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THE POLITICS OF PERSUASION¹

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If one . . . has a layman's knowledge of practical psychology, and uses the salesman's approach, he can be successful in reaching into a man's brain and pulling out the facts he wants. (Police interrogation manual by Mulbar, 1951, p. 5).

The road to the top is steep and treacherous. To move up, you have to give 100 per cent of your energies and abilities at all times. . . . Whether you sell to industry, to wholesalers, to the retail trade, or to the individual consumer, you are dealing with people. Human beings are generally regarded as unpredictable and unfathomable but over the years the knowledge of human nature has been increased and clarified. Psychology has taught us much about getting along with and motivating people. The Manual will show you how to deal successfully with people and motivate them to make decisions in your favor. (Professional Salesman's Desk Manual. Bureau of Business Practices, 1969. Introduction).

The police interrogator is recognized by society as an agent of change whose job it is to persuade witnesses and suspects to give evidence, admissions and confessions of guilt. When he is successful, the individual may lose his freedom or life, but society is presumed to be the beneficiary of this loss. The salesman's effective persuasion may or may not benefit either the "target" of his sales attempt or the society, but it certainly brings personal gain to the salesman and those he represents. What is similar about both is that they are "formal" persuasive communicators in so far as their goal to effect a specified

change is explicitly formulated and their tactics are often laid down in training manuals used in their initiation. Examination of their tactics reveals a further basis of similarity--a willingness to employ virtually any means to achieve their goals. Indeed, for the one it has been necessary to establish Supreme Court rulings to limit the use of third degree physical brutality and excessive psychological coercion; for the other, Better Business Bureaus and Ralph Nader are needed to limit the excessive exploitation of the consumer.

But every social interaction carries the burden of being a potential attitude change encounter. The ethical issues raised by deceptive business practices or police coercion are often ignored in other equally compelling influence situations. Parents, educators, priests, and psychotherapists, for example, represent some of the most powerful "behavioral engineers" in our society. It is rare that we even consider the appropriateness of evaluating what they do in ethical terms. This is largely because they are not perceived as formal agents of attitude and behavior change. They function with the benefits of socially sanctioned labels which conceal persuasive intent: parents "socialize," teachers "educate," priests "save souls," therapists "cure the mentally ill."

There are two other characteristics of the

influence situations in which they operate which minimize any issue of unethical, deceptive or coercive persuasion. First, there is an illusion that the goal of the situation is defined in terms of the best interests of the target person: the child, student, sinner, sick patient. Second, an attribution error process typically occurs by which we judge that the individual could have resisted the pressures brought to bear upon him. We want to believe that people change only when they want to or when they are subjected to overwhelming physical forces. The extent to which behavior is controlled by external social and psychological forces is denied in favor of the presumed strength of individual will power to resist. Given these three characteristics, then, our most persuasive communicators are not acknowledged as such, or are not recognized as exerting a potentially negative effect on the individuals with whom they interact.

Upon closer analysis, however, these underpinnings of our naive view of such attitude change agents lose some of their foundation. For example, all of them can be viewed as "salesmen" for the established status quo with the best interest of society placed before the best interest of the individual. Socialization to be a Hitler Jungen, socialization to repress impulses, to be a good child, to do what one is told, to be seen and not heard, to be

patriotic, to be polite, not to question elders, and so forth are goals of the adults in the Society which may be at odds with the child's personal growth. Education can mean to bias, to present prejudiced opinion as scientific or accepted fact, to perpetuate preferred ways of thinking. For example, the Russians teach the doctrine of Lysenko, some of our schools reject Darwinism, teachers can be models of racial prejudice, etc. To save sinners may involve making people feel guilt, shame, anxiety; deny the pleasure of physical contact; accept the poverty and status quo of this world for a pie in the sky when you die. To cure the mentally ill sometimes involves communicating what the person must do in order for society not to label him a "deviant" and cast him out into a madhouse. Psychotherapy can be seen as conformity training in which there is a unilateral influence attempt to make the patient's "abnormal" behavior "normal" (like everyone else's) again.

Our predisposition to make the attribution error of overestimating internal relative to external causality is seen repeatedly in those phenomena which most intrigue and fascinate us. Hypnosis, voodoo deaths, brainwashing, placebo effects, Asch's conformity and Milgram's obedience findings all share this property. Dramatic changes in behavior occur in others, which we believe we personally could resist. The strength of the situational forces are

not appreciated, while our own ability not to be tender-minded or weak-willed or suggestible or controlled by words is magnified.

But research from many disparate areas clearly reveals how easy it is to bring behavior under situational control. Hovland (1959) has noted that it is almost impossible not to get positive attitude change in a laboratory study of attitude change. Orne (1962) despairs at being able to find a task so repulsive and demeaning that "experimental subjects" will not readily perform it upon request. Milgram (1963) shows that the majority of his subjects engage in extremely aggressive behavior in a situation which psychiatrists had believed would only have a weak effect in inducing blind obedience. We comply, conform, become committed, are persuaded daily in the endless procession of influence situations that we enter, yet we each continue to maintain an illusion of personal invulnerability. It is only when the situational forces become so obviously unfair--so physically suppressive or psychologically repressive--that we question the ethics of the change situation.

