

THE QUALITY OF THE ENVIRONMENT

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contents

PREFACE vii

PART 1

The State of the Environment 1

1. WHAT MAKES THE GOOD ENVIRONMENT? 3
 2. THE LAND 21
 3. THE AIR 45
 4. WATER 67
5. THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE SENSES 100
6. THE AESTHETIC ENVIRONMENT 127
7. SURVIVAL: WHOLE EARTH PERSPECTIVE 149

PART 2

The Institutions of Social Change: How They Work, How to Use Them 177

8. POLITICS AND PROPAGANDA 179
9. GOVERNMENT AND BUSINESS 202
10. GOVERNMENT AND BUSINESS: THE PROBABLE FUTURE 219
 11. THE PROFESSIONS 233
 12. BUREAUCRACY 249
- INDEX 269

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Keepers of the myth can be assured that no threat to the American way will come from the successful few who manage affairs. They like freedom and the idea of rotation of officials; they like the flexibility given the Constitution by judicial review; they like a free press and free enterprise. They like competition. Having learned to succeed within the present system, and knowing that no other system in man's history has worked as well for as many people, they are not about to change the system. Threats come from those who have not been able to get or to keep what they want. Most significant, the successful people learn the two great truths of society. First, change is constant. Second, deliberate change is made to happen through politics and propaganda. They learn the techniques of politics and propaganda in order to influence change.

Politics and propaganda are never separable. They both aim at persuasion—to persuade voters in an election, to persuade mem-

bers of a legislature, to persuade a board of directors, to persuade the necessary number of executives or union officials or members of a faculty. Politics occur in any conceivable social group and are not limited to government. The politics of a university are just as real as the politics of Congress, the politics of a church congregation as real as the politics of city hall. Propaganda is any effort to persuade others to a chosen opinion by presenting them selected facts and ideas. It can be distributed in the mass media or by word of mouth, by national network or by face-to-face talk. Once the few who manage the affairs of society and who know the techniques of politics and propaganda agree on the need to save the environment, it can be saved. This is one great advantage in a polity such as the United States. The successful are much alike wherever they are.

When a majority of them begin to pay attention to the same thing, they will all reach much the same conclusions about what should be done. No blind dogmas will handicap them.

Once the attentive few have recognized that something should be done, the arguments will be more about means than goals. The solutions will be found in competition and compromise but mostly through agreement among a majority of the participants and acquiescence among the rest. Americans in this way have made some great changes from the past. Their leaders wrote the Declaration and Constitution, accepted judicial review, held the union intact, created new states, built our present social and physical technology. The few who manage the American system can save the environment in this one nation and set an example for the entire earth.

CONSENT OF THE GOVERNED

Only one constraint surrounds them. They must do whatever they do within the tolerance of the mass culture. In America this means that they must act in moderation, walking down the middle way, declining to be associated with extremism. Since the techniques of survey research were perfected in the 1930's, political scientists have had recurring proof of the influence and appeal of the middle way among the majority of Americans.¹

The decision-makers know this too. "The people" must con-

sent for any new measure to be effective. In a free society, with a free press, the limits of possible solution are truly set by the majority of the members of that society. Only rarely does the majority take direct action, not even in the election of a President, except when the winner gets a majority of the vote cast. Almost never does the majority take the initiative. It is not organized to take the initiative. The majority gives consent to the action of its leaders. It abides by decisions. American leaders and "the people" have shown that they are concerned in general about the subject of environment. How much they will support a particular remedy depends on whether that particular remedy has been recognized and accepted by a sufficient number of people who are strategically placed to get attention.

A SUBTLE AND ELUSIVE THING: TIMING

First, an issue must have come into its time. Ignorance of this fact probably causes more frustration and more disappointment with American politics than any other part of the process. A citizen who wants a change that he thinks important, but a change that most of his fellows do not think important, is unhappy. He blames the system. What makes an issue timely? One of the mysteries of political science is that for such a practical question we have very few firm answers.

Casual observation reveals that leaders—known as opinion-leaders—start the process. Editors and reporters see a new significance in the issue and start giving it space. Business executives start talking, along with teachers, preachers, farmers, working-men, the girls in an office, a man at the open table in a downtown club, a woman in a car pool on the way to work, a high school student in a class discussion, or the President of the nation.

Anyone can be an opinion leader if he states an opinion. For his opinion to spread, it must be taken up and expressed by other opinion leaders. When enough of these leaders agree that an issue is important, and the rest of the members of a free society acquiesce in this opinion although they do nothing to promote it, the issue becomes important.

