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SOCIAL COMMUNICATION AND GLOBAL PROBLEMS
Towards a New Information/Communication Order

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May 1984

1. Global Problems

Of global problems there are many, and I would like to start by locating them on the political map of the world that I prefer to make use of in my analyses.¹⁾ I divide the world in four parts, combining the north-south and the east-west divisions so that we get the rich capitalist countries in the north-west, often called the First World; the socialist countries in the north-east, often called the Second World; the poor capitalist countries in the south-west, often called the Third World comprising South-America, the Caribbean, Africa, West-Asia, the Arab world and South Asia. Then I add to this a Fourth World, the world south-east, of mainly buddhist-confucian countries in East Asia and Southeast Asia, ^{is Japan,} On top of the Fourth World then the mini-Japans (South Korea, Taiwan, Hongkong, Singapore), then the other ASEAN countries, the socialist countries in East Asia, (above all the Peoples Republic of China), and finally, as periphery areas in this vast section of the world Australia, New Zealand and Oceania.

If one divides our world into four parts one gets six relations, and the six global problem areas I am particularly interested in would be the following:

First World-Second World: the relation is characterized by a nuclear suicide pact with tremendously serious implications not only for the inhabitants in these two "worlds" but for the rest of human kind. The peace/security/disarmament issue is mainly located here.

First World-Third World: this relation is characterized by a perennial tendency of the First World to penetrate, also militarily with interventions, the Third World in order to secure its economic grip on such inputs as raw materials and raw labor, as well as markets, for outputs, capital.

First World-Fourth World: this relation is characterized by a new phenomenon although it has been coming for some time: the emergence of a major economic power, Japan-but potentially the whole Fourth World as a new player on the world capitalist market; more competent than First World capitalism, beating

First World capitalism in general and the US in particular at its own game for an increasing range of industrial goods, and services.

Second World-Third World: this relation is characterized by assistance given in the fight for liberation from colonialism and neo-colonialism, with certain efforts to extend control after the struggle is over, militarily, politically and in terms of economic relations.

Second World-Fourth World: this relation is characterized by, relatively speaking, emptiness; there is little going on, it constitutes today some kind of reserve area for world interaction. However, the Pacific arena of the cold war is located here - if we also include the United States.

Third World-Fourth World: this relation is characterized by increasingly heavy penetration of the Third World by the Fourth World, particularly by Japan, making many countries of the Third World look like a Japanese trade fair; in other words Japan as not only success country but successor country to the old colonial powers in the First World.

About all this much can be said, and this is not the place to take up that discussion. Suffice it only to mention that the problems of over- and under-development above all are located in the First World-Third World relationship, with the First World being increasingly over-developed and the Third World increasingly under-developed except for a tiny elite which has accepted and propagated exogenous models at the expense of endogenous needs. The center/periphery problem is also usually seen as located between the First and the Third world although it also has Second World-Third World, Second World-Fourth World and Third World-Fourth World aspects to it. At any rate, in all these worlds the exploitation of nature is going on, depleting resources and polluting the environment. And the exploitation of human beings is also going on, subordinating human beings to machines, taking away from human beings any sense of mastery of problems they might have had, exhausting and frustrating them, even if they are materially well off. And all of this, of course, hitting particularly the minorities and the women, the very young and the very old, and then most particularly young and old minority women, all over the world.

In short a desperately problem-ridden world, full of promises, but also of probabilities that it may get worse.

2. On the nature of social communication

We all know perfectly well that we cannot have all of this present in our minds everyday; a selection of events has to take place. There have to be gate-keepers, regulating the flow of information. When I myself worked on this problems some twenty years ago²⁾ I used some obvious principles to try to explain why information is communicated the way it is, in terms of two simple factors.