It is in this sense, then, that one may talk about the politics of persuasion since an influence attempt backed by society is persuasion sanctioned by established policy. If a communicator advocates change which is not

acceptable to the power structure which controls the resources of the society, then pressure is brought to change the communicator. Attempts are made to bring him back in line or, failing this, to reject him through relabelling as a "revolutionary," "radical" or "traitor."

Our own society is now in a state of confusion because agents of change whose persuasive influence once was sanctioned by society are no longer granted dispensation to use the approved labels "educator," "pediatrician," etc. or to be immune from persuasion attempts themselves. It then becomes obvious to former "targets" that there was previously an implicit contract of complicity and that there still is with other agents. When people become aware of this duplicity and cognizant of the hidden situational forces, they lose trust in parents, educators, politicians and all those who now reveal themselves as undercover agents of change. They become cynical of a system which professes to function for the people when in fact it functions for the communicator and his powerful backers, the Society. Finally, when their illusion of individual assertiveness, resistance, and will power disintegrates under the realization of the overwhelming forces operating to keep even their "personal" communicators in line, feelings of hopelessness come to the surface.

If a society, through its political power base,

wanted to make war and not peace, and most of its traditional communicators supported this view (or did not openly oppose it), how could the society ever be changed? The two alternatives are revolution, which destroys the established base of power, or persuasion, which redirects available knowledge and tactics and utilizes former "targets" as new agents of communication.

The remainder of this paper presents one attempt to apply the research findings of social psychology and the salesman's intuition to just this problem. Can "students" and young people effectively persuade adults, who collectively have the power to change the system, to use their voting power in an effort to promote peace?

Tactics and strategies designed to achieve this goal will be formulated explicitly, and then, for purposes of comparison, the tactics of the police interrogator will be outlined. The ethical issues involved in attempting "to turn a society around" by working through its system will not be discussed, but the question of using "Machiavellian" techniques on an individual in order to do so will be raised.

Persuading for New Politics

I. Preparing for the initial contact

A. Be informed - get as much accurate, up-to-date, reliable evidence as you can. Commit important facts, arguments, statistics and quotations to memory so they are "natural" when you need them. You should see yourself as more expert on the particular issue of concern than the people you will try to persuade. Your perceived competence is a very important source trait. However, do not use information as a put-down. Do not overkill. Hold your storehouse in reserve and select only the facts you need.

B. Learn as much as you can about those you will engage. Be familiar with their neighborhood, local issues, basic values, language style (use of diction, cliches, homilies), source of local pride and discontent, the nature of usual influence media, attitudes on the issue in question, etc. You can obtain this information from local businessmen (barbers, cab drivers, grocery store employees, bartenders, etc.), from salesmen, from letters to the newspaper, and distinguishing characteristics of the neighborhood or the individual home. You can also encourage people to state their opinions on preliminary telephone surveys. When you are in this learning phase, do not try to exert influence.

C. Actively role-play with a friend the anticipated situation. Imagine and then work through as realistically as possible the persuasion situation in which you will operate. If available, tape record or videotape such dress rehearsals and then critically analyze your performance. Switch roles and try to be the target person in the situation where he is experiencing the pressure to comply to a request for some commitment.

D. Do a critical self-appraisal. Analyze your own personal strengths and weaknesses, your appearance, and discuss any source of fear, anxiety, anticipated embarrassment, etc. with one or more others with whom you feel comfortable before you actually start out.

E. You must be confident that you will be effective more often than not, you must expect some setbacks, but you must be dedicated to winning, to making the "sale." If you do not handle the situation carefully, you may produce the undesirable effect of increasing the person's resistance to any further influence attempts by others, or you may generate a backlash effect yourself. If you blow it once or twice, or if you get doors slammed in your face before you even start talking (this will surely happen in some neighborhoods), keep trying. If you lose your confidence, however, or you get negative results in a variety or neighborhoods with a variety of techniques then perhaps you

are not suited for face-to-face confrontations and your talents could be put to better use.

F. Be sensitive to the varied reasons underlying the attitude(s) in question. Attitudes are formed and maintained because of needs for information, for social acceptance by other people, or for ego protection from unacceptable impulses and ideas. Deeply held attitudes probably have all three of these motivational bases. Information per se is probably the least effective way of changing attitudes and behavior. Its effectiveness is maximum at the attitude-formation stage when the person has not yet taken a stand and put his ego on the dotted line. Your general approach must acknowledge that the individual is more than a rational, information-processor--sometimes he is irrational, inconsistent, responsive to social rewards, or primarily concerned about how he appears to himself and to others.

