

The Rape of the Mind – The Psychology of Thought Control, Menticide and Brainwashing – Joost Meerloo (1955)

Introduction (D.R. Shearer – 03/23)

This is definitely one of the most important books that I have read in the past three years for the following reason – Meerloo's book was written in 1955. Other than 2 fundamental misconceptions that can be excused because of the knowledge we have gained since that time period, it very much seems that the book was written for today!! Not only because his insight into the working mind of the totalitarian controller applies heavily to today, but also in the appraisal of the reactions of the masses, as we go through the globalist control scenario (for 3 years now).

13 The importance of 'concept recognition' – "menticide", "thought control" & "brainwashing"

23 Nazi approach – not direct physical pain but continuous humiliation and mental torture that broke people.

24 One ugly truth: the spirit of most men can be broken, men can be reduced to animal behaviour.

27 Menticide (Meerloo)

35 "The modern means of mass communication bring the entire world daily into each man's home; the techniques of propaganda and salesmanship have been refined and systemized; there is scarcely any hiding place from the constant visual and verbal assault on the mind." (these words from 1955!)

36 "Free men in a free society must learn not only to recognize this stealthy attack on mental integrity and fight it, but must learn also learn what there is inside man's mind that makes him vulnerable to the attack..."

41 "Pavlov's research on the machinery of the mind taught us how all the animals – including man – learn adjustment to existing limitations through linking the signs and signals of life to body reactions..."

47 "He who dictates and formulates the words and phrases we use, he who is master of the press and radio, is master of the mind."

"In the Pavlovian strategy, terrorizing force can finally be replaced by a new organization of the means of communication. Ready-made opinions can be distributed day by day through press, radio, and so on, again and again, till they reach the nerve cell and implant a fixed pattern of thought in the brain."

"Such is the Pavlovian device: repeat mechanically your assumptions and suggestions, diminish the opportunity of communicating dissent and opposition."

48 "A man is like a rabbit – you catch him by the ears." La Rochefoucauld (18th century)

49 "Pavlovian strategy in the totalitarian sense means imprinting prescribed reflexes on a mind that *has been broken down*. The totalitarian wants first the required response from the nerve cells, then control of the individual, and finally control of the masses..."

51 "Peaceful exchange of thoughts in free conversation will disturb the conditioned reflexes and is therefore taboo."

52 "Cultural routinization and habit formation by local rules and myths make of everybody a partial automaton..."

53 "...In the whole animal kingdom man is one of the most helpless and naked beings..."

“Puzzlement and doubt, which inevitably arise in the training process, are the beginnings of mental freedom... [they are] however, already crimes in the totalitarian state. The mind that is open for questions is open for dissent...”

54 “...Here is a simple example of an age-old truth: love & laughter break through all rigid conditioning.”

60 “Hunger and addiction were among his most valuable strategic tools.”

“Democracy and freedom end where slavery and submission to drugs and alcohol begin...Any man who escapes from reality through the use of alcohol and drugs is no longer a free agent.”

62 Fifth Amendment – protects a man against self-incrimination.

73 Sigmund Freud – the unconscious/subconscious connection dictating human conduct...

“Through systemized suggestion, subtle propaganda, and more overt mass hypnosis, the human mind in its expressions is changed daily in any society.”

77 Depersonalization syndrome – “They let themselves to in what psychopathology calls a depersonalization syndrome, a general feeling of having lost complete control fo themselves and their own existence. What Pavlovian conditioning can do in applying artificial confusion, can be done too by one shocking experience.”

95 “Only blind wishful thinking can permit us to believe that our own society is free from the insidious influences mentioned in Part One...”

97 “In the wake of such advertising and engineering of consent, the citizen’s trust in his leaders may become shaken and the populace may gradually grow more and more accustomed to official deceit.”

99 “In our epoch of too many noises and many frustrations, many “free” minds have given up the struggle for decency and individuality.”

100 “Hitler’s psychological artillery... weapon of fear... He had for example, a network of fifth columnists whose main job was to sow rumours and suspicions among the citizens of the countries against which he eventually planned to fight.”

102 “The continual intrusion into our minds of the hammering noises of arguments and propaganda can lead to two kinds of reactions. It may lead to apathy and indifference, the I-don’t-care reaction, or to a more intensified desire to study and to understand. Unfortunately, the first reaction is the more popular one.”

103 “We have to learn to encounter the totalitarian’s exhausting barrage of words with better training and better understanding.”

