online than see more relevant ads.

Facebook should protect the privacy of its users, not sell it away.

More information:

"Facebook Is Now Selling Your Web-Browsing Data To Advertisers" Consumerist, June 12, 2014.

"Facebook to track users' web browsing data for better targeted ads" The Inquirer, June 12, 2014

"How to Stop Facebook From Using Your Browsing History" Gizmodo, June 15, 2014

BIG BROTHER WATCH

Emma Carr

DRIP, DRIP, DRIP

We have watched the debate around the Data Retention and Investigatory Bill (DRIP) in the House of Commons and Lords with great interest, noting that Parliamentarians from all political parties have berated or welcomed the legislation with equal measure.

The Bill follows a European Court of Justice ruling which was published in early April, making the EU-wide Data Retention Directive invalid due to its disproportionate nature. DRIP has been created in its place, introducing a wide-ranging set of powers to enhance the UK's digital surveillance and data retention laws. However it isn't the content of the legislation that has provoked such strong reaction but the fact it has been forced through under emergency legislation procedures.

Today, Members of the House of Lords from all political persuasions have described the emergency legislation process, as being a 'disgrace', 'deeply suspicious', 'unreasonable', and a 'scandalous affront to democracy'

For a detailed analysis of the Bill, see the briefing (PDF) published by the Civil Society groups behind the Don't Spy On Us coalition.

For analysis of the 'safeguards' proposed, see our article, 'DRIP, DRIP, DRIP - the Government enters murky waters' for Conservative Home

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Report on "The right to privacy in the digital age"

Whilst the DRIP Bill process is coming to an end in Parliament, it is certainly timely that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has published his report on "The right to privacy in the digital age" (PDF). The report raises some important questions regarding the legitimacy of mass data retention, the role of private companies, and the potential impact on privacy and human rights.

Surveillance Transparency Is Now More Important Than Ever

With the announcement of emergency legislation on the retention and interception of communications data the question of safeguarding the privacy of individuals should be foremost in the minds of legislators.

However the speed that the Bill is tabled to progress at raises concerns over the amount of scrutiny it will receive. If the Government wants to force communication service providers to retain citizens' data then they must be prepared to open the system to a greater deal of transparency than is already in place.

As Big Brother Watch has repeatedly pointed out it is possible to increase the level of transparency around surveillance without compromising security. In the US the Department of Justice publishes information provided by federal and state officials on orders authorizing or approving interceptions of wire, oral, or electronic communications in annual reports.

As a result, we have recommended amendments to the legislation which we believe will lead to greater transparency, build trust amongst the public and improve accountability within the intelligence services. We are sending it to Members of Parliament for their consideration, you can help by emailing your MP to add your voice to the calls for surveillance transparency.

Big Brother Watch Picks Up Internet Villain Award On Behalf Of NSA and GCHQ

It was somewhat ironic that yesterday of all days the Internet Service Providers Awards were held in London. Big Brother Watch were invited to pick up the tongue in cheek award of 'Internet Villain' on behalf of the winners (who would obviously not be attending).

The Internet Villain 2014 was NSA/GCHQ. On accepting the award, we noted that Big Brother Watch currently has legal papers filed in the EU Court of Human Rights alleging that GCHQ has illegally intruded on the privacy of millions of British and European citizens.

The winners of the Internet Hero award were The Guardian, for their reporting of mass surveillance programmes. Our acting director, Emma Carr, is pictured here with James Ball from The Guardian.

Big Brother Watch Research Mentioned In Parliament

Big Brother Watch's report 'Traffic Spies' was mentioned in Parliament. In response to a question from Hilary Benn MP to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government regarding the abolition of CCTV for parking enforcement, Brandon Lewis MP, stated that:

"A report in April by Big Brother Watch estimated that static CCTV and CCTV spy cars have raised £312 million in parking fines from 2008 to 2013 across 71 local authorities."