G. Even as a stranger you can exert considerable influence. You can be an effective agent for change by serving as a model for some behavior by publicly engaging in it, by selectively reinforcing some opinions rather than others, and by providing a new source of social contact, recognition and reward for many people.

II. Gaining access to and establishing the contact

A. Before you can persuade, you must get the person to acknowledge your presence, to attend to you and to follow your presentation. People are wary of an assault on their privacy and "life space" by an unknown person on their doorstep. You might want to consider an initial phone call or letter to contacts to be made at home.

B. If you are making a home contact, be aware of the particular situation you have encountered. Be sure that the person is willing to give you the required time. You might be interrupting dinner, a phone call, a family quarrel, a visit with guests, or some bad news. You do not want the dominant motivation of the homeowner to be to get rid of you as soon as possible.

C. Although strangers can influence everyday behavior, persuasion is enhanced when the target perceives some basic similarity with the source. This "strategy of identification" (practiced by all good entertainers and politicians) involves finding some commonality between you. Physical similarity is the most obvious: age, sex, race, ethnic features, dress, (distribution of hair). In addition, similarity is inferred from voice dialect, regionalisms, and appropriate slang, jargon, or group-membership identifying phrases (e.g., "such a lot of chutzpah he's got, that Vice President." "People like us who work for a

living have callouses on their hands; a politician like X who talks about working for the people, probably has them only on his mouth.") Canvassing should be arranged to optimize this perceived similarity by selecting neighborhoods and locations which are appropriately matched to the available canvassers. The canvasser should try to uncover as many points of similarity as possible because similarity breeds familiarity which breeds liking and enhances credibility and greater acceptance of the message.

D. Students are not seen as credible sources on most issues that concern them directly, and to be effective, it is important to increase their source credibility. This may be accomplished in a number of ways:

- (1) Impress the audience with your expertise, concern, and dedication, being forceful but not overbearing.
- (2) Make some points which are against your own best interest; indicate the sacrifices you have made and would be willing to make.
- (3) Have a respected person introduce you, make the contact for you.
- (4) Begin by agreeing with what the audience wants to hear, or with whatever they say first.
- (5) Minimize your manipulative intent until you ask for the commitment.

E. Avoid group situations where the majority are known or expected to be against you, since they will provide support for each other and their cohesion might make

salient the group norm that you appear to be attacking (which they never cherished so much before your attack).

III. Maintaining, intensifying, directing the interpersonal relationship

Once you have managed to get the person to receive you, then you must hold this attention, while trying to get your message (and yourself) accepted.

A. You have the power to reinforce many behaviors of the target person; a power you should use judiciously but with conscious awareness of what and how you are reinforcing.

1. Attentive listening to what the other person has to say about anything of personal interest is absolutely necessary. This not only "opens up" the person for a dialogue, and helps in establishing what are the primary values, beliefs and the organization of his (or her) thinking, but establishes you as someone open to what others have to say. (The opportunity to tell a college student where to get off is very rewarding for many people).
2. Maintain eye contact with the person and as close physical proximity as seems acceptable to the person.
3. Individuate the person, by using names (with Mr. or Mrs. or titles where there is an age or

status discrepancy). Make the person feel you are reacting to his uniqueness and individuality-- which you should be--and are not reacting in a programmed way to your stereotyped conception of a housewife, blue collar worker, etc. Similarly, help the other person to individuate you, to break through the categorization and pigeon-holing process which makes you just an anonymous canvasser. At some point, describe something personal or unique about your feelings, background, interests, etc. (which you expect will be acceptable). However, once accomplished, then don't allow yourself to be the exception to the stereotype--say "most other students are like me in how we feel about X."

4. Reinforce specific behaviors explicitly and immediately, by nodding, saying "good," "that's an interesting point," etc. Reinforce more general classes of behavior by smiling, by making it obvious you enjoy the interaction and by being impressed with the person's openness, sensitivity, intelligence or articulateness. As a student with a lot of "book learning" you can still learn a lot from people who have gone to the "school of hard knocks," who have "real

life learning" and "street savvy" to offer you. Let them know that's how you feel when talking to someone who has not had the benefit of your degree of education.

5. The person must perceive that you personally care about and are enthusiastic about the item(s) under discussion; moreover, you must be perceived as really caring about the complaint act of the person--at a personal level and not merely as part of your role.
6. Your reinforcement rate should increase over the course of the interaction, so that ideally, at the end of the time, the person is sorry to see you leave.

B. Be aware of sources of resentment against you for what you represent by your physical appearance, group membership (as a student) etc.; work first to differentiate those biased and often unfounded feelings and reactions from the reactions you want to elicit by your influence attempt.