The first factor is, of course, the center-periphery nature of the world. There are center countries, located in the First, Second and now increasingly Fourth Worlds; there are periphery countries mainly in the Third World. That gives three types of communication relations with top priority given to center-center relations, then center-periphery relations (but then it should be the periphery of that particularly center country, in terms of economic, political, military, social, cultural relations); and lowest priority to periphery-periphery relations. There are actually two interpretations of this: a periphery country, for instance, will report least about other periphery countries, then about its center country, and so on. But in addition to this, all over the world, when international relations, between countries (as opposed to what is going on within a country) are reported there will disproportionately much about center-center relations than about center-periphery relations, and last come the periphery-periphery relations.

Second, the more precise content of what is being reported, in other words the criteria that events have to satisfy in order to become news. Twelve criteria were identified, and the last four- the most important ones in this context-are given here, to be elaborated:

- The more the event concerns elite nations, the more probable that it will become a news item.
- The more the event concerns elite people, the more probable that it will become a news item.
- The more the event can be seen in personal terms, as due to the action

of specific individuals, the more probable that it will become a news item.

The more negative the event in its consequences the more probable that it will become a news item.

As they stand they look relatively plausible but also somewhat trivial. Evidently, writing about this in 1961, I could conclude that the perfect news item would be that Khrushchev and Kennedy kill each other during the Vienna summit meeting: top/elite nations; top/elite people; highly personal relation of specific individuals; negative.

However, these points become less trivial when they are combined. The mock example just mentioned is indicative of an important point in news selection: the additive nature of the criteria. The more criteria an item satisfies, "the more probable that it will become a news item." But this also means that if the event is short on one of the dimensions, then ~~has to~~ compensate by ranking high on some other dimension. Thus, for non-elite nations, or periphery nations to enter the picture they have to be "represented" by highly elite people, preferably heads of state, prime ministers, possibly foreign ministers. And that immediately gives an over-elitist image of periphery countries as countries devoid of other human beings, populated only by elite persons and "masses".

Correspondingly, for center countries more structural (as opposed to personal, actor-oriented) factors can be mentioned, whereas in periphery countries what happens will much more tend to be seen as the actions of concrete persons. Evidently what has concrete actors behind it is more newsworthy. It is an "event". The slow or quick workings of structures, in other words processes, are not events but rather "permanents".³⁾ Nevertheless, a center country is so newsworthy in and by itself that it may be forgiven for producing permanents and not always events.

Most importantly, if a country is a periphery country then the news from that country ~~has~~^{has} to be even more negative in order to compensate

for the periphery nature of the country. As a consequence the usual image of periphery countries as being places where only negative things happen, and particularly things that are events rather than permanents - such as tidal waves, earth quakes, hurricanes or - when there are persons behind - military coups, assassinations and what not.

In the same way elite people can be reported in a more positive manner and still become news - they may for instance marry and get children. Non-elite people, ordinary people will not enter the news through such events, but may do so through murder, collective family suicide, etc. And so on, and so forth. Masses are gray, with danger spots.

If we now combine these two perspectives we cannot escape the conclusion that the reporting about periphery countries will be not only scant, quantitatively insignificant but also highly negative, and even more so for periphery people in periphery countries. One may say that precisely for that reason attention is drawn to their problems, and one cannot possibly say that there is no reporting about drought, famine, starvation. The point, however, and that comes out of the theoretical positions taken, is the following: this reporting is taken out of its context, put into the periphery country as something typical of those countries, not seen in its structural context as something partly created and constantly reproduced by strong forces in the industrialized world in general and the First World in particular. This type of reporting is probably mainly serving one function, that of confirming to people in the center countries what a miserable life they have in those periphery countries, and consequently how lucky we are not to be there.

Let us now look at the global problems again to see how this type of information/communication order will have an impact on our knowledge and perception in general of these problems.

When it comes to peace/security/disarmament issues nothing will meet the bill so well as top level disarmament conferences. Elite persons from elite nations are meeting, they are addressing each other

face to face in highly personal ways, and the only problem is whether the outcome will be positive or negative. As we know it is usually negative, thus making for perfect news with the additional comment that the higher the level of the participants, particularly when they are even heads of state, the more easily could positive events get through the information channel. The sum is still high.