The Response to Revenge Porn Should Be Level Headed, Not a Knee Jerk Reaction

A debate has erupted around revenge pornography and whether new legislation is required to tackle the problem of jilted lovers posting sexually explicit photographs online. Whilst there is no doubt that these occurrences are deeply damaging and upsetting for the individuals involved, the Government must ensure that any new laws created to police what is posted on the internet is done so with a clear head and not in the heat of the moment.

This debate must acknowledge that there is already legislation in place, including the Malicious Communications Act, Sexual Offences Act or the Harassment Act, which could be used to prosecute perpetrators in these sorts of cases. Therefore it would perhaps be more productive for the Ministry of Justice and the Crown Prosecution Service to, at least as a starting point, produce guidance on what legislation is available, how it applies to these cases and, probably most importantly, that when complaints are made they should be taken seriously.

You can listen to our contribution to a debate on revenge porn on BBC Radio 5 live here.

If Companies Cared About Our Privacy They Would Be Transparent About How They Use Our Data

First GameStation threatened to harvest the souls of its customers' through its Terms and Conditions (no really!), now it has been revealed that Facebook has been attempting to manipulate its users' moods after gaining 'consent' by burying information about the project in its Terms and Conditions.

We have long warned about the dangers to users' privacy that lurk within the lengthy and complex Terms and Conditions of online companies. For example, one study conducted by Which? showed that Facebook's privacy policy and general terms of use added up to 11,195 words, around the same as Einstein's General Theory of Relativity. Some are even longer, with Apple's conditions for iTunes use running to 19,972 words, over 1,000 more than Macbeth. It is therefore not surprising that as a result of these lengthy T's&C's, 74% of people were put off reading them.

New Briefing Note Published - Mandatory Installation of Event Data Recorders: The eCall System

Concerns have been raised in recent weeks regarding the European Commission's plans for all new cars to be installed with event data recorders in order to enable the eCall system. We have produced a briefing note to explain the background of the policy, the concerns that have been raised and the other potential uses for event data recorders once they have been installed.

THE DISLOYAL

Golem XIV

There have been three important men in my life. The dreams of all of them have been betrayed.

My grandfather was and in many ways still is everything I admire. He began working down the pit when he was 14 years old. He retired at 65 and a few fleeting years later was dead of cancer. But in his life he fought for the dignity of the ordinary working man and woman. He believed that if we wished for a better world, a world where ordinary people had a chance in life, a chance to earn a living wage, to educate themselves and see their children educated, then we all had an obligation to fight for that dream. And he did. When WWII began he was too old to be called and as a miner was exempt, but volunteered and at Dunkirk saved the life of a young man who became his life-long friend – my godfather. After the war it was his generation, his vote, his willingly paid taxes, which made sure his children would have what he had not,

a National Health Service and a chance to go to university. These were his dreams and he fought for them every day when he went to work.

Once, to see for himself what his father did, my uncle went with my Grandfather, down the pit. In those days narrow seams would be worked by men lying on their sides cutting the coal out with a pickaxe. My grandfather was one of those men. At the end of the day my uncle asked my grandfather how he could stand to do such work day after day after year after decade. He replied, "So that you'll never have to". That was my grandfather.

Later in my life one of the closest friends I have ever had was an incredibly tough man called Henri Goujat. Given away as a child, he too began life working in a pit, as boy in occupied France. After the war he, like my grandfather, had believed his county's leaders when they assured him, that he and all those like him, were fighting to build a better country. He spent a hard, physical, working life digging and laying water and sewer lines all across rural France. He believed any hardship was just his part in the struggle to realize what my grandfather's generation had fought for – a better world. It might sound naive now but Henri remained loyal to that ideal and it sustained him.

I spent all the summers of my late 20's and early 30's with Henri, travelling with him, listening to the stories of his life and the stories of a generation of ordinary French men and women that I came, through him, to know, listening to their hopes of a better France, their profound belief in the struggles of their lives. But not long before Henri died he told me, that he had come to see that they had all been lied to. That all they had built had been for others to sell from under them.