Working class people in particular will resent you for having an easy life. They have worked with their hands, strained their backs, calloused their knees, scrubbing, lifting, sweating, struggling, eking out a measly subsistence, while you (as they see it) sit on your butt and have every

need catered to. You can blunt this resentment in at least two ways: 1) by showing respect, even awe, for how hard they work, acknowledging that you found it really tough that summer you worked as a hod-carrier, etc.; 2) by off-handedly noting what a sweat you had studying for that last calculus exam, that while other students may have a lot of money, you don't and you don't know whether you can afford to make it through college, etc.--whatever you can honestly say to undercut the perception that you are privileged and spoiled.

In contrast, middle class office workers are likely to resent you for a different set of reasons: that (according to the stereotype) you don't show respect for your elders, that you are an uncouth, dirty, disruptive, pot-smoking libertine. A neat appearance and considerate, respectful manner will do much to combat this stereotype.

C. Plan the organization of your approach well enough that it seems natural and unplanned, and be flexible enough to modify it as necessary.

1. Do not surround your best arguments with tangential side arguments or a lot of details. Arguments that come in the middle of a presentation are least well remembered. Put your strongest arguments first if you want to motivate or interest uninvolved people.

2. Draw your conclusions explicitly. Implicit conclusion drawing should be left for only very intelligent audiences.
 3. Repeat the main points in your argument, and the major points of agreement between you and the target person.
- D. In tailoring your approach to the target person:
1. Do not put him on the defensive, or even encourage or force a public defense of (and thus commitment to) any position against you.
Opposing beliefs are to be seen as providing the opportunity for open discussion, as a starting point to find areas of common agreement. If the person is for you, then do get a public commitment early, and try to make it more stable and more extreme.
 2. If possible, have the person restate your ideas and conclusions for himself, in his own words (encourage active participation).
 3. If the person appears to be very authoritarian in manner and thinking, then he will probably be more impressed by status sources, decisiveness, and one-sided generalizations than by informational appeals, expert testimony, unbiased presentation of both sides of the

- issue, etc. Any approach must be responsive to the dominant personality and social characteristics of the person to whom you are talking.
4. Although a more personal relationship can be established in a two-person interaction, there is much to be gained from team work. Working in pairs provides each student with social support, lowers apprehension about initiating each new contact, allows one of you to be "off the firing line" appraising the situation, to come in when help is needed, to refocus the direction, or respond to some specific trait detected in the target person. There are several ways in which teams can be composed to produce interesting effects. There is a general principle covering all of them, namely: the two members of the team should differ in some obvious characteristic, such as temperament, age or sex. There are two reasons behind this principle; first, it maximizes the chances that one or the other member will be similar to the target person and therefore at the appropriate moment can gain a persuasive advantage; second, it promotes the subtle idea that even when people differ in outward characteristics, they can

still agree on the important issue of peace-- therefore the target person, who may differ from both persuaders, can be encouraged to agree also. The obverse of this "team difference" principle is also important: It is very inefficient for similar canvassers to accompany each other.

IV. Getting the commitment and terminating the contact

Don't insist that the person accept and believe what you've said before he makes a behavioral commitment. Get the behavioral commitment anyway, and attitude change will follow. The ideal conclusion of the contact would also leave the person feeling that the time spent was worthwhile and his self-esteem is greater than it was before you arrived.

A. Do not overstay your welcome or be forced to stay longer than is worthwhile according to your time schedule. Timing is essential both in knowing when to ask for the commitment, and in knowing when to quit with an intractable person. For a person who needs more time to think, encourage it if you get a promise to allow you to come back.

B. You might provide several levels of possible behavioral alternatives for the person: pushing the most extreme is likely to get a greater level of compliance

even if the extreme is rejected.

C. Be clear as to what actions are requested or what has been agreed upon or concluded.

D. A "bandwagon" effect may be used to indicate prestigious others who have joined in the action.

E. When you believe the target person is about to make the commitment (or after a verbal agreement is made), then stress the fact that the decision is his own; it involves free choice, no pressure. This maximizes the dissonance experienced by the decision made and forces the individual to make his behavior internally consistent by generating his own intrinsic justification for his behavior. Each person is his own best persuaser. After the final commitment, honestly and openly thank the person and reinforce his behavior.

F. Broaden the contact in two ways. First, get the name of one or more neighbors who would agree with the person's position. You will talk to them too and use the person's name if that is O.K. with him. Secondly, honestly react to something about his person which is irrelevant to the main social/political issue at hand, the house, decor, hair, clothes, an avocation mentioned, or a favor which you can do related to something mentioned.

G. You can extend your influence if you can get the target person also to be an agent of influence. Try to

enlist his aid in getting at least one other person to agree to do what he has just done. He should be motivated to proselytize at this time, especially if he is an outgoing person good at persuading others. If he convinces others, that reduces his own doubts about whether he has done the right thing.