106 “The tragic facts of political experiences in our age make it all too clear that applied psychological technique can brainwash entire nations and reduce their citizens to a kind of mindless robotism which becomes for them a normal way of living.”

110 “Our culture of individual freedom may offer us a partial immunity to the disease of totalitarianism, but at the same time our personal immaturities and repressed savageries can make us vulnerable to it.”

119 Introverted schizophrenics – “They never congregate in groups, they seldom talk with one another...”

121 “Totalitarianism is man’s escape from the fearful realities of life into the virtual womb of the leader... man need no longer assume responsibility for his own life... There is peace and silence, the peace of utter submission.”

122 “Secrecy and conspiracy increase the delusion of power. That is why so many people like to pry into other people’s lives and to play the spy.”

“Perhaps the greatest dangers, to the totalitarian mind, is the use of intellect and awareness and the ‘egg-head’s” demand for free, verifying thinking.”

123 “The totalitarian mind is like the schizophrenic mind; it has a contempt for reality...”

129 “... be clean, be clean, be clean, be good, be good, be good, be loyal, be loyal, be loyal. The constant repetition of these commands reinforces each citizen’s sense of **guilt**, of childishness, and of **shame**.”

130 “... Hate for an outsider checks and deflects the hate and aggression each man feels toward his own group and toward himself. The more **fear** there is in a society, the more **guilt** each individual member of the society feels, the more need there is for internal scapegoats and external enemies. *Internal confusion looks for discharge in outside wars.*”

133 “The process of systematic criminalization requires a *deculturation* of the people. As one of Hitler’s gangmen said, “When I hear the word ‘civilization’, I prepare my gun”... People are told not to believe in intellect and objective truth, but only to the subjective dictates of...”

135 “Totalitarianism must kill, slaughter, make war. Totalitaria preaches hatred, and...”

“**Verbocracy** and **Semantic Fog** – Talking the People into Submission” – important chapter

137 “Instead of aiming at true understanding, people listen to thoughtless repetition, which gives them *the delusion of understanding*.”

“**Logocide**” – Byfield points out in his pamphlet on logocide that words are commonly used as instruments of social revolution. Politicians seeking power must coin new labels and new words with emotional appeal, while allowing the same old practices and institutions to continue as before...”

defn. Verbicide – word slaughter.

138 “We can say that verbocracy turns them into what psychology calls symbol agnostics, people capable only of imitation, incapable of the inquisitive sense of objectivity and perspective that leads to questioning and understanding and to the formation of individual ideas and ideals. In other words, the individual citizen becomes a parrot, repeating ready-made slogans and propaganda catchwords without understanding what they really mean, or what forces stand behind them.” [important section]

Labelomania – “The urge to attach too much meaning to the label of an object or institution and to look only casually at its intrinsic value is characteristic of our times and seems to be growing...” [important chapter]

139 “In Totalitaria, there is no search for truth, only the enforced acceptance of the totalitarian dogmas and cliches.

“Totalitaria makes the thinking man a criminal...”

142 “The moment the judicial process becomes a farce, a show to intimidate the people, something in man’s soul is profoundly affected... To whom shall a man turn if he cannot find justice in the courts?”

144 “The more the individual feels himself to be part of the group, the more easily can he become the victim of mass suggestion.”

145 “In the yearning to be freed from one fear, they may be willing to surrender completely to another.”

148 “In their defense against psychological attacks on their freedom, the people need *humor* and *good sense* first.”

154 “Let us not forget that betrayal of the community is rooted in self-betrayal.”

155 **This book written in (the fall) of 1955** – copyright 1956.

156 Psychiatry, patients and the Hippocratic oath -

158 Re: mental blackmail – “We blackmail men’s minds with too many security measures, with secret files; we blackmail with gossip, with subtle pressures within political pressure groups, with lobbies within lobbies, and even by withholding our friendship.”

161 “Any ideal feeling of justice requires sacrifice and implies self-limitation. Emotionalism is its enemy...”

162 “There is in man an instinctual need to take sides with the majority, to conform to the opinion of the strong. This need is rooted in a biological urge for safety. That is why a strong feeling of participation grew among soldiers in a P.O.W. camp. The result was complete unconscious falsification of what happened. The individual observation got lost in the strong impact of mass opinion.”

166 “It is the paradox of fear that it propagates warm feelings of immature ties and cold suspicion at the same time.”