Now my father, is nearing the end of his life and he too has tasted the ashes of his dreams. His was the generation that inherited the things my grandfather and Henri built. And in his own way he too believed he had fought the good fight. He did things in his life that I never knew about till decades later. Things still covered by official secrets. Things he really believed were for the good. Good people, he believed, with good intent had asked him to do things which he had willingly done. But now he looks at what it has all amounted to and is angry. Angry at the stupidity, greed and arrogance.

Who betrayed their dreams and hopes? Of course in the final analysis the answer is us. But who helped us, helped us understand that our parents' dreams were more 'valuable', their old age more 'affordable', in fact their entire society more 'efficient' if it was all sold off, privatised? Who presided over the efficiencies whose benefits we are now enjoying?

By what name could we being to know them?

And let's make no mistake names can give you power over things. The names we give, or more importantly those we accept, influence how we think. Think of all the names for us, that we have accepted in to our parlance, our thoughts: the Consumer, the Clients, the Workforce (if we're lucky) or if we're not then, the Unemployed, the Welfare Recipients, the Punters, the Proles, the Mob, the Common People.

But who are they who rule over us? It's all very well calling them Neo-cons, or Thatcherite/Reaganite Free-Market Deregulating Zealots, or even The 1% or The Global Overclass, but these names tell us nothing about the nature of these people. They tell us how much they own or the brand of Fundamentalism they worship.

When I look at people like Lloyd Blankfein (Goldman Sachs CEO) or the billionaire vulture fund boss Paul Singer making sure he gets his pound of profit from the Argentinian people regardless of their need, I am quite sure I do not want any future imagined and presided over by any of the verminous little Ceasars of Wall Street.

For me these people are The Disloyal, because for all that they have, they have none of the loyalty which made my grandfather, my friend and my father the admirable men they were. Whatever they may claim about their vastly superior understanding, their wealth creating genius, their technocratic brilliance, none of it will be put at the service of anyone or anything beyond their own greed. These people will not hesitate to betray any and all in the pursuit of their own advantage. This we have already seen in action. Nothing that has been done to bail out the banks, or protect the bond holders, has been for any purpose beyond helping those who owned those bonds or were invested in the shares or bonds of those banks, or whose wealth and power was held in the paper IOU's issued by those banks. We have 'saved' a system not because a new or better system was impossible, or because the system we had was the only or best system, but solely because saving the financial system saved the wealth and power of those who sat at its apex. This is not what my grandfather fought for.

What has been achieved? Are the banks safer? No. Have risky financial products been banned? No.

Have those who laundered billions, or who knowingly created and sold fraudulent securities been gaoled? No. But the wealthiest have become far wealthier and the gap between them and the poor has widened. That has been achieved. Is this the better world my friend Henri struggled for?

The people who rule over us dislike democracy. It hinders their plans and threatens to curb their desires or subject them to the rules and laws that, they feel, only little-people should be bound by. Those who sit at the apex of power and wealth today are no longer interested in democratic debate or civilized disagreement. They are interested only in being above the laws which bind you and me and in wielding power over the democracy we think we still have, not being subject to it. We are coming to the point where what their system needs to sustain itself will brook no disagreement, no debate. In the name of 'protecting' the system which maintains their wealth and power, they are already systematically closing off one door to democratic debate, control and change after another. Trade Agreements and Bilateral Investment Treaties already bind nations in ways that future governments will be told they cannot undo. This is not what my father thought he was protecting.

We must see these people for who and what they are. They have no loyalty to democracy, to you or your children or to any future in which you might hope for better. "Better" is to be reserved entirely for them. They have no loyalty to any nation, any people, any ideal save that which guarantees that they will become richer and richer while others get poorer and poorer. Their only loyalty is to amassing more and more wealth and the power over others that it confers. They will betray you at every opportunity. Have we not already seen how willing they are to sell out any project, to bend, break or game any law or rule and think themselves so superior for doing so? Have they not already lied to you, assuring you that lessons have been learned and behaviours changed while crowing in private over how they duped you? Have they not already shed poisoned tears of fake contrition over wrong-doing while finding new ways of doing the same? Their only concern is profit. Their only currency is betrayal.