Machiavellian Strategies

Just how far should you go to make the "sale," to get the commitment? The answer to such a question depends ultimately on a complex interplay of ethical, ideological, and pragmatic issues. Each individual must establish his own set of weighting coefficients to determine how much pressure he is willing to exert. Assuming that your approach will achieve your purpose, is it "right," "proper," "decent," "humane," "moral" for you to deceive someone, to hit him below his unconscious, to arouse strong negative feelings of guilt, anxiety, shame, or even positive feelings of false pride, etc.? Behaving unethically for whatever reason pollutes the psychological environment by replacing trust, understanding and mutual respect with deceit, lies and cynicism.

Police interrogation manuals tell us , "When you break a man by torture, he will always hate you. If you break him by your intelligence he will always fear and

respect you." (Kidd, 1940). This generalization may hold only when he does not realize that you have, in fact, broken him by intention. When deception techniques are employed by a sophisticated, trained practitioner, the "victim"--be he criminal suspect, collegiate experimental subject, or "mark" in a pool hall hustle--does not realize he has been conned. But you always know what your intention was and that you "broke a man" thus. What effect does such knowledge have upon you? Do you respect yourself more because of it? Do you begin to depersonalize other human beings as they become notches on your gun handle, "hits/misses," "easy cases/tough customers?" Thus you must reflect upon the psychological effects of behaving unethically, both upon the target person and upon yourself. If you are so ideologically committed to your cause or goal that any ends justify the means, then ethical issues will get a zero weighting coefficient. But that alone should give you pause:

- (a) will it be possible to restore ethical precepts after your ends have been achieved?
- (b) if you have been converted to such an extreme view, can others be similarly moved without recourse to deception?
- (c) have you not been duped into the extreme position you now hold?
- (d) are you being honest with yourself in

recognizing that you are about to be dishonest with others, and are not covering up that fact with rationalizations about "the other side did it first" (if that's true then the poor victim gets it from both ends).

Finally, if you cast ethics to the wind and proceed firmly convinced that Goodness, Justice and Truth are what you stand for, then ask one more practical question: "Is it likely to work?" How much effort, training, staging and time will it take to carry off the caper? Are you the kind of person who can be effective at this game? What happens if the person discovers the gimmick? Will each "miss" turn into a "boomerang" or a backlash that will actively work against your cause? Will you then get only the immediate, small behavioral compliance, but blow the hoped-for bigger subsequent commitment and attitude change? Have you "ruined" the person for further persuasion attempts (or experiments) by your colleagues?

Having posed and answered such questions to your own satisfaction, and if you still want to go for broke, then the time has come to go Machiavellian. Once such a decision has been made, the only concern becomes finding the weak points of the target person, and learning what conditions to manipulate and how best to exploit the unsuspecting victim.

Before describing several concrete examples of how Machiavellian tactics can be utilized in even so incongruous a situation as a "peace campaign," it is well to see how they are already effectively being used.

The Police Interrogator Misrepresents a Little Bit

Confessions are often obtained by either minimizing the seriousness of the offense and allowing the suspect a "face-saving" out, or by the opposite through misrepresenting and exaggerating the seriousness of the crime.

The first approach can be accomplished through "extenuation"--in which the investigator reports that he doesn't take too seriously a view of the subject's indiscretion, since he's seen thousands of others in the same situation. Or he may "shift the blame" to circumstances, the environment, a subject's weaknesses, any of which might lead anyone to do what the suspect did. A more morally acceptable motive may be suggested for the crime, such as self-defense, an accident, a mistake, heat of passion, etc. In order to "open up" a suspect, it is recommended that good "bait" is blaming anyone who might be associated with the crime other than the suspect, e.g., an accomplice, a fence, a company, loan sharks, or even the victim.

Some provocative examples of the way in which experts use this approach in order to misrepresent the

nature of the crime to the suspect in order to get him to talk about it are (Inbau & Reid):

(a) A 50-year old man accused of having taken "indecent liberties" with a 10-year-old girl was told: "This girl is well developed for her age. She probably learned a lot about sex from the boys in the neighborhood and from the movies and TV; and knowing what she did about it, she may have deliberately tried to excite you to see what you would do."

(b) Or, in forcible rape cases, "where circumstances permit, the suggestion might be offered that the rape victim acted like she might be a prostitute. . . that the police knew she had been engaged in acts of prostitution on other occasions."

(c) "During the interrogation of a married rape suspect, blame may be cast upon the subject's wife for not providing him with the necessary sexual gratification. 'When a fellow like you doesn't get it at home, he seeks it elsewhere.'"

Once the suspect is in a state of emotional confusion, then "he is unable to think logically and clearly, since his sense of values has been disturbed and his imagination is distorting his perspective. It is possible for the investigator to obtain admissions or even a confession from the suspect by further misrepresenting the picture." (O'Hara, 1956).

This misrepresentation can take the form of a "knowledge bluff"--revealing a few known items and pretending to know more, or lying to the suspect that his fingerprints, blood, etc. were found at the scene of the crime (even show him falsified samples and records). In some cases of murder, it might be stated that the victim is not dead or, as happened in Minneapolis recently, a youthful offender (John Biron) might be told he will be tried as a juvenile when it is known that he is legally an adult (cf., Time Magazine, December 3, 1965; April 29, 1966).