“Whether he is aware of it or not, modern man lives in an atmosphere of fear – fear of war, fear of the H-bomb, fear of totalitarianism, fear of nonconformism, fear of dissent. Fear has already begun to influence our behaviour by the time we are aware of it...”

167 “It is our personal attitude toward life and toward mankind that determines whether we consider a situation a welcome challenge or an unconquerable danger. Some people enjoy strict control and mechanical conditioning of their lives. For them, totalitarianism and thought control are not danger; they bring a kind of eternal day-sleep without responsibility. To these people, freedom is a danger, while dependence is a pleasurable safety. Others loathe any intrusion into their personal freedom and integrity and are continually on the alert to defend themselves against any external pressure – real or fancied.”

168 “The strategy of fractionalized fear” – “This paradoxical fear reaction after danger has passed is important for us to understand. The totalitarian strategists know that during a period of temporary quiet and relaxation of tension, people lose their alertness and thus can be more easily caught in the totalitarian mental grip... As soon as we let go and drop the defenses we have built up against danger, we can be brought to swallow any strong suggestions...”

“Whether the reaction to fear and danger is immediate or delayed, most people show, under stress, behaviour that can be said to fall into one of the following patterns:

1. *Regression* – loss of learned behaviour.
2. *Camouflage and disguise* - the so-called “feign or faint” reactions.
3. *The explosive panic* – defense through “fight or flight”.
4. *Our psychosomatic conditioning* – the body takes over.

[expanded analysis on these 4 conditions]

176 “Those who are in danger of being brainwashed can be helped simply by making them familiar with the facts. Foreknowledge has a partial protective function and this belongs to the best security we can give to them...”

179 “Indeed, I must repeat that in my experience all those who are educated under rules of too strict obedience and conformity break down more easily under pressure...” (and...)

184 “Trained into conformity, the child may well grow up into an adult who welcomes with relief the authoritarian demands of a totalitarian leader.”

187 “The Father Cuts the Cord” – “The father is the first one who cuts into the essentially biological relation between mother and child.” (in keeping with the ancient India poem on script analysis and the first 5 years)

192 “The need for authority, when it is not understood, and the confused resistance to authority, are the roots from which the totalitarian attitude may grow. Whenever the father-leader fails, he sets up a pattern of future trouble with authority...”

198 “Knowledge is still in the service of power instead of in the service of understanding.”

199 “If awareness and reality confrontation become rigid and automatic, if man does not look for alert and repeated verifications of what he finds in the world, he may develop delusions – ideas not adapted to the reality situation... When experience is petrified into dogma, the dogma itself stands in the way of new verification and of new truth...”

201 “Where thinking is isolated without free exchange with other minds and can no longer expand, delusion may follow. Whenever ideas are compartmentalized, behind and between curtains, the process of continual alert confrontation of facts and reality is hampered...”

202 “Delusional thinking doesn’t know the concept of delusional thinking.”

203 “Delusions, carefully implanted, are difficult to correct. Reasoning no longer has value; for the lower more animal type of thinking becomes deaf to any thought on a higher level...”

208 “The peculiar paradox of technology lies in this: gradually the well-being of the machine (autocar, factory) assumes greater importance and value than the well-being of man and mankind.” [It can be demonstrated here that the 68 years that have elapsed since these words were written, have provided us with a higher degree of understanding of technology and how it has been utilized, and by whom, and for what purposes, and with what neglect. All these things are mostly clear to us now giving us a critical understanding of the abject use of technology and how it is not technology that is at fault, but rather the abject use of it that is.]

209 “In an overtechnical world, body and mind no longer exist. Life becomes only a part of a greater technical and chemical thought process...” [Again, see boxed comment above.]

212 “Luxury causes mental and physical atrophy.” [Again, 68 years of progressive thought allows for a better claim to Reality than what this statement may allude to. With great technological advancements comes great advances in consciousness... on a world that has not been guided by globalist propaganda falsehood, that is.]

213 “In a technocratic world every moral problem gets repressed and is displaced by a technical or statistical evaluation. The problems of sound and speedy mathematics serve to overthrow ethics...” [But does it have to be this way... or is it this way by globalist overreach design? In other words, technocracy does not inherently carry with it immorality or unethical behaviour.]

216 “Our technical civilization gives us greater ease, but it is challenge and uneasiness that make for character and strength.” [If this were absolute then advanced civilizations would not be able to traverse the universe due to the supposed inherent self-destruction of technological advance.]