This much descriptive theory is probably sound. It tells nothing

ing, however, of why interest in an issue spreads under what circumstances. For nearly any issue that becomes prominent one can find that earlier leaders had tried to raise it and had failed. Consumer advocates had worked in Washington for at least thirty years before Ralph Nader, saying many of the same things that Nader said successfully later. They received little attention. If by hard work they were invited to testify before a congressional committee, they made no news. For years the Food and Drug Administration had been condemning batches of food, some produced accidentally by the most eminent companies, for hideous reasons such as the presence in selected samples of rat hair or mouse dung, and the mass media paid no attention. Now such exposures are news, meaning that now the opinion leaders think that the mass audience is concerned about the quality of what they eat and the responsibilities of food processors. For at least a hundred years, warnings have been issued about the destruction of earth's environment. The facts were plain to anyone who looked, but the warnings were not news. Only in the 1960's were enough people interested to make the issue news.

Having said that timing is important to catch an issue in its tide, what can one say in general about the recognition of a tide? Not much. Opinion can be measured for breadth and intensity by the techniques of survey research, but unless the issue has become known to most of the people questioned, "don't know's" help only to indicate ignorance and lack of interest.

The late V. O. Key, Jr., master scholar of American politics and public opinion, discerned different kinds of consensus when in 1961 he analyzed data from survey research, although he found supportive data "not copious," having said earlier that "to speak with precision of public opinion is a task not unlike coming to grips with the Holy Ghost."

Supportive consensus upholds policy already adopted and actions taken under it. Thus social security had consensual support from its beginning, and public officials, especially the President, usually have support for their decisions. Permissive consensus allows leaders to adopt new policies. Sometimes it is formed long before the action is taken. A consensus existed in the public to admit Hawaii as a state for fifteen years before Congress acted.

Yet the issue was not strong enough to make Congress act. A consensus of decision, as Key calls it, is in the classic definition of democratic debate and discussion. In the months before Pearl Harbor such deliberation occurred and the majority of opinion swung from decidedly against American involvement to favor of help to England. There was still a division, however, which the Japanese erased by their attack at Pearl Harbor. These are all degrees of public acquiescence or consent.²

In practical terms we can say that leaders in the movement to save the environment already have the question in the main political stream. Abruptly, as the tides of issues run, public awareness of the environmental crisis rose in a few years. Some day perhaps the historians will be able to trace what happened. At the moment this is not clear, except to say that Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* will be one of the landmarks as will such shocking events as the wreck of the *Torrey Canyon*, the Santa Barbara oil leak, and the public debate about the S.S.T.

A worried awareness of a threat is the beginning of cure. Awareness makes it easier for leaders of the politics of cure to find the consensus to support them.

THE BASIC ISSUES OF ENVIRONMENT

It appears now that the particular questions of environment, such matters as the various pollutions on which we are working as well as the ultimate physics of how much waste can be oxidized safely and how much access we keep to the sun, are subordinate to four issues that recur in discussions of all the particular questions. The main issues in the politics of cure are:

1. How much time do we have to change the practices that now threaten to destroy the environment? It makes a difference whether we think and act about the environment in terms of years or decades. And once the trend is turned, it may take decades to reach safety. We cannot permit the trend to decline any longer.
2. Shall we continue to gamble on the future? Until now our practice has been to adopt any new technology that promised more speed or profit or military power or employment. Later, if the technology proved to be dangerous to the environment, we

began to talk about regulating it. Another approach is to make the best assessment possible of the future consequences and control the introduction of new technology.

3. Who will pay for the cures? We will say more about money in the next chapter. Here we need only list the question. Because Americans make such a distinct, though wrong, division between public and private money, this issue will continue to affect the movement to save the environment.

4. How will the cost of the cure and protection of the environment relate to other costs? This question becomes most troublesome when the issue of environment collides with the issue of war. War is already the largest consumer of money. Restoring the environment may well become the second largest. If we have to decide to reduce spending for war in order to spend more to save our lives, the issue then will be loud and clear. Decision after decision will allocate money to war (and of course the preparation for war or what the government propagandists carefully call national security), to environment, and to such other standing causes as health, the poor, highways, education, civil order, justice, and never will there be enough to give to each all that its advocates think they need.

For these and for all the subordinate issues, the people who manage the affairs of society will find the tides of consensus by constantly listening and asking questions. They will use consensus to seek change through the use of persuasion, or in other words, through politics and propaganda.

PEOPLE

People are at once the source of awareness and the objects of propaganda. They develop the facts of politics known to political scientists by such words as consensus, expectations, demands, support, and intensity, stability, or latency of opinion. People muddy the affairs of society with the consequences of sin. Men and women, not squirrels, toss out the beer cans, throw away the cigarette packs, find it amusing to throw an empty bottle into a delicately colored, rare, warm spring in Yellowstone National Park. People try to evade the cost of cure and commit the crime of pollution.

People also bring virtue into social decisions. Public and private executives who manage their affairs with the environment in mind are virtuous. So are members of legislatures and all others who take the time to try to save the environment.