But is this not simply positive - does this not mean that such negotiation will simply get adequate coverage? No, my point would be that the underlying structure on news communication will dominate the perspective on disarmament negotiations much more than vice versa. When more regular people, such as ambassadors, negotiate the tendency will be to focus on negative outcomes, and whatever little they might achieve will go under-reported.⁴⁾ As a result of this pressure will build up for summit meetings, and whatever little tiny achievement they might produce will pass over-reported, in an uncritical manner. Needless to say, the expectations will tend to be disappointed. The game is then thrown back to the more ordinary level, and here the news will make the results look even more meagre. Result: a frustrated public not knowing what to expect, not to mention what to demand.

However, I would be one of the last to defend disarmament conferences under the general heading of "balanced, mutual and controlled" - claiming that under such conditions they are not able to arrive at results anyhow.⁵⁾ But since disarmament conferences are actor-oriented phenomena, with persons participating, they constitute news as opposed to the constant build-up of arms on both sides, of belligerent attitudes, enemy images, the piling-up of unresolved conflict material, and so on. Or, to mention a much more important factor from the other side of the political spectrum: the quantitative and qualitative improvement all the time of the peace movement in West and East, in the First and the Second Worlds, being more numerous, better prepared, more knowledgeable, more able to exercise pressure on political decision makers. Reported are only the demonstrations.

If we then turn to development issues there will be the same over-reporting on conferences since they have the great advantages of being

events - the fifth condition underlying the four factors mentioned above. They are points in time. Even if they are stretched out through months and years at least the opening and concluding sessions fall between two editions of the paper, of major newscasts on radio/television. Development issues are projected onto the conference schedules and calendars of the year. The constant workings of the machineries of exploitation, of the structures of imperialism of various kinds will of course pass unreported. They may be the subject of articles and books, but will not appear on the first page under the headline "exploitation today about as yesterday"! It might actually be a good idea for a newspaper to have some kind of index of violence level, or exploitation level, or repression level, somewhere on the top of the first page, as a constant reminder of constant or only slowly changing factors). Direct violence makes journalism, because it is an event; structural violence makes for statistics because it is a permanent. But permanents can also be reported in statistical form, and those statistics might not be so unattractive on the front page as "news" editors seem to think.

Leaving that aside it is clear that news as we know them will only be able to reflect the tips of the iceberg, the crest of the waves, not the more solid and structure/process type phenomena occurring all the time. And this will be even more so for periphery people, particularly in periphery countries. They will lose their individuality and will appear as "masses", also to the left which often thinks that it is progressive to report about people as if they were physical entities (this is where the word "mass" comes from). There are of course the efforts to see faces in the crowd, to pick up one or two victims of structural violence and present them with name and address. In itself praiseworthy because it becomes more human, but it is usually done at the expense of any kind of structural insight in what makes them victims. The interest in the personal aspect, the story in human terms, overshadows completely any social analysis. Earthquakes and hunger become personalized, there is no mention of such social factors as which parts of the populations live in houses that are most easily destroyed by an earthquake and who

are most hit by a drought when water is used for grazing cattle for beef export and not for the farming population in general.

With the highly dramatical relationship between the First and the Second Worlds this particular type of center-center relation will tend to penetrate all other kinds of news from all other relations among the four worlds; they will be seen in "East-West" terms. In other words, not only a question of center-center relations dominating quantitatively but also of qualitative penetration into other news categories, with efforts to see the other five relations in terms of the first one.

In this connection some words on the way the Fourth world is reported, particularly Japan. The build-up of the Japanese economy has gone on for a very long time, but that went unreported because it was a process, or at least under-reported. Then, suddenly it is discovered because the First world starts getting worried and initiates actions, such as a demand for "voluntary restraint". Just like the grotesque underpayment by the First world for oil went undiscovered till prices became very high - from 1973 onwards - the high level of Japanese industrial achievement went unnoticed till the prices suddenly were seen as very low, meaning highly competitive. What comes suddenly gets an air of the devious, of a plot, a sudden conspiracy, of oil sheikhs or Japan Incorporated, whereas the truth is that all of this was completely predictable to anyone knowing anything about the issues involved and the processes underway.