217 “The dangerous paradox in the boost of living standards is that in promoting ease, it promotes idleness, and laziness. If the mind is not prepared to fill leisure time with new challenges and new endeavours, new initiative and new activities, the mind falls asleep and becomes an automaton.”
[Again, see above.]

221 The analysis of the last paragraph on this page illustrates how the lack of understanding of world globalist control and manipulation was prevalent in 1955 (and up to 2020).

222 Again, these pages are written with the mindset that a globalist agenda is NOT in play... and now we know that the 8 years following Meerloo’s writing, the JFK assassination went down (part of the same globalist takeover/agenda).

230 “Politicians too often forget... The repetitious mutual calumny, so often used during elections, gradually undermines the democratic system and leads to the urge for authoritarian control. The strategic rumours and suspicions the politicians sow are an attack on human integrity.”

232 “As soon as treason is mentioned, something in man’s soul is stirred. Anger and scorn, suspicion and anxiety are aroused, and people want to avoid the subject...”

237 “Because of its deep emotional content, the very word itself (treason) can be used as a political tool with which to manipulate people. In Totalitaria it becomes merely a Pavlovian sign, triggering off reactions of distrust and hatred.”

“The germ of treason arises first in the individual’s compromises with his own principles and beliefs. After these initial compromises have been made, it becomes easier to go on and on, to make more and more compromises, until finally the compromiser may become the man who is willing to sell himself and his services to the highest bidder.”

238 “...the night of the long knives...” (1934) where Hitler was a traitor to his closest friends and collaborators, many of whom he betrayed and murdered...

“In my study of political traitors and collaborators, I found that most of them shared two common characteristics: they were easily influenced by minds stronger than their own, and none of them would admit his disloyalty as an act of treason.”

242 “The ease with which human beings can be corrupted is still one of our most serious psychological and moral problems. Inner confusion can make us submissive to almost any strong suggestion from the outside, no matter how foolish or false.” [David Hawkins – man possesses no internal guidance system to discern truth from falsehood.]

*“Our doubts are traitors,
And make us lose the good we oft might win
By fearing to attempt.”*

245 “The cult of the “masses” often serves as a defense against loneliness.”

“Another form of self-betrayal may be caused by the inability to grasp the complexity of the real world. Many people have been seduced into unstable behaviour and even disloyalty through lack of comprehension of these complexities and through the need to find a single, all-embracing, easy answer to the problems of human life. Who gives them the simple myth to believe in? The Nazis seduced nearly all of Germany into a form of ideological treason in this way!”

246 “Overt fear and panic can also cause treason. The whole psychology of totalitarian interview and interrogation is based on this principle. People can be frightened and brainwashed into treason.”

“... treason takes place more in the emotional than in the intellectual sphere of functioning.”

249 “In his well-documented study on *The German Fifth Column*, the Dutch historian Dr. Louis de Jong could prove that Hitler’s dreaded network of treason and betrayal was for the greatest part an imaginary ogre created by the panic and fear of the people.”

“We have become so concerned over the spectre of a treacherous fifth column in our own land that we have grown both overcautious and oversuspicious...”

“In times of fear and calamity arises the myth of a treacherous aggressor, the myth the totalitarians know so well how to exploit. Our own inner insecurity is displaced and projected onto our neighbours and our environment. We begin to doubt and distrust everyone...”

252 “The approaches to truth are multifarious, and it is only where there is a clash of opinion that these approaches can be discovered and the right road to truth be found.”

“Subversion of opinion is never a crime. The right to dissent is the keystone of democracy...”

253 “As soon as the government starts to search the souls of its citizens, it begins to intrude on their rights and interests... The hallmark of the totalitarian is his insistence that his is the only right way.”

254 “Evasiveness and skilful dodging of issues of principle – these are among the most dangerous because they lead unwittingly to the hypocrisy that puts power beyond ethical value.”

266 “The Role of Education” – excellent piece on the child’s formative years...

“The fallacy of such half-education is that the so-called alphabetics – in contrast to those who cannot read – may become better followers and worse thinkers. The totalitarians, for example, are not against schools; on the contrary, for the more you overburden the mind with facts, the more passive it may become. Intellectual erudition and booklearning alone do not make strong personalities, and in our passion for factual education and the quiz type of examination there lies hidden a form of mental pressure. The awe with which we regard the accumulation of school facts may inhibit the mind so that it cannot think for itself...”