They have no loyalty to us. The only thing they feel for us is fear. If it comes to it, and it will, they will not hesitate to call out their private police forces to spy on you, arrest you and intern you if needs be.

If we do nothing now, while we still can, we will soon find that our ability to 'reform' the system, or tinker with it or change it from within will be closed off. To change will soon require the repudiation of so much, that future governments will be afraid to even try. In many ways this is already the case. And those in power would like it to be much more the case.

Our present leaders would like it if future governments could be kept in line, prevented from even attempting to reassert sovereign, democratic power, by threats of what chaos such an attempt would unleash. Paranoid fantasy? Think of Henry "Hank" Poulson in 2008 threatening the US Congress with anarchy and tanks on the streets if the TARP was not passed right there, right then.

The agreements which will shackle us are already being negotiated in secret. The TTIP and TPP and soon the Trade in Services Agreement (TISA), unless stopped, will roll back democratic control of finance in ways that will make a mockery of all the sweaty wheezing of our congressional and parliamentarian blow-hards, that have done nothing whatsoever to reform or reign in the banks and financial elite.

Think how quickly we were fed the new concept of Too Big To Fail, which actually means outside of both democratic and judicial control. A new vocabulary for a new era. At home TBTF, 'technocratic' governments, Austerity cuts, wage restraint for the many but not for the few, and abroad regime change, rendition, secret flights to secret prisons for the new disappeared without trial, appeal or hope. No judge, no jury just the assumption of guilt. Today it is others they will come for. When will it be people you know, or you or your children? When will voicing or organizing opposition become domestic extremism?

If we do not fight the peace then we will one day soon find we are forced to fight a war. Fighting the peace is hard. It requires standing up and saying things that others might ridicule. But is that so very hard?

Our future is in the hands of The Disloyal. Is their future the one you want? Do you want to live in a country rotted by systemic and protected dishonesty where the law is a whore, democracy a pantomime, integrity and honour sneered at and loyalty to others forgotten? I do not.

***'All for ourselves, and nothing for other people, seems, in every age of the world, to have been the vile maxim of the masters of mankind.'* (Chap IV, Book 3)**

Adam Smith; The Wealth of Nations; again thanks to David Dewhurst

CENTRAL BANKS IN OTHER COUNTRIES TO REQUIRE BIOMETRICS TO BANK

Melissa Melton; Activist Post

You think the big brother surveillance state is getting creepy here in America, check out what central banks are doing in other countries. Via All Africa:

In line with the ongoing initiative of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) and the Bankers' Committee (comprising Chief Executives of the nation's deposit money banks), banks across the country are to begin capturing of customer biometric data as part of Bank Verification Numbers (BVN).

The rollout of the BVN solution for the identification and verification of bank customers is expected to begin in 1,000 selected bank branches across Lagos, as a prelude to a nationwide rollout.

This is in alignment with the phased approach adopted in executing the three-tiered Know-Your-Customer (KYC) and cashless policy of the CBN.

That's right. In addition to the Central Bank of Nigeria's new cashless policy — which aims at “reducing” the amount of paper money and coins circulating in the economy and encouraging more electronic transactions by adding a ‘cash handling charge’ — a new biometric program will require customers to sign up for a Bank Verification Number and present themselves at any branch for fingerprinting (all 10 fingers), facial image capture, and more.

No customer will be able to do any banking whatsoever without those fingerprints. Some articles have also tossed around voice recognition and retina scans as well. All to “revolutionize” banking ... for people's safety and security, of course.