This much is clear from living in society. It is not so easy to understand people as the objects of propaganda, for then they become complex psychological networks quite unlike the pastoral ideal men from a pre-Freudian past.

"New theories of psychology," says Key, "brought new conceptions of the nature of man, conceptions that made him a non-rational creature of subconscious urges and external suggestion." Certainly those of us who went through courses with Harold D. Lasswell at the University of Chicago in the 1930's, and learned the melody of what he said even though we did not learn all the words, could never again think of a voter or a consumer, or his leaders and bureaucrats, as the clear-headed rational citizens postulated by Thomas Jefferson.³ Lasswell's citizen was the new natural man. He reacted to ideas, people, problems, events as much with subconscious emotions as with a rational mind, if indeed a rational mind were possible. This citizen was discovered in the study of Sigmund Freud. He craved safety, income, and deference and felt deprived when he was threatened. He reacted from a bundle of motives that had been created by his total experience from birth. Those citizens who sought positions of authority were moved by the same collections of emotion based on experience. They needed power to compensate against deprivation.

Most of Lasswell's hypotheses from the 1930's were proved in later research. He took the pragmatic observations of such men as John Dewey and Walter Lippmann (in his role of social philosopher) and gave psychological explanations for them. They knew that citizens did not behave as they were supposed to and that the public was what Lippmann called it in a title, *The Phantom Public*. Lasswell said that by the nature of man, the rational citizen who reacted to evidence only by weight and by virtue could never exist because no such man was possible. People really do think with the "pictures in their heads" that Lippmann talked of in *Public Opinion* (1922), still one of the best books ever written on the subject. They cannot perceive all the world

around them but choose only those aspects for which they have already conceived a picture. They live by symbols and slogans more than by rationality.

If Lasswell opened the door to post-Freudian psychology in political science, Murray Edelman added the idea that not people alone but all the institutions and processes of government are symbolic. While conventional studies emphasized how people get the things they want through government, he analyzed the way "politics influences what they want, what they fear, what they regard as possible, and even who they are."⁴

Voting is more a rite that allows voters to feel involved than it is an influence on policy. All times are times that try men's souls, and whenever leaders want or have to do something they think may rouse resentment and resistance, they say that the crisis of the time requires it. The incumbents in public office are regarded as leaders simply because they are in office. Public officials do not have to succeed to get support; they must only try to do something. Leaders have to identify with the approved community symbols. But leadership is defined always in terms of a situation; not by what the leader does but by the way followers respond. If they follow, leadership has been exerted.

The citizen sees the public official not as he is but as he appears to be from the symbols with which he is identified, and because national officials are the most prominent, the citizen will "know" national officials better than he "knows" local officials. The police power can be more trouble than minor violations of the law when it is enforced strictly by the rule. Policemen expect speed laws to be slightly violated by everyone, and they are. The notion that government's regulation of private business is a meeting of adversaries is fiction; if government did not regulate, business would have to regulate itself to get the same order and safety for itself that government now provides.

Such radical conclusions, and many more, Mr. Edelman makes quietly, citing evidence for their truth from research in psychology, anthropology, and political science.

PROPAGANDA

The principal technique of politics is propaganda, the use of communication to persuade.

Harold Lasswell and associates once happily invented a sentence that includes all the subheadings of propaganda with which professional analysts and conscious practitioners deal.⁵ It asks: *Who* is saying *what*, *how*, to *whom*, with *what effect*? "Who" is the *source* of propaganda, "what" the *content*, "how" the *media* of transmission, "whom" the *audience*, and "effect" the *change* or *no change* in opinion in the audience.

Many Americans still think that propaganda is a dirty trick that has no place in politics. It is a common practice for one propagandist to accuse an opponent of using propaganda, implying that this tactic is unfair and misleading. Realists are aware that nearly every communication they receive by any means can be and usually is propaganda. One big exception is art for art's sake, but not art as propaganda. In the popular arts many lyrics of popular songs are propaganda against war, for brotherhood, for and against the use of drugs. Another partial exception is education, when the purpose is to transmit skills, but not when teachers are delivering arguments for good manners, hygiene, safe streets, and the benefits of the American way.

Propaganda is any message for which the content has been chosen for the purpose of persuading an audience to think or do what the source wants them to think or do. It is used to get people to a church supper as well as to incite a mob to burn a ghetto. The technique is not good or bad. Its use may be.

To save the environment through politics and propaganda, advocates must know how to use propaganda effectively. First, they must know the elements of propaganda and some of the elementary facts about how to use it. Moreover, they must know how to detect and analyze propaganda as well as how to use it. There is nothing mysterious about the subject. Some experience and some awareness will make any person able both to use propaganda and to be immune to it. The best approach is through the sentence from Lasswell and his associates that we referred to earlier.