Exaggerating fears can be successful with some types of suspects, as in statutory rape cases, where the suspect is told that his "victim" has testified to being forcibly raped. With thefts and embezzlement it is suggested that one increase the reported value of the loss and thus of the consequences. "To make it look more authentic" it is suggested that a letter typed on company stationery be prepared reporting the false, larger loss to the police and the insurance company, and it should be "folded and refolded several times" to increase its believability.

Such misrepresentation by the police has two more extreme forms:

(a) The fixed line-up, in which the interrogation is interrupted while alleged witnesses (in alliance with the police) finger the suspect as the offender, after which

the interrogation is resumed, with the interrogator adopting an air of confidence.

(b) A reverse line-up again has the suspect falsely accused by paid witnesses, but for a real or fictitious crime more serious than that under investigation. Confession to a burglary may seem like a simple way out when accused by seemingly reputable citizens in a police station of murder, rape, or kidnapping.

Since modern interrogation involves establishing "rappport" or a meaningful interpersonal relationship between the suspect and the interrogator, it must involve a distinction of the social-psychological situation. Even before the questioning begins, the interrogator is urged to role-play the position of the subject in order to be able to respond to him--"man to man, not as policeman to prisoner" (Inbau & Reid, 1962).

Under this category would fall all the appeals which depend upon the interrogator being friendly, kind, sympathetic, understanding, "a Dutch uncle," or an older brother. He is the one who provides social approval and recognition, who accords the suspect status, and is aware of and able to manipulate the suspect because of his social values, feelings of pride and class or group membership.

The police manuals recognize, "It is a basic human trait to seek and enjoy the approval of other persons."

Therefore, it is wise to flatter some subjects, for example, by complimenting an accused driver of a get-away car for his maneuvering and "cornering," or by comparing a juvenile with his movie idol, or a member of a racial group with a respectable, outstanding member of that group. This approach apparently works best with "the uneducated and underprivileged," since they "are more vulnerable to flattery than the educated person or the person in favorable financial circumstances."

A slightly different approach is needed for the white collar first offender, which includes clerks, managers, cashiers, office workers, professionals, and teachers--in short, most of this audience. Since these people traditionally subscribe to orthodox ethical principles and conventional moral standards, the calm, dignified approach of the physician is respected and effective. One police manual author states rather boldly: "The character of a person in this category is weak and must be exploited fully." (O'Hara, 1956).

To create rapport, the interrogator could pat the suspect on the shoulder, grip his hand or offer to do a favor for him--get water, talk to his wife, employer, etc. "Gestures of this type produce a very desirable effect. They import an attitude of understanding and sympathy better than words."

For suspects who have pride in their family, if an attempt to get their parents to cooperate fails, their attention is called to a (faked) circular being prepared for broadcast and distribution throughout the country. It not only describes the fugitive, but lists all of his known relatives' names and addresses as possible leads for approaching him. Cooperation is quite often obtained in this way.

The reader may recall that in the famous case of George Whitmore, Jr. (who confessed to the slaying of two society girls in New York in 1963), he gave a 61-page typed confession after 20 hours of interrogation. He virtually sentenced himself to death or life imprisonment with this confession--which later was proved false and coerced when the true murderer was subsequently exposed (as Richard Robles).

Although the Whitmore case gained much notoriety, it is by no means an isolated exception. Alvin Mitchell confessed to a murder after being interrogated by the police, only to have it repudiated when another man, Winston Mosley, took the stand at Mitchell's trial to admit that he was the killer. A Bronx, New York, factory worker who spent a year in jail after having confessed to the murder of a woman, was subsequently proven innocent and released.

In Whitmore's case the techniques reportedly used involved the arresting detective instilling fear in him, while the interrogating detective was protective, supportive and sympathetic. Whitmore responded to this technique, which the police call the Mutt and Jeff approach, by actually believing that Jeff was sincerely concerned about his welfare. While Mutt is typically a big, cruel, relentless investigator, Jeff is a kind-hearted family man, perhaps with a brother in a similar scrape once. Jeff asks Mutt to leave the prisoner alone and get out of the room. He then confides that he, too, detests Mutt's tactics (which unfortunately will get worse), and the suspect's only hope is to cooperate quickly with his friend Jeff by telling the truth and confessing. Whitmore is reported to have said that Detective Aidala (Jeff) was nicer to him than his own father ever was!

An extension of this device used primarily with prostitutes who may be concealing information about clients, agents, or underworld connections, is called "face-saving." If the girl refuses to cooperate, the officer begins to degrade her by calling her vile names. Just then another officer enters, throws the first officer out of the room, apologizes, tells the girl that the first officer can lose his job for the way he behaved toward her, and if she cooperates with him by confessing, then he'll see what he

can do in this matter. Once she does, of course, he does nothing in return.