CBN Governor Lamido Sanusi launched the new biometric registration at the head office on behalf of the Bankers' Committee in February. Punch quoted Sanusi as saying, “We have launched the Bank Verification Number today, the timetable suggests that within 18 months, every customer would have been registered. This is a day that we would remember for many reasons, not for where we are but where we are likely to get from here. Nobody can steal this identity except he or she steals my fingers...” Apparently this guy hasn't seen a whole lot of science fiction films.

The nation of India has instituted similar measures, recently rolling out a massive biometric identity system which aims to collect the iris and fingerprints of every single one of its over a billion citizens, linked to a 12-digit identity number.

Never mind that iris scanners and fingerprint IDs have all been easily fooled. Someone has been reading a lot of the Bible lately, specifically Revelations.

These types of measures are being rolled out in developing nations first, but don't worry, they'll make their way here soon enough. Eventually, no one will be able to buy or sell anything without giving up their biometrics to big brother and his database.

U.S. Bank and Wells Fargo are already piloting voice recognition biometrics as I type this.

Melissa Melton is a writer, researcher, and analyst for The Daily Sheeple, where this first appeared, and a co-creator of Truthstream Media. Wake the flock up!

BUYING UP THE PLANET: OUT-OF-CONTROL CENTRAL BANKS ON A CORPORATE BUYING SPREE

Ellen Brown; Global Research; Web of Debt

Finance is the new form of warfare – without the expense of a military overhead and an occupation against unwilling hosts. It is a competition in credit creation to buy foreign resources, real estate, public and privatized infrastructure, bonds and corporate stock ownership. Who needs an army when you can

obtain the usual objective (monetary wealth and asset appropriation) simply by financial means?

Dr. Michael Hudson, Counterpunch, October 2010

When the US Federal Reserve bought an 80% stake in American International Group (AIG) in September 2008, the unprecedented \$85 billion outlay was justified as necessary to bail out the world's largest insurance company. Today, however, central banks are on a global corporate buying spree not to bail out bankrupt corporations but simply as an investment, to compensate for the loss of bond income due to record-low interest rates. Indeed, central banks have become some of the world's largest stock investors.

This is a rather alarming development. Central banks have the power to create national currencies with accounting entries, and they are traditionally very secretive. We are not allowed to peer into their books. It took a major lawsuit by Reuters and a congressional investigation to get the Fed to reveal the \$16-plus trillion in loans it made to bail out giant banks and corporations after 2008.

What is to stop a foreign bank from simply printing its own currency and trading it on the currency market for dollars, to be invested in the US stock market or US real estate market? What is to stop central banks from printing up money competitively, in a mad rush to own the world's largest companies?

Apparently not much. Central banks are for the most part unregulated, even by their own governments. As the Federal Reserve observes on its website:

[The Fed] is considered an independent central bank because its monetary policy decisions do not have to be approved by the President or anyone else in the executive or legislative branches of government, it does not receive funding appropriated by the Congress, and the terms of the members of the Board of Governors span multiple presidential and congressional terms.

As former Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan quipped, "Quite frankly it does not matter who is president as far as the Fed is concerned. There are no other agencies that can overrule the action we take."

The Central Bank Buying Spree

That is how "independent" central banks operate, but it evidently not the US central bank that is gambling in the stock market. After extensive quantitative easing, the Fed has a \$4.5 trillion balance sheet; but this sum is accounted for as being invested conservatively in Treasuries and agency debt (although QE may have allowed Wall Street banks to invest the proceeds in the stock market by devious means).

Which central banks, then, are investing in stocks? The biggest player turns out to be the People's Bank of China (PBoC), the Chinese central bank. According to a June 15th article in USA Today:

Evidence of equity-buying by central banks and other public sector investors has emerged from a large-scale survey compiled by Official Monetary and Financial Institutions Forum (OMFIF), a global research and advisory group. The OMFIF research publication Global Public Investor (GPI) 2014, launched on June 17 is the first comprehensive survey of \$29.1 trillion worth of investments held by 400 public sector institutions in 162 countries. The report focuses on investments by 157 central banks, 156 public pension funds and 87 sovereign funds, underlines growing similarities among different categories of public entities owning assets equivalent to 40% of world output. The assets of these 400 Global Public Investors comprise \$13.2 trillion (including gold) at central banks, \$9.4 trillion at public pension funds and \$6.5 trillion at sovereign wealth funds.