SOURCE

Few sources except advertisers ever admit that they are engaged in propaganda. They usually call it information or education. To a President of the United States, only unfriendly nations practice propaganda, never a President who is doing his best on

network television to persuade his audience that he is doing a good job, that we will soon be out of Viet Nam, that we have been wholly successful there. Any President is a propagandist when he says anything in any year of any administration. So are all his top officials. So are Governors, Mayors, and all other office holders. They may look as if they are simply answering questions from reporters—that is what they want you to think they are doing. They may look as if they are making an impromptu speech. In fact, they are carefully choosing words, slogans, ideas calculated to persuade the audience, including the reporters, to accept whatever opinion or interpretation the official has in mind.

A source may be a witness before a congressional committee. If the chairman asked him to appear, he will say things that support the chairman's views. If the witness asked to appear, he wants a chance to try to publicize his views or at least to try to persuade members of the committee. Any time a group, no matter its size, appoints a director of public relations, or information, or public affairs, a source is created.

Propaganda also comes from many sources besides those called propagandists. When a pastor preaches a sermon designed to persuade his audience to a point of view, he is engaged in propaganda, having chosen the phrases, arguments, and scriptures that enforce his argument.

The air would be clearer and citizens would be better able to know their own minds and to get what they want if all Americans would stop thinking of propaganda as sinister and realize instead that it is ubiquitous. A tough-minded Frenchman summed up accurately, "... nowadays propaganda pervades all aspects of public life."⁶

WHAT: CONTENT

The content of any piece of propaganda can be taken apart word by word to reveal what its source had in mind. Thus when gathering intelligence from secretive nations, the United States and other open nations keep a close ear to the radio and read the press. A secretive nation, under strict censorship, puts out propaganda for its own people. Such propaganda often tells a great

deal about what concerns the leaders of a secretive nation; even strong denials may indicate that what is denied has in fact happened.

Content consists of selected facts, selected ideas, selected opinions. These are expressed in symbols and slogans.

A symbol is a word or thing that is taken for the idea or thing with which it is associated. "Frontier" in America means the country to the west. "Liberty" has a meaning that can seldom be defined exactly but means more or less the same to all Americans. Few laymen to political and economic theory have a correct knowledge of what "communism" is, and few beyond specialists in Soviet government and economics know how communism is practiced in the Soviet Union; yet American politicians for twenty years after 1945 used "communism" as a symbol of threat and as a reason to wage cold and hot wars. Hammer and sickle mean Soviet Union and communism. (In the 1920's a bushy-bearded man carrying a lighted bomb meant "communist" or "Bolshevik.") Swastika means Nazi Germany.

Sounds can be symbols. When background music emits a short and sinister buzz, apparently borrowed from the rattlesnake, danger is near. Castanets evoke Gypsy dancing girls. Theme songs can become so widely known that they come to stand for their users. Only the President can enter to "Hail to the Chief." Tex Ritter singing "High Noon" from the sound track came to represent the entire movie of that name. "I Walk the Line," played in the low notes of a guitar, can mean only Johnny Cash.

Words and phrases are symbols. They are chosen very carefully for the purpose of propaganda. What Governor Wallace would call some pointy-headed intellectual chose the Dow Chemical Company as the target of student radicals' propaganda against the war in the late 1960's. "Dow" is short and fits headlines or placards; it is impersonal, flat in sound. "Napalm" symbolizes fiery death and destruction. Only a very small part of the company's production was napalm. The combination of "Dow" and "napalm" was perfect for sound, conciseness, symbolism, and all other requirements of radical propaganda. As a result, the company was severely hurt, and its officials were forced to spend much time trying to get an audience for their counter-propa-

ganda. "Intellectual" itself is also a symbol, whether pointy-headed or not. Some others are "liberal," "conservative," "home-maker," "businessman." In any of these categories shades of meaning defy any generalized description of a whole group.

Symbols often are euphemistic, designed to divert the receiver from a harsh reality. When the United States was getting deeply into war in Viet Nam, we heard only about "escalation" of the fighting, not about entering a rugged struggle to win a major war. After we stopped bombing North Viet Nam, any further air raid across the border was never called bombing but rather "protective retaliation" and then, after someone thought up a better combination, "protective reaction." Retaliation suggested revenge. One could watch the Secretary of Defense facing reporters and television cameras and in a weird distortion of sense insisting that our policy had not changed. We have not resumed bombing North Viet Nam. We are sending bombing missions in protective reaction against positions in North Viet Nam that shoot at American reconnaissance planes with armed escorts flying over North Viet Nam. Such are the power and prevalence of symbol-speak that reporters accept the distortion and transmit it to all who are interested.