If two or more persons are suspected of committing a crime, one of the following tactics is recommended:

(a) Put both men in the same cell, then remove the weaker (or follower) of the pair for an hour, during which time nothing happens. When he is returned to the cell and he tells the other suspect that "nothing has happened" this will create suspicion. Then question the other man, telling him that his accomplice squealed.

(b) If the suspects are father and son and they refuse to talk, separate them, question the father and regardless of what he says, get him to send a note to his son saying, "I have told the truth, you should do the same."

(c) Bluff-on-a-split-pair. A very effective technique involves removing the weaker member to the interrogation room while the other sits outside able to hear only muffled voices. After a while the secretary is called on the intercom and told to bring in her stenography pad. When she reenters the waiting room she begins typing from her "notes," interrupting herself only to check with the waiting suspect the spelling of his name or to get some other background information from him. When he is finally questioned, the interrogating officer waves before him the alleged (typed) confession of his friend, which purportedly puts all the

blame on the waiting suspect. Often resentment toward this "squealie" will result in a confession in order to even the score.

While practicing one or more of these tactics on the suspect, the interrogator is cautioned to be alert constantly to recognize "moments of indecision, during which [the suspect's] struggle to avoid the consequences of his criminal act will be partially overcome by, or temporarily deadlocked with, his impulse to confess." (Inbau & Reid, 1962).

This is the time to "move in" on him. If he is a youngster, the interrogator could play on shame by asking him if or how often he masturbates. This is so embarrassing for most youngsters that they will be eager to change the topic of conversation, and can easily be led into talking about the crime.

On the other hand, with sex offenders of the so-called "intellectual type," it may be helpful to note that the Kinsey reports reveal human beings are not so different from animals in matters of sex. Because female sex victims are usually reluctant to talk about the activities which transpired (and some may even be feeling some guilt at not being more disturbed than they are after having been raped), the interrogator may have them write out details rather than speak them, or he may ease the situation for them by asking them to view him as their gynecologist whom they are

consulting about "a sex organ problem"

Fears of novel contrivances allow the police to capitalize on the public's belief in the validity of lie detector tests, truth serums, etc. The suspect is told he will have to undergo such tests and they will prove conclusively his guilt. If he refuses, then he is told that that too is taken as a sign of his guilt. It is suggested that a "knowledge bluff" be used in which false fingerprint comparisons are presented to the suspect, or falsified ballistics reports, blood stains, lie detector records, etc. While this evidence obviously cannot be used in court, his confession based on it is admissible.

Making Machiavelli work for Peace

The following hypothetical examples do not have the time-tested validity of those reported in the police interrogator's literature; rather, they are merely illustrative of how such tactics can be adapted to suit virtually any cause. The content of our cause will be related to "canvassing for peace," but one could imagine an adversary who could use them to canvass for war.

A. Mutt and Jeff

The so-called "Mutt and Jeff" technique of police interrogation involves a sneaky one-two punch in grilling suspects. A rough analogue of this tactic in political

persuasion can be devised. One persuader is militant in style and extreme in his position; the second persuader is moderate and reasonable as if to save the listener from the excesses of the first, but in fact exacts a considerable concession by virtue of his soothing performance.

A very skilled and aggressive anti-war debater who is dying to be turned loose but who may sometimes turn people off, can be paired with a sympathetic gentlemanly type who can gently chide him in the presence of the listener with remarks such as, "My friend may be overdoing it a little because he feels so strongly about the war, but what I would say on this point is that the war is much too expensive. I think that this is a position with which most hard-headed American can agree." Thus the "moderate" brings the listener over to his side by using the "militant" as a foil.

This technique must at best be very delicately and sparingly used. It is double-edged. Too much Mutt militance on the doorstep will drive the listener up the wall, and both of you may get thrown out before Jeff can intervene. Furthermore, it takes a couple of good ham actors to carry it off, and too much "con" in the canvassing operation would be unfortunate, especially if neighbors compare notes.

B. The stigmatized persuader

Recent research has found that a person with a visible stigma (blind, crippled, etc.) elicits a mixed reaction. There is sympathy and a tendency to want to help

in some way, but also considerable tension from guilt, revulsion, and resentment (the disabled person has intruded himself upon the complacent life-space of the individual). These basic motives to help and to ignore can be both elicited by having a person with a real or faked stigma appear on the doorstep. (e.g. a pretty girl with a scar, a boy on crutches, a team of whom one member is apparently blind). After the general introduction, the person with the stigma clearly states the level of commitment desired and then suggests that if the person does not want to act on it now, they could perhaps spend some time together talking it over. Embarrassed sympathy will make it difficult to terminate the interaction brusquely, but if an easy way out is provided by the canvasser, it will be the preferred way of resolving the conflict. They may sign now to avoid facing the stigmatized of the world any more than they have to.