Public pension funds and sovereign wealth funds are well known to be large holders of shares on international stock markets. But it seems they now have rivals from unexpected sources:

One is China's State Administration of Foreign Exchange (SAFE), part of the People's Bank of China, the biggest overall public sector investor, with \$3.9 trillion under management, well ahead of the Bank of Japan and Japan's Government Pension Investment Fund (GPIF), each with \$1.3 trillion. SAFE's investments include significant holdings in Europe. The PBoC itself has been directly buying minority equity stakes in important European companies. Another large public sector equity owner is Swiss National Bank, with \$480 billion under management. The Swiss central bank had 15% of its foreign exchange assets – or \$72 billion – in equities at the end of 2013.

Public pension funds and sovereign wealth funds invest their pension contributions and exchange

reserves earned in foreign trade, which is fair enough. The justification for central banks to be playing the stock market is less obvious. Their stock purchases are justified as compensating for lost revenue caused by sharp drops in interest rates. But those drops were driven by central banks themselves; and the broad powers delegated to central banks were supposed to be for conducting “monetary policy,” not for generating investment returns. According to the OMFIF, central banks collectively now have \$13.2 trillion in assets (including gold). That is nearly 20% of the value of all of the stock markets in the world, which comes to \$62 trillion.

From Monetary Policy to Asset Grabs

Central banks are allowed to create money out of nothing in order to conduct the monetary policies necessary to “regulate the value of the currency” and “maintain price stability.” Traditionally, this has been done with “open market operations,” in which money was either created by the central bank and used to buy federal securities (thereby adding money to the money supply) or federal securities were sold in exchange for currency (shrinking the money supply).

“Quantitative easing” is open market operations on steroids, to the tune of trillions of dollars. But the purpose is allegedly the same—to augment a money supply that shrank by trillions of dollars when the shadow banking system collapsed after 2008. The purpose is not supposed to be to earn an income for the central bank itself. Indeed, the U.S. central bank is required to return the interest earned on federal securities to the federal government, which paid the interest in the first place.

Further, as noted earlier, it is not the US Federal Reserve that has been massively investing in the stock market. It is the PBoC, which arguably is in a different position than the US Fed. It cannot print dollars or Euros. Rather, it acquires them from local merchants who have earned them legitimately in foreign trade.

However, the PBoC has done nothing to earn these dollars or Euros beyond printing yuan. It trades the yuan for the dollars earned by Chinese sellers, who need local currency to pay their workers and suppliers. The money involved in these transactions has thus doubled. The merchants have been paid in yuan and the central bank has an equivalent sum in dollars or Euros. That means the Chinese central bank’s holdings are created out of thin air no less than the Federal Reserve’s dollars are.

Battle of the Central Banks?

Western central banks have generally worked this scheme discreetly. Not so much the Chinese, whose blatant gaming of the system points up its flaws for all to see.

Georgetown University historian Professor Carroll Quigley styled himself the librarian of the international bankers. In his 1966 book *Tragedy and Hope*, he wrote that their aim was “nothing less than to create a world system of financial control in private hands able to dominate the political system of each country and the economy of the world as a whole.” This system was to be controlled “in a feudalist fashion by the central banks of the world acting in concert by secret agreements,” central banks that “were themselves private corporations.”

It may be the Chinese, not acting in concert, who break up this cartel. The PBoC is no more transparent than the US Fed, but it is not an “independent” central bank. It is a government agency accountable to the Chinese government and acting on its behalf.