Military jargon is crowded with euphemisms as symbols, especially when the United States is not clearly threatened and the military and civil politicians must keep citizens persuaded that they should accept large expenditures and heavy casualties to fight a dubious war or to maintain large forces on guard overseas. We are not in a "war" in Southeast Asia; we are granting military aid. "Casualties" is a standard term in all wars to mean dead and wounded. We do not invade another country; we make an "incursion." An invasion to cut enemy supply lines is "interdiction." Everything from patrolling the earth, the sky, and space to bombing one suspected location of one Viet Cong soldier is done for the sake of "national defense" and the protection of the "security" of the United States.

The President uses "Vietnamization" as a *package* symbol to mean his policy of "withdrawing" American ground combat troops (but not air combat forces and ground supply troops). It is a cover-up symbol, an evasion of the more candid, "I am trying

to get out of a war we can't win under our decision of limited military action. My predecessors made mistakes by getting involved, but I approved at the time. I am in office when a great many Americans no longer approve of the war. They may not vote for me next time unless I can convince them that I have really reduced the numbers of Americans in Southeast Asia. I only hope the South Viet Nam army, even with our air support, our advisers, our supplies and our support of the country's economy does not fold and quit before I can get enough Americans back home."

The propaganda for peace has some euphemisms too. "The brotherhood of man" represents a concept that can be accepted if one does not ask the bothersome questions about nationalism. Some "doves" as opposed to "hawks" approve of "wars of liberation" although others regard all war as a "waste of lives and money."

Slogans are short statements of opinion which become known to so many people that they are used in the same way as symbols for communication. State a slogan and the details can be spared; the idea is established. "If we don't stop the communists in Southeast Asia they will be in San Francisco next." "America has no interest in Southeast Asia." "The United States must honor its treaty obligations!" "America needs to regain the respect of other nations."

Surprisingly few symbols of propaganda have become the currency of communication in the movement to save the environment. "Pollution," "environment," and "ecology" are about the only ones. "E-Day," when students and others across the land brought attention to the question, was poorly chosen because it was limited to one-time use. "Whole Earth" caught on with the considerable but still relatively few numbers of people who bought the catalog published by the Portola Institute.⁷ The Whole Earth symbol is broader than environment, however. It includes a way of living cheaply and naturally by escaping from the urban-industrial world of chemical foods and expensive clothes, a manner of living that its followers would sum up in another symbol, "life-style."

The media of communication can be classified in a number of ways, reaching at times to such an extreme as the discovery, and worse reporting, of a category called memorandummatic.⁸ Categories are a sometime useful thing.

HOW: MEDIA

Most important, when thinking of the media, is to remember that their variety is infinite. A new one will appear (the picture phone, computer pictures, video cassettes) as soon as technology and the market are ready. Attempts to find new uses are incessant and ingenious. A wise propagandist is always looking for them. For example, the electronic media are most familiar as radio and television. They also include inspirational speeches on tape, played solemnly at meetings of the faithful in their local cells, whether Birchers or Maoists, Christians or communists. They include telephone hook-ups to be received either by individuals at their phones or by audiences in auditoriums. Any communication by sound or image carried by electricity by any device can be used for propaganda. So can print in any form and words spoken face to face with one or a thousand other people.

The printed media include the obvious newspapers and magazines plus newsletters, direct-mail, and thousands of specialized magazines and newspapers for particular audiences in business; religion; the professions; farming; sports; hunting and fishing; conservation, subdivided into soil, water, air, health, mammals, reptiles, birds, forests, pesticides, fertilizers; and on as far as Americans form organizations, which is their tendency. Posters are printed; they range from a notice on a bulletin board to billboard advertising.

Some other media are neither printed nor electronic: speech in all its uses, for example, from spreading rumor to preaching, demonstrating, sabotaging, hunger striking, rioting, and others.

A key element is to choose those media that will best reach the audience whose support or acquiescence is most needed. One example will illustrate. Plant managers and mayors are more strategic in the immediate use of the environment than are college students. If quick action is needed, the media should be chosen to reach plant managers and mayors, perhaps their trade jour-

nals, or telephone conferences, or personal appeals by speech or letter. If more lasting reform is wanted, the appeal can be distributed next in the media that reach college students, for they will become the plant managers and mayors of the future. To reach the residents of a neighborhood, the best medium may be door-to-door visits. To reach the residents of a city, the best media may be newspaper, radio, and television. To reach an audience of the few top executive officials who make decisions for the nation, the best media may be a nationwide campaign in all media or personal visits from equally prestigious people. The choice of media can be decided only case by case, subject by subject.

WHOM: AUDIENCE

Only the amateur expects everyone who is exposed to his propaganda to be paying attention to it. The professional knows that only some will listen. These will be the people who already have an interest in the subject or those who catch the mention of it and become interested. They can be attentive yet still be for or against the proposed change. The purpose of propaganda, then, is to reinforce the support of those who are already interested and in agreement and to capture the support of those who become interested and might be persuaded.

