Plenty," that advertising is "an instrument comparable to the school and the church in the extent of its influence on society."

Estimates have been made that by 1965 the advertising total will reach $15 billion a year in the U. S. This is another aspect of the colossal waste of capitalism which socialists have often documented in other areas. More and more has to be spent to prod the jaded consumer into buying. Aside from the material waste, there is the waste of artistic abilities. Gifted writers and artists spend most of their waking hours planning and executing advertising gimmicks, M. R. programs, catchy eye filling layouts, and any meretricious method to help sell the product. Many a talent to produce a genuinely worthwhile artistic work has been frustrated and wasted in the advertising business.

The wear and tear of the business is legendary. Pressure builds up and frustrations are common. Ulcers, nervous breakdowns, alcoholism, are traceable to the pressure. Fear of losing the account to the competition is ever present. Client turnover is increasing. The rat race, so typical to business, is here intensified to the nth degree. Like the corporation organization man they must conform. Agency copywriters and account executives may have salaries ranging up to $30,000 a year, although the average is less than half of that. If the agency loses the account the ax is wielded and the high salaried brain is out on the labor market with his specialised labor power for sale just like any ordinary production worker who has his labor power for sale when he is out of a job. These are the people who fancy they can look down on the consumers and manipulate them. They themselves are puppets on the string of those who direct the show...the capitalist class.

Now and then an advertising man protests against certain aspects of the advertising world. One of them is Vance Packard who wrote the best-seller, "The Hidden Persuaders." As Packard states, the book itself was a protest against the growing interest advertising people have in setting up programs to appeal to the subconscious mind. They aim to arouse subconscious desires and satisfy hidden needs such as the need for security or power. They offer the consumer relief from his feelings of guilt and anxiety, and present a product so that it seems necessary for the consumer's social class. They will give the consumer status enhancement if he buys the long car, the suburban home. They create dissatisfaction in the consumer's mind with a product he already owns which may function satisfactorily so that he will feel a "need" to buy a new model. Finally, they aim to create a mood on the part of the public that encourages people to give vent to their whims and mollify their ids. Packard in his book wanted the professional persuaders to develop codes of ethics so that they would not invade the privacy of our minds by playing upon our frailties, the encouragement of irrational behavior, and what he calls the reshaping of our national character in the direction of self-indulgent materialism. These codes of ethics were his solution to curb the motivational researchers and bring them under control.

Since writing "The Hidden Persuaders," Packard has had even more disturbing thoughts. A year after the book appeared he wrote in the New York Times Magazine, May 11th, 1958:

> "Since the book appeared the economic climate in America has changed in some unsettling ways. Several months ago we began experiencing an economic recession despite the best efforts of the industrial persuaders, hidden or *otherwise* (our italics) to move our goods as fast as our economy could produce them. Warehouses became uncomfortably crowded with the products of our excess capacity."

Packard goes on to state that this development along with several others:

> "Have caused me to shift my main area of concern from the manipulators to the climate that has produced them. Today I see their efforts as symptoms of the strain our system is undergoing... The problem of selling all the goods our rapidly expanding economy can turn out when working near its ever-expanding capacity is each year becoming more challenging. It is producing signs not only of indigestion on the part of the public but unhealthy signs of straining on the part of the professional persuaders charged with moving the goods."

Dismay or disgust with some of the methods the witch doctors use to advertise the products is part of the moral affectation and commercial hypocrisy of the modern business world. Anyone would be naive indeed to imagine that there would be any integrity in advertising — which is a most important preliminary step in selling the commodity and realizing the profit in a capitalist economy. Capitalism, which can wage wars over markets, will not hesitate to use any methods to sell its products. These methods can range anywhere from the employment of prostitutes by sales executive to sell buyers to the use of the pseudoscientific dopesters of the ad agencies, who prostitute whatever little scientific knowledge they have acquired. Capitalism under its surface blandness is brutally unscrupulous, using any means to an end, despite the typical hogwash the institutional advertisements give forth about the idealism of the system of exploitation. The mainspring of the persuaders who run the agencies is the profit motive. No motivational researcher is needed to discover that profit is the motive in all capitalism. An executive vice president of a New York agency echoed the sentiments of all capitalists when he stated, "Advertising is a profitable business. It always has been profitable, and it's always going to be profitable."

When one examines advertising it is very easy to poke fun at its most ridiculous aspects. It is a crazy childish business that reflects a society that hardly can be classified as sane. The super superlative claims on the part of competing products cancel out believability. It is out "to shake people up and make 'em buy," in the words of Whitman Hobbs, a vice president of B.B.D. & O. (New York Times, June 10th, 1958). Certainly, the methods of the professional persuaders cannot be used to make socialists.

Even if the latest technique of subliminal advertising were used on every TV screen in the land, flashing the words "become a socialist" at a fraction of a second to millions of unconscious (sic) minds, it would not do the job. Socialism involves conscious understanding along scientific lines. Advertising tricks cannot make socialists any more than they can make mathematicians. Indeed, it would be beyond the ken of the advertising business to do a little research into the actual nature of capitalism, to penetrate a little into the social set-up of capitalist class and working class, and see how the surplus value system operates. They would not be interested in advertising "the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people."

The capitalists, who pay the media, dictate that all must be safe, conformist and non-critical. Through advertising they financially support newspapers, magazines, radio and television, and therefore control the ideas expressed in them. Any who would expose their system would be forever ostracized. At the present time only small groups of socialists are engaged in the seemingly hopeless task of advocating socialism. As time goes on the conditions of capitalism itself, the necessities of existence, the assimilation of the hard facts arising from the workings of the system itself, will all cumulatively aid the establishment of a new society. Needless to say, where there will be free access to the products of such a society, there will be no need to persuade its members to buy them.

W. N.

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