The Chinese have evidently figured out the game of the “independent” central bankers, and to be using it to their own advantage. If the Fed can do quantitative easing, so can the Chinese – and buy up our assets with the proceeds. Owning our corporations rather than our Treasuries helps the Chinese break up US dollar hegemony.

Whatever power plays are going on behind the scenes, it is increasingly clear that they are not serving we-the-people. The global central banking scheme is systemically flawed and needs to be radically overhauled.

Ellen Brown is an attorney, founder of the Public Banking Institute and the author of twelve books, including the best-selling Web of Debt. Her latest book, The Public Bank Solution, explores successful public banking models historically and globally.

***Civil government is, in reality, instituted for the defence of the rich against the poor’
(Part 2, Chap I, Book 5)***

Adam Smith; The Wealth of Nations; via D Dewhurst

SEX, DRUGS & THE EU

Mike Gold; Radical Soapbox

If proof was needed that EU politicians and unelected officials have finally lost the plot, read on!

The EU has decided that the GDP* figures for all 28 member states are inaccurate, and this means that the distribution of the EU's large budget – which is based on the size of each country's GDP – is also inaccurate. At least this is what they say but it is also possible that the by artificially increasing GDP countries are made to look financially healthier.

Clearly, it's sensible to make statistics more accurate, but there are serious questions about the way in which the EU is proposing to do this. Wait for it – they plan to include estimates for the sales of mainly illegal activities – namely drugs, prostitution and trafficking!!

The madness doesn't end there either – there will be categories and sub-sections that will explain what will contribute to GDP and what will not. So, for example, fencing stolen property is allowable, but actually nicking it in the first place is not!!

Of course, if any of the parties are not voluntary participants, then the sales will not count towards GDP. So does this mean that a person conned into being trafficked is a willing participant? If yes, then this is a 'legal' illegal activity and part of GDP – if not, it's an 'illegal' illegal activity and not part of GDP. Imagine all those well-paid bureaucrats carefully working out these distinctions!

It becomes so much clearer when a cigarette manufacturer sends billions of cigarettes to a tiny country with low tobacco tax, then they are smuggled back into Britain, and Osborne will be able to count these 'illegal' sales as part of the most invisible economic recovery ever seen!

The Bank of Italy estimates that by including criminal activity in the GDP figures, it will increase GDP by around 10%¹. Prostitution is not illegal in Poland, and the authorities are trying to work out how to estimate the average cost for a range of 'services'². In Spain, brothel owners are being phoned to find out how much they charge³ – initially owners thought it had to be a prank!

So once the authorities, politicians, bureaucrats, Government statisticians, police etc have worked out how to estimate the earnings from these different activities, there may well be a more 'accurate' figure for GDP. Certainly, the morality of counting the proceeds of crime as part of GDP has to be questioned. But also, we need to ask whether the politicians and the unelected bureaucrats have actually been truthful about why they are so desperate to increase GDP?

Here is a possible suggestion – the Treaty of Maastricht has five Convergence Criteria for a country to join the Euro, and two of these are dependent on GDP. A Government's budget deficit can be no more than 3% of GDP, and the Government Debt to GDP ratio no more than 60%. It doesn't take an Einstein to realise that since the bank crash of 2007/8, numerous countries in the Euro are breaking the convergence criteria. Budget deficits and debt are not going down any time soon, and certainly not while the ECB (European Central Bank) keeps imposing more austerity on the whole of Europe.

By increasing GDP, the budget deficit and debt ratio automatically go down. Obviously, some bright wunderkind thought of including sex, drugs and trafficking. This will show the EU countries' economies improving, but it will just be a cynical optical illusion, perpetrated by overpaid immoral politicians and unelected bureaucrats. You couldn't make it up!

*(A country's GDP (Gross Domestic Product) means the market value of all the goods and services produced by that country in a fixed period, normally for one year.)