Only seldom can an audience be defined neatly and easily. The people who come to a meeting to hear about a subject, the subscribers to a publication of narrow scope, can be defined easily. Most of the time the "source" sends the "content" to the "audience" that it thinks will most probably include the people who will pay attention. Within a category, however, sub-groups will be interested in differing subjects. Within the politics of medicine, for example, internists differ from surgeons, psychiatrists from internists, orthopedists from psychiatrists, salaried physicians (in research or public health) from fee-earning doctors, small-town clinicians from big-city medical center physicians.

Always within any category the young will differ from the "establishment." Changing ideas, changing moods, come from the fact that the young fortunately often come up with better ideas after having watched their elders make mistakes. The United

States of the 1970's is a vastly different place from the nation of the 1950's. A generation of the young has come along to take over.

EFFECT

To measure results precisely in a large audience costs too much for most propagandists to take the trouble. It requires survey research. Instead, most politicians watch for changes in their own way. A colleague changes his position, a friend calls to approve, votes (or sales in business propaganda) rise or they do not. Persistence, sometimes over a span of years, is required according to such circumstances as the novelty of the subject, the size of the change proposed, the size of the audience to be reached. If attitudes toward the environment are to be changed so that life can continue, the propaganda and politics must be heavy and persistent.

THE PRACTICE OF PROPAGANDA

The rest of propaganda is practice. It is learned from experience. A beginning group of environmentalists or an individual should seek advice from professional politicians and propagandists before planning a campaign. Practice varies from one cause to another. Sources, content, media, audiences, and effects differ. Certain practices are so accepted, however, that they can be called the wisdom of the trade.

The best propaganda looks so much like news that not even the reporters mention that it has a certain purpose. You can analyze the events of any day and see that many of them were made to happen: a certain witness before a congressional committee, a demonstration, a presidential news conference, an action in war that focuses attention on the plight of prisoners of war and away from continuing casualties and the war itself, an earnest statement by a President or a Secretary of Defense that turns out later to have been deceptive because it was not completely candid.

Not too many years ago the Governor of Alabama blocked the door of the University of Alabama to prevent the admission of a black student. This act insured: (1) live television and radio coverage; (2) prominent space in every newspaper; (3) news maga-

zine coverage; (4) international news space; (5) editorial comment; (6) replays in news summaries on radio and television and in reviews of the year. His propaganda and political strategy was simple: As Governor of Alabama I am opposed to the federal authorities forcing integration in our schools and university. I do not have the power to stop them, but I will make them forcibly move me aside to enter the building. I will have done my best to abide by the feelings of those who elected me, and I place full responsibility for this action on the federal government. The Governor became famous and began to run for President.

Take advantage of breaks in the news. If coho salmon are seized and destroyed by the State of Michigan because they are too contaminated with D.D.T. to be fit for human consumption and you are fighting the use of D.D.T., exploit the incident for its news value.

Make news at the right time. If you plan a demonstration, stage it at the right time of day for press and television coverage. Know deadlines for afternoon and morning papers, for radio and television news programs.

Know what is most likely to go on radio and television networks, and on newspaper wire services, and never, never ask a news handler to use something which is not news. Drive home the point by turning it into an event that is news!

Try for double effect. Governor Lester Maddox of Georgia is a master of double effect. He demonstrates as a one man picket in front of the Atlanta newspapers building, and the press and television networks give him full coverage. He claims to be angry over something said on a late night television talk show and walks off. Because no other guest has tried this stunt, he makes news; he get his point across and continues in the limelight.

Do not be deceived by ardor and your own propaganda. A surprising number of politicians and others who use propaganda fail to keep clearly in mind what is real support and how much they are reading into something that is not really there. Especially when employing face-to-face propaganda in crowds, as in parades or demonstrations, pay little attention to what is happening at the time. Watch television and press to see how the much greater audience that was not present received the performance.

Student radicals in the late 1960's and the staff of the late Robert F. Kennedy in the primary campaigns for President in 1968 both made this mistake. The radical student leaders claimed they had support because they drew many students out to demonstrate. More students, and practically all off-campus citizens, were turned off by the stammering and unreasonable people that many young demonstrators appeared to be on television screens. The Kennedy parades drew:

... ecstatic, screaming, jumping crowds of students, ghetto blacks, Mexican-Americans, and poverty-stricken Indians. The press and television covered the frenetic crowds on hand—and rhapsodized. At first, the Kennedy campaign staff was pleased, but they soon discovered something else: Millions of Americans watching television were appalled at what seemed to be the radical and frenetic nature of Senator Kennedy's campaign. His ratings in the polls fell, and soon the nature of Kennedy's campaign changed.⁹

Be aware of the mood of the time. Is it one of well-being or of concern over war, crime, income, the next generation? If people are troubled, what troubles them most? It appears that President Nixon and his Vice President misinterpreted the mood of 1970. They stressed the symbols "violence," "law-and-order," or the "social issue." The supporting *Wall Street Journal* in an editorial the day before election (November 2, 1970) referred to the social issue as trying to stop "a litany of what for want of better words must be called anti-Americanism and permissiveness." In the news columns of the same paper and in conversations all through the land, among all kinds of Americans, the first concerns were high prices, falling real incomes, sluggish business, lay-offs, and the fact that despite all the Nixon symbols about "game plan" and similar magic, times were not getting any better. The Republican Party failed to gain significantly in the Congressional elections of 1970 as it had hoped to do. Its leaders had failed to keep in touch with the mood of the time.

