

evidence, no hint of how many turncoats we could be talking about, where they lodged, or what dastardly plots they might be hatching.

The other type of psychological warfare treated in this chapter is the forged document. Here, at least, several concrete examples are supplied. Chapter V consists of interviews with two East bloc disinformation specialists who defected and are now singing a new tune. One gets the distinct impression that it was included as ornamentation first, authentication second, and edification last.

From a methodological standpoint, the authors have committed two major sins. First, they designed a research project that was unmanageable in size and scope. As a result, they were compelled to limit the "data-base" for the propaganda portion of the study to only two sources: (1) the "International Review" section of *Pravda*; and (2) *New Times*, a weekly, multilingual publication intended for both foreign and domestic audiences. As a result, the possibility that the Soviets tailor their propaganda "commercials" to the tastes of a particular foreign market is not—indeed, cannot be—explored in their book. Had they focused exclusively on either overt propaganda or covert political techniques, the study would have been more manageable and (perhaps) less superficial.

Second, the authors attempt to use a quantitative technique of content analysis, but the type of *political* questions that can be answered with this sort of quantification are rarely worth asking.

Nowhere do the authors explore the practical, political implications of their research. If the Soviets are contriving to suborn Western journalists, if these journalists are writing to order for Moscow, and if the net effect is to confuse and distract public opinion on issues of vital interest to the USSR, how are responsible officials and private citizens in the West to distinguish between traitors and critics? Should vociferous, left-wing critics of Western governments be considered guilty until proven innocent? In these matters, leaving too much to the imagination runs the risk of inviting McCarthy-type witch-hunts, while too little vigilance carries yet other risks.

In a most profound sense, then, *Dezinformatsia* is a politically uninteresting book—an outcome foreordained by the methodological straitjacket the authors chose for themselves. Exercising the same freedom of choice, thoughtful consumers of literature dealing with the darker side of Soviet diplomacy would do well to look elsewhere. [WV]

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF NATIONALISM

by Dudley Seers

(Oxford University Press; xii+218 pp.; \$29.95/\$12.50)

Stephan Haggard

The liberal tradition has long viewed nationalism as the source of numerous evils: authoritarian rule, parochialism, economic warfare, and militarism. Yet nationalist sentiments and policies, far from being historical anachronisms, have grown in the face of international economic turbulence. In this spirited but loosely connected set of essays, unorthodox development economist Dudley Seers comes to nationalism's defense. His main question is simple: What, given the growth of nationalism, are the prerequisites for maintaining a nationalist policy and creating an egalitarian society?

Leaders pursuing a nationalist course require "room to maneuver." Above all, Seers argues, this means certain *political* capabilities in navigating among domestic social elites, the military, and the external constraints posed by the superpowers and multinationals. "The income of anyone, even in the industrial countries, now depends in

large measure on the bargaining power of his or her government: the world is not any more such a benign place." In addition, room to maneuver requires cultural independence, adequate resources, population and food, and even technological capabilities. If these are the pre-conditions, then "room to maneuver" is virtually synonymous with development itself.

Seers believes nationalism is a viable strategy, however, and parts company with "Third Worldists" who find the roots of underdevelopment mainly in the international economic order. Self-reliance demands a constant exploitation of one's international political position while marshaling domestic planning capabilities. Using a military analogy, Seers calls for closer integration of development efforts around a "general command" that would tackle the issue of basic needs as well as the traditional agenda of investment. Noting the dilemmas faced by Chile and Jamaica, Seers turns out to be interestingly orthodox in financial matters: Since transitions to socialism have faltered more often on inflation than on recession, curbing financial irresponsibility is key, though Seers admits that weak governments will be hard-pressed to resist inflationary temptations.

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What Seers finally means by a nationalist or self-reliant strategy is frustratingly elusive. He speaks more often in terms of goals than of concrete policies. It is refreshing to hear an economist grapple with political realities, but his solutions demand overcoming deeply rooted institutional weaknesses. And where is the economic heart of his argument? What *kind* of nationalism works?

One doesn't have to be a Friedmanite to admit that certain nationalist experiments have been disasters. The developing countries that have fared the best have not been nations like Tanzania, Burma, and Cuba, but those willing to accept selective integration into the international trading system: Korea, Taiwan, and Singapore. These states are also, in some sense, "nationalist." With strong bureaucracies, they are a far cry from the Chicago textbook. They are also relatively egalitarian, even by the standards of advanced countries, though they are not democratic. Yet Seers scarcely mentions them. He also conveniently ignores the disasters of state intervention in Africa as well as the authoritarianism of many self-proclaimed "socialist" experiments.