¹<http://www.economist.com/news/finance-and-economics/21603073-italys-inclusion-illicit-activities-its-figures-excites-much-interest-sex>

²<http://euroradio.fm/en/eu-add-prostitution-and-drug-trafficking-gdp>

³<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jun/09/spain-prostitution-gdp-estimate>

POSTIVE MONEY BULLETIN

Ben Dyson; Positive Money Team

New Paper: Creating a Sovereign Monetary System

A couple of months ago Martin Wolf wrote that we should "strip banks of their power to create money" in the Financial Times. He referred to the proposals we put forwards in *Modernising Money*, and ended his article saying "Remember the possibility [of this reform]. When the next crisis comes - and surely it will - we need to be ready."

That article sparked a significant debate between economists and bloggers, both for and against the idea of stopping banks from creating money. Of those against, many critiques either misunderstood the proposals or simply made claims without providing evidence. To respond to some of the common objections, we've revised the paper that outlines our proposals.

Download the updated paper and read the new sections that explains how Positive Money's proposals would:

- Create a better and safer banking system
- Increase economic stability
- Reduce the dependence on debt
- Support the real economy
- Improve government finances
- Tackle unaffordable housing
- Slow the rise in inequality
- Stop the banking sector from overriding democracy

We're also busy preparing a paper that explains why preventing banks from creating money will not harm businesses or the real economy, as some economists have claimed.

Do our MPs understand how money is created?

We've commissioned a poll to find out how many MPs actually understand how money is created, and next week we'll (hopefully) have the official results.

And we'll have one important (but easy) task for YOU, so that you can directly contribute to the debate about this important issue in the parliament! Watch out for our newsletter next week.

In the meantime you can let us know your guess - how many MPs do you think understand money?

How to waste £375 billion

In 2010 the government cancelled a program to rebuild 715 schools, because they'd run out of money. But at the same time the Bank of England had created £375 billion of new money through a program called Quantitative Easing. Instead of this money being spent on something useful, it was pumped into the financial markets, benefitting the richest 5% but doing almost nothing to create jobs and stable economic recovery.

So why does the government cancel essential projects because "there's no money", while at the same time the Bank of England was able to create more new money than the entire government spends in 6 months? Why is it that the power to create money is used to blow up property bubbles and boost financial markets, but not to do the things that we actually need? Our latest video explains how things could have been done differently, and why it's so important to campaign for a better monetary system...

WATCH THE NEW VIDEO: [How to waste £375 billion](#)

We need your help to share this video! Please take a few minutes to:

Share this video on Facebook

Tweet it – try to think of people who might be interested and mention them in your tweet

Email the video to your friends:

Text that you can use:

I've just watched this video which explains why the government was cancelling school rebuilding programs and flood defence programs because they'd 'run out of money', even though the Bank of England was creating £375bn to pump up the financial markets. I think you'll find it shocking:
<http://bit.ly/videoQE>

Sign the petition

In case you haven't yet, please make sure to sign the petition and share:

"Tell the future Prime Minister of the UK that money creation should only be used in the public interest"
Read the full text of the petition and sign here.

From the Blog

Positive Money at Glastonbury

The attention we received said it all – Glastonbury

World Economics Association on Sovereign Money

Positive Money at the Festival of the Common Weal

Lower interest rates contribute to a continued vicious circle

Why we disagree with Ann Pettifor

Sovereign Money will strengthen Democracy and Private Property

Questions that the Bank of England must answer (Quarterly Bulletin 2014 Q2)

Former FSA boss Lord Turner close to arguing for debt-free money creation

The Bryan Callen show: Interview with Ben Dyson (podcast)

Rate rise will bring 'major problems with debt repayments' (Lord Turner)

Launch of the Sovereign Money Initiative in Switzerland

Money Workshop aftermath

**RUNNYMEDE GAZETTE EDITED BY;- FRANK TAYLOR, 2 CHURCH VIEW, ST GILES TERRACE.
CHETTON, BRIDGNORTH, SHROPSHIRE, WV16 6UG; Tel; (01746) 789326
frankinshropshire@hotmail.co.uk**