The most accessible readings of a mood, as well as of opinion on a particular issue, are the public opinion polls. Learn to read them. Analyze the questions carefully. They may not get the answer they seem to be getting. Make sure you know how much time has elapsed since the poll was taken. It is just as important

to know what a poll does not tell as what it does. Valid conclusions can be based only on what the polls do tell.

Never underestimate or overestimate an audience. Not all Americans are the same. Only very few of the influentials fall for fads in ideas, books, hair spray, deodorants, and fashions. Perhaps there are some women like those who insult each other's wash, and some men and women like those who hawk pills, lotions, and gargles in television commercials, but they will not be among the people who successfully affect vital decisions.

Data about age distribution, race, income, things possessed, and occupations can be found in the nearest library from census reports. Ask for the reports by nation, state, county, or census tract, the last being the smallest geographical areas for which the data are reported. For a campaign aimed at individuals the data from a census tract is probably the best.

One does well always to remember that Americans of all ages and incomes are among the best informed and most widely experienced people in the world. They are exposed to a great array of information and propaganda. If they tried to absorb all of it, they would end up as gibbering lunatics. They listen to what interests them. Each group that wants to reach them has to find those in the great public who are interested in what it has to say.

The exposure of Americans to information and other experiences is progressive. Each generation that grows to maturity is better educated, more aware, better informed than the generation that begot it. Appeals for attention have to change with the changing abilities of each new generation.

Honesty is the best policy. It is the right policy. It is also the only safe policy. In the open society of free America, propaganda is competitive, and someone is always watching for a flaw in the other's propaganda. Professional newsmen, especially, want to handle only honest news. Their ethic requires that they make their stories as factual as possible. If they discover that a source has misled them, or given them only partial information, they will expose him. President Nixon was not helped after the elections of 1970 when he tried to interpret the results as a victory for his Party. It does not help a business firm to advertise that it has removed pollutants from the water beside its plant when re-

porters with cameras can show that it has not. Only the ignorant trust the Atomic Energy Commission to tell the truth about fallout or any other nuclear danger; the agency has lost its reputation with the informed and the skeptical.

THE AMERICAN PROCESS

Politics in America reflects two characteristics so prevalent that any citizen who wants to help save the environment will have to defer to them if he or she is to be successful. The American process is a matter of groups, and it is a matter of gradual change.

The capsule word that comes closest to describing the way government, business, and other institutions in America make decisions is "groupism," which has a dreadful sound because the concept has been so abused by organizers and joiners. David B. Truman, another political scientist from Chicago of the 1930's, best stated recent group theory in *The Governmental Process, Political Interests and Public Opinion*, an enduring book.¹⁰ Groups, according to Truman's theory, can be organized and carry a name or they can consist of people who share an attitude. A group of individuals who share an attitude makes certain claims on other groups in society, either by clear statement or by inherent, potential statement. When some development arouses all the individuals of a particular group, it ceases to be latent and becomes an interest group.

Truman's theory of groups struck most political scientists as a true statement of what happens in the process of government in the United States. Some groups are organized—a church congregation, for example. Other groups exist because their members share an interest, but these groups are not organized—"church people," for example. An unorganized group can still be a force simply because it exists, and "church people" are respected by leaders. When Calvin Coolidge was asked to explain the cause of the creeping liberalism of his time, he answered, "women." Women are another unorganized group.

In the day-to-day practice of American politics, however, the voices most heard will be those of organized groups with officers responsible for knowing what is going on. The potential interest groups have influence only because those who make decisions

know they are out there and must not be offended—too much.

If a group does not organize and post a guard, decisions will be made without the knowledge of the members of the potential group. They wake to the news that they may be dying of pollution; a slice is torn from a park for a wider freeway; the estimated time of arrival of doom has been advanced again. The lesson for those who want to save the environment is plain. They should organize and hire a guard, a staff to keep watch against offenders, an information center to keep members informed, and a quarterback to call plays for the offense in legislatures, stockholders' meetings, local governments, state governments, national government, executive, legislative, and judicial branches, factories, retail stores, banks, insurance companies. Decisions about the use of the environment are made in all these places and more, and decisions can be influenced best while they are being made.