267 “Totalitarianism is well aware that youth has a sensitive period during which Pavlovian conditioning may be established without difficulty. Early teachings form nearly indestructible patterns in the child’s mind and eventually replace innate instinctual precision.”

268 “I like to distinguish among the intellectuals *quantellectuals* and *quintellectuals*. The former aim for quantity of knowledge and easily yield to any kind of new conditioning. To the quintellectuals, on the other hand, intellect is a quality of personal integrity. Facts are not consumed passively but are weighed and verified. This kind of intellect has a potentiality independent of school education and often school can spoil it.”

275 “When inter-human contact is not allowed, morale is soon lacking...”

277 “Yet, trauma and frustration are emphasized too much as weakeners of the personality during its development. As a matter of fact the opposite is true. Challenge and resistance to unfavourable influences make the personality...”

279 “Who Resists Longer and Why?” - excellent piece...

“Men yield primarily because at some point they are overwhelmed by their unconscious conflicts. These conflicts, kept under control in normal circumstances, come to the surface under the

strain of menticidal pressure. The stronger the inner conflicts and the greater the pressure, the greater the tendency to yield...”

280 “Psychiatric examination of returned P.O.W.’s from Korea showed that many of the men who resisted enemy propaganda most strongly were those with a history of lifelong rebellion against all authority – from parents through teachers to army superiors. They were troublemakers wherever they were, among their friends as well as among their enemies.” (Segal)

285 Moral boosters to keep one from despair and collapse:

- religious/spiritual faith
- political ideology
- having a mission or inner goal
- love of native land
- love of freedom or justice
- the thought of hate or revenge

“The body hardly ever gives up its regenerative capacities... The same thing seems to operate on a mental level; in times of confusion, pressure and exhaustion, man’s psychological healing and regenerating forces are still in action. This applies as much to large groups of people as it does to the individual...”

286 “The more a man lives in marginal and torturous situations, the greater is his need for supportive moral values and their stimulating actions.”

“In general we may say that there are **three** influences under which the unbearable becomes bearable: ... first place - faith... simple faith in religious or ethical values, or faith in humanity, or faith in the stability of one’s own society, or faith in one’s own goals... second... the victim must feel that in spite of the disaster which has overtaken him and turned him into an outcast, he is wanted and needed somewhere on this earth... third place... there must be understanding, not sophisticated book knowledge but simple, even intuitive, psychological understanding of the motivations of the enemy and his deluded drives. Those who cannot understand and are too perplexed break down first.”

287 “Even though part of the propagandistic suggestions leak through these perceptual defenses and creep unobtrusively into our opinions (all advertising is based upon this leakage), it cannot be stressed enough that full knowledge of the enemy’s methods gives us more strength to resist.”

288 “Of *greatest importance* is the victim’s awareness that other people know and understand what is happening, that there is a home front that is acquainted with his lonely struggle and torture.”

[strength in community]

290 “We live in a world where we accept too much of the actual occurrences, without asking why and for what all this happens...”

291/292 “The New Courage” – excellent section

Particular concentration camp victims - “They are living proof that the mind can be stronger than the body.”

“There is also a spiritual bravery, a mental courage that goes beyond the self. It serves an idea. It asks not only what the price of life is, but also for what that price is being asked. It asks for a *hyper-consciousness* of the self as a thinking spiritual being.”

“Consciousness, alert awareness are themselves a form of courage, a lonely exploration and a confrontation of values. Such courage dares to break through old traditions, taboos, prejudices and

dares to doubt dogma. The heroes of the mind do not know the fanfare, the pathetic show, the pseudo-courage of exaltation and glory; these brave heroes fight their inner battle against rigidity, cowardice, and the wish to surrender conviction for the sake of ease. This courage is like remaining awake when others want to soothe themselves with sleep and oblivion...”

“Only when people have learned to accept individual responsibility can the world be helped by the combined efforts of many individuals.”

300 “The fear of freedom is the fear of assuming responsibility.”

“When the intellectuals lose their self-control and courage and are possessed only by their fears and emotions, the power [Hawkins would say force here] of those with prejudice and stupidity gains.”

302 “In order to become free... They have to know that education can turn us either into weak factories or strong personalities.”

“It cannot be emphasized too strongly that liberty is only possible with a strong set of beliefs and moral standards. This means that man has to adhere to self-restrictive rules – moral rules – in order to keep his freedom.”