

people yield to the craving to read about murders and divorces and to look at the comic strips, or to listen to soap operas and swing music, they must expect to be influenced by the propaganda which always accompanies these habit-forming stimuli. A questionnaire on reading habits was recently addressed by the heads of a New York labor union to its membership. Among the questions asked were: What newspaper do you regularly read? and what newspaper do you consider the least trustworthy and most untruthful? Sixty per cent of the membership agreed that newspaper X was the most untruthful sheet in the New York area, but over forty per cent admitted to making it their daily reading—because of its superior comic strips and more violent sensationalism. As usual, it is a case of *video meliora proboque; deteriora sequor*—I see the better and I approve; but the worse is what I pursue. Under the present dispensation, nothing but self-denial on the part of readers can diminish the influence of newspaper X. Continued indulgence in psychological addictions has to be paid for, and the price is undesirable propaganda.

3. By supplying the ruling oligarchy with more effective instruments of coercion and persuasion, applied science has contributed directly to the centralization of power in the hands of the few. But it has also made important indirect contributions to the same end. It has done this in two ways; first, by introducing over ever larger areas of the industrial and agricultural economy the methods of large-scale mass production and mass distribution; second, by creating, through its very progressiveness, an economic and social insecurity which drives all those concerned, owners and managers no less than workers, to seek the assistance of the national state. Let us now consider these two power-centralizing factors in greater detail.

a) In applying the results of disinterested scientific research, inventors and technicians have paid more attention to the problem of equipping large concerns with the expensive machinery of mass production and mass distribution than to that of providing individuals or co-operating groups with cheap and simple, but effective, means of production for their own subsistence and for the needs of a local market. The reason for this is that there has been more money in working for the mass producers and mass distributors; and the mass producers and mass distributors have had more money because financiers have seen that there was more profit for them, and more power, in a centralized than in a decentralized system of production.

Here, in parenthesis, let us note that concentration of financial power preceded the scientific revolution of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and was largely responsible for making our industrial civilization the hateful thing it was and, for the most part, still is. Throughout Europe land and natural resources were not owned outright by the people, represented by a multitude of small holders; nor were they the property of a sovereign, leasing to small tenants and spending the rent (which is the monetary expression of the social value of land) for social purposes. The best part of the land and its natural resources was the monopoly of a small class of landlords, who appropriated the social values of what should, quite obviously, have been everybody's property, to their own private use. Hence the early centralization of financial power—a power that was used to exploit the new technological discoveries for the benefit, not of individual small producers or co-operating groups, but for that of the class, which alone possessed accumulations of money. Centralized finance begot centralized industry, and in due course the profits