As for gradualism, the United States has been having a revolution for some two hundred years without once having the government overthrown or the economy drastically changed. Pragmatic Americans accepted the principle that government, business, all other institutions and individuals could change and that as long as the change made sense, it would be accepted. They interpreted the Constitution and the mixed system of private and public property as allowing for change.

Individuals and interest groups are perpetually seeking one change or another, depending on their interests and their values. When they command enough attention to start a movement, the issue is debated, discussed, amended, approved, or disapproved. So far, those who advocate drastic change, such as replacing private with communal ownership, have never been able to win more than a passing curiosity from most Americans.

The new movement to save the environment is being discussed and conducted at the very center of the American process. Its first advocates picked up many others who agreed with them, supporters of many varied interests, backgrounds, occupations. Legislatures have been persuaded in many places and on many subjects. Private and public bureaucracies have been moved. Yet nothing has been done, or will get done, abruptly or drastically.

The progress of change will be gradual. Today in one state, in one county, a decision will be made about local water. Tomorrow the nation will move to begin saving the oceans. Day after tomorrow in some place a decision will be made for clean air.

If the reformer becomes impatient because all problems are not solved at once and completely, he frets ineffectively and drops out of the process by which change is accomplished. He should, instead, take comfort in the fact that all the incidental changes do add up and that the process of constant change holds promise that change will continue. As technology changes, the nation will be able to protect the environment more effectively each year, and this too is an advantage of constant change. Indeed, in view of the American experience, the worst blow that could be dealt us would be a fast and total overthrow in favor of a frozen system that in the faith of its advocates is seen also as a perfect system.

NOTES

1. A recent example is Richard M. Scammon and Ben J. Wattenberg, *The Real Majority* (Coward-McCann, New York, 1970). Studies of voters using modern techniques, go back to Harold Gosnell, *Negro Politicians* (University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1935), a Chicago study. For national elections Louis H. Bean had discovered in the 1930's that certain counties would reflect the national vote. See his *Ballot Behavior* (American Council on Public Affairs, Washington, D.C., 1940) and *How to Predict Elections* (Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1948). Another pioneer study was Paul F. Lazarsfeld, Bernard R. Berelson, and Hazel Gaudet, *The People's Choice, How the Voter Makes Up His Mind in a Presidential Campaign* (Columbia University Press, New York, 1948), a study of the 1940 presidential campaign and election in Erie County, Ohio.
2. V. O. Key, Jr., *Public Opinion and American Democracy* (Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1961), pp. 8, 27-37.
3. Key, *ibid.*, p. 6. Leo Rosten, one of Lasswell's students, wrote an affectionate essay about him in *People I Have Loved, Known or Admired* (McGraw-Hill, New York, 1970), "The Incredible Professor," p. 274. The titles of Lasswell's books written in his days in political

- science at Chicago were: *Propaganda Technique in the World War* (1927), *Psychopathology and Politics* (1930), *World Politics and Personal Insecurity* (1935), and *Politics: Who Gets What, When, How* (1936). Then he went east and became more polite. When three scholars published in 1971 their analysis of 62 basic innovations in social science from 1900 through 1965, Lasswell was the only man named three times as associated in the contribution of three different innovations: elite studies, quantitative political science and basic theory, and content analysis. Of the four men listed twice for contributions to basic innovations, two had been Lasswell's students or associates, Herbert Simon (hierarchical computerized decision models and computer simulation of social and political systems) and Ihriel de Sola Pool (content analysis and computer simulation of social and political systems). Karl W. Deutsch, John Platt, Dieter Senghaas, "Conditions Favoring Major Advances in Social Science," *Science* Vol. 171, Feb. 5, 1971, p. 450, Table 1.
4. Murray Edelman, *The Symbolic Uses of Politics* (University of Illinois Press, Urbana, 1964), p. 20, and all of this book.
 5. Harold D. Lasswell, Daniel Lerner, and Ihriel de Sola Pool, *The Comparative Study of Symbols, An Introduction* (Stanford University Press, Stanford, Calif., 1952), p. 12.
 6. Jacques Ellul, *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes* (Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1965), p. 119.
 7. *The Whole Earth Catalog, Access to Tools* was published twice a year by the Portola Institute, Menlo Park, California, between Fall 1968 and Spring 1971. It described a great variety of things that were worth the price and that would help an individual be more self-sufficient. The Catalog was a great success.
 8. James N. Rosenau, *Public Opinion and Foreign Policy* (Random House, New York, 1961), pp. 91-93. Memorandummatic media, e.g., a news letter, should not be confused with assemblomatic media; e.g., a meeting, pp. 86-91, or programmatic media; e.g., an agenda, pp. 93-96.
 9. Scammon and Wattenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 19.
 10. (Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1951). Truman drew from the ideas and observations of A.F. Bentley who could hardly have been less a group man in person. He lived in rural Indiana, thinking for himself, not conforming to the fad-think of any groups.