C. The "overheard" communication

It is a well-known result of studies of persuasive communication that a message accidentally overheard can be more effective than when the speaker is aware of the listener's presence. In the "accidental" case, the listener has no reason to be suspicious that the speaker is trying to manipulate him.

The following set-up tries to utilize this advantage

of overhearing. Since it is an artifice, it is not recommended for widespread use.

In a possible one-person version, a co-ed enters a busy laundromat with a basket of laundry, puts the clothes in the machine, asks another customer for change of a quarter to make a phone call to her mother. While pretending to call Mom she describes the chores she is doing and checks on the groceries she is to buy at the supermarket. "A daughter like that, I should only have," is the kind of thought running through the heads of the ladies of the wash. "Good Daughter" then proceeds to talk to her mother briefly about the war and agree with her mother that it's awfully important to end this terrible war very soon and that she is happy that the mother has written to her Congressman, and hopes she will also vote for candidate X. She talks loud enough to let the target audience hear, but goes about her business when she is finished, unless someone in the audience initiates a conversation.

Variations on this idea can be adapted for use in bus stations, drug stores, barber shops, etc., although this technique suffers from the general difficulty that the same person cannot repeatedly wash the same bundle, call the same Mom over and over, or get more than a few hair cuts a day without seeming very peculiar indeed.

More practical is the two-person version which can

be enacted riding back and forth on crowded subways or buses, never traveling the same line at the same hour of a weekday. A student and an older person (his uncle or Dad, presumably) make the ideal team. The two get into a spirited argument about today's mood of campus protest. Even though they argue, it is obvious that they have a great deal of affection for each other, and the Student (or Son) slips in references to good behaviors ("When I was fixing our sink last night with that rusty drainpipe, I was thinking down the drain, down the drain, boy, all the money we're spending in Vietnam is just going right down the drain, totally wasted"). Their voices are raised just enough so that people can hear, but not enough to be obnoxious. The Dad complains that students aren't working hard like he did in his day (avoid references to riots, drugs, etc.--the most intense anti-student issues). The Son agrees that this may be true, but the reason is that they are disillusioned because America is fighting an expensive far-away war when there are all these problems that need working on at home. The Dad tentatively offers a few lukewarm arguments in favor of present war policy, but soon changes his mind when the student confidently (but not arrogantly) cites facts and arguments for quick withdrawal. The Dad agrees to write against the war to his Congressman, but counterattacks with gusto on the issue of student laziness. The Son now

concedes this point (it wouldn't leave a good taste with the listeners if the cocky Son triumphed completely over the wishy-washy Dad). The Son resolves to get back to his campus and get all his buddies more involved in their own education and in constructive action. He compliments his Dad on his understanding and on all he's done all these years for his Son. They now chat amiably about other things.

Postscript

Bandura's (1969) original concern for the potential misuse of the therapist's influence in his one-way power relation with those labelled "patients," has been cogently expanded and reflects the fundamental concern of the present paper:

As behavioral science makes further progress toward the development of efficacious principles of change, man's capacity to create the type of social environment he wants will be substantially increased. The decision process by which cultural priorities are established must, therefore, be made more explicit to ensure that "Social Engineering" is utilized to produce living conditions that enrich life and behavioral freedom rather than aversive human effects.

(p. 112)

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Footnotes

¹This paper represents an elaboration and integration of ideas developed in association with Robert Abelson and reflected in our book, Canvassing For Peace: A Manual for Volunteers. Ann Arbor: S.P.S.S.I., 1970. Other ideas come from my research on police interrogation techniques, (an interest stimulated by Abraham Goldstein) which is outlined in "The Psychology of Police Confessions." Psychology Today, June 1967, 17-27.

The action orientation to applying the knowledge from academic studies of communication and persuasion is more fully described in Influencing Attitudes and Changing Behavior. Reading, Mass.: Addison Wesley, Revised 1970, co-authored with Ebbe B. Ebbesen.

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13. ABSTRACT <p>This paper was developed as part of an ONR sponsored symposium on attitude change and social change (organized by Bert King and Elliott McGinnies) and will be included in an edited volume of the papers presented at that University of Maryland symposium.</p> <p>The major position represented in this paper is that underlying every attempt by one person to change another person's attitudes, affects, behavior or even health is a complex set of assumptions about their relative power positions, the direction of change desirable, the degree to which the target person must conform to social and political standards of appropriateness, the ethics of persuasion, and the social sanctions given to the change agent.</p> <p>An analysis of the techniques used by salesmen, police interrogators, and volunteers canvassing for political candidates helps make explicit some of these fundamental assumptions. In the process of presenting these general analyses, extractions from police training manuals and improvised tactics used to influence voting behavior, the issue of Machiavellian strategies is examined in detail and questions are raised as to the far-ranging consequences of using these and other forms of social influence.</p>			

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