In addition, Seers fails to address squarely the problem of form of governance. Despite his democratic hopes, the need for "freedom of maneuver" might well be used to justify a top-down politics which would betray them. The pattern is not uncommon, and Seer's references to a "general command" is somewhat chilling.

Seers is as interested in the North as in the South. Seeing the current economic crisis as a transition from the "neo-colonial order," Seers seeks just options for his native England. He finds them in an "extended nationalism" that harkens back to De Gaulle's vision of an integrated Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals. This would constitute one of the several economic-political blocs into which the world is, in any case, naturally moving. Seers admits that this would require wide-ranging reforms at a time when British policy toward the community is moving in the opposite direction. But the implications of an international system fragmented into blocs are more troubling than Seers admits.

First, interdependence is not divisible. Britain trades with Africa and the United States, lends to Latin America, and imports technology from Japan. Second, such regionalism is likely to politicize North-South relations even further. Select less-developed countries would be integrated into preferential schemes, while others would be excluded by protectionism. Would an inward-looking Europe be more concerned

or less concerned with the poorest of the poor?

There is much here to provoke thought. Seers's emphasis on the international and domestic political bases of economic growth is crucial. Yet the advocacy of a "nationalist strategy" is too broad to be of much use, while the political and economic implications of a fragmented international system are not faced squarely.

Nationalism may be the outcome of a more turbulent international economy, but should we advocate and welcome it? **[WV]**

UNDERSTANDING NEW MEDIA: TRENDS AND ISSUES IN ELECTRONIC DISTRIBUTION OF INFORMATION

edited by Benjamin M. Compaine
(Ballinger Publishing Co.; xxi + 378pp.; \$29.95)

Martin Green

In the brave new media world described in *Understanding New Media*, television as a conscious manipulation of the audience will be pushed to its logical conclusion. With a hundred channels of cable TV, advertisers and programmers will be able to tailor TV fare to every segment of the audience: separate channels for newswatchers, health addicts, sports fans, cineasts, and pornophiles. This cornucopia will be supplemented by VCRs and videodisc players to provide what is unavailable on the hundred channels or to allow the viewer to break out of the lock-step of mass programming. Hooked to a computer, the TV set will also become a purveyor of information as well as entertainment, delivering up-to-the-minute news, stock market reports, travel and weather information, as well as providing access to far-flung databases.

These developments have usually been described as an "information revolution." New technologies seem to arrive on the scene almost daily, and pundits like Alvin Toffler and John (Megatrends) Naisbitt have been quick to trumpet the profound changes they will have on our life (style). Visions of the paperless office, the home office, the wired nation have been spun; the death of print has been proclaimed; the emergence of a new split in our culture (the information rich vs. the information poor) has been predicted. Scenarios of work and play in the electronic cottage depict happy families pecking away endlessly at computer keyboards to do their jobs as well as while away

their leisure time: the New Togetherness. Obviously there is a great deal of truth in these prognostications. I am writing this on a newly acquired home computer, and computer talk has rapidly replaced real estate, cars, and even food as the prime topic of conversation in certain circles. But more sober reflection, provided by *Understanding New Media*, indicates that there is an equal amount of hype.

Despite the McLuhanesque overtones of its title, this book—a collection of talks, position papers, and research proposals to congressional committees, professional and trade associations in the communications field, and corporations involved in media transformation that were prepared by the Harvard Program on Information Resources Policy—eschews prophetic enthusiasm for the calmer tones of social science discourse. Because most of the essays have been only lightly edited from their original form, there is a great deal of repetition and overlap in the volume, and not much shaping of the material for the general reader. But those who can wade through the often deadly prose of some of the essays (the editor's contributions excepted) will find a wealth of insight into the current media environment.

According to Benjamin Compaine, the changes in the media environment have been evolutionary rather than revolutionary. The development of computers from the behemoths of the first generation to the sleek and portable models of today is a major transformation of technology, but it took forty years. Cable has been around an equally long time, but only in the last decade has it penetrated the TV market to a significant degree (its share is still only about 35 per cent), and in the last year there have been signs that cable may not be an infinite growth industry. Despite proclamations of the death of print, newspapers are still publishing; if anything, the changing technology of computer typesetting and satellite transmission has breathed new life into old boys and made way for some new kids on the block (e.g., *USA Today*).

If the change is not revolutionary, the new technologies are nonetheless having an impact. The fact that, like TV programs, a newspaper's content can be transmitted via satellite has far-reaching implications for law. On what basis can the law distinguish between the traditional press, with its constitutional protections, and TV news services, which are regulated by the FCC, if both are using essentially the same transmission mode?

Another major development in the media evolution is the shifting cast of characters. "Why might American Express have ac-