Again, the point is not that the news communication has to become an article service written by social analysts. The point is only that the world image we receive through the pattern of news communication we are exposed to has a built-in bias in not reporting the continuity in distant phenomena so that they appear as unnecessarily threatening, and the more so the further removed from us they are. Contributing to this, of course, come the usual misunderstandings about Japan. Japan is often seen as a capitalist country, even as a part of the West, with no understanding of the cultural and structural specificities, not to mention that Japan, like China, might have her own strategies, different from and even at variance with those of the West.⁶⁾

3. News communication as a function of occidental social cosmology.

Let us now try to get one step deeper into this phenomenon, the structure of news communication. My general thesis would be that it cannot be detached from its socio-cultural context, that it is a part of occidental deep ideology/structure in general, what on other occasions I refer to as "social cosmology", and more particularly the Western version.

In that social cosmology I have tried to describe six themes that will be presented below, with their articulations in the field of news communication.

- (1) SPACE: there is a general western inclination to see the world as divided in two parts, center and periphery, of course with the West in the center. This perspective is not only found in the center, however, but also in the periphery influenced by the West: they also see themselves as the periphery, with the West in the center. News communication is an expression of this, making it acceptable for an African or Latin American country to find very little about its neighbor country in the newspaper, and then only seen through the eyes of the metropolitan country - although this has possibly been improving in the last decades.⁷⁾
- (2) TIME: there is in the West a tendency to believe in progress, but also in the possibility of a crisis and after the crisis some kind of Endzustand, catharsis. This applies only to the center, however. The periphery is not a part of the progress, and particularly not any obstinate part of the periphery that refuses to be incorporated. That accounts for one part of the negative colour of news communication: the periphery is a place where things go badly, by definition, hence it is correct and objective when the news from the periphery are negative. But how does it relate to the circumstance that also news from the center tend to be negative? I would venture the following

hypothesis: negative events are over-reported in spite of a general faith in progress; precisely because they are negative they are also news! If they had been positive they would have been uninteresting, just a part of the general move in the direction of something better - perhaps today somewhat less believed in than before because of the general idea that there is a crisis going on. In short, negativism can derive from three sources: the periphery as a place where life is negative anyhow, the crisis as a phase where life is negative anyhow, and the non-crisis center where negative events are outstanding, and for that reason become news.

- (3) KNOWLEDGE: there is a general inclination in the West to see knowledge in terms of atomism and deductivism, a tendency to present reality in a fragmented, scattered way, dividing it into small parts that can be understood and "digested" one at the time; and a tendency to try to tie this together through theoretical frameworks. The first part of this is certainly satisfied through news communication by day in and day out reporting what can be referred to as "news-atoms": events that are limited in space and time to there/then and through the communication channel brought to here/now on the printed page or the newscast usually with one or more actors whose actions, possibly also motivations, are reported. There is the classical Greek unity of space, time and action. In practice this means an enormous subdivision of the world in small points, some of them over-selected and some of them under-selected, projected onto the news medium with no connecting links whatsoever, be they deductive or of other types. It is not necessary: the social cosmology is that connecting link, the basic message is in the structure, not in the content.

- (4) MAN OVER NATURE: this occidental theme is reflected in the way in which man makes nature into a non-actor, reporting nature only für mich and not an sich, not in terms of nature's own balances and development potential. The objection would be that anything else would be antropomorphic; the counter-argument

being that because nature is seen as so different, so far below man reporting takes place the way it does. Again, the projection of the problems of nature becomes like the projection of the problems of development and disarmament: onto a conference room that satisfies the rules of news reporting.

(5) MAN OVER MAN: the theme of the occident in general is individualism and verticality, in other words competition. Who is best, who wins, who loses. Whenever a social problem of any kind can be presented this way it has already made considerable progress towards becoming news. Elections are not seen in terms of whether aspirations, hopes, interests are adequately articulated but of "who wins, who loses". Politics in general tends to be seen that way, of whether political actors get their will through the system. Even in the field of culture music is reported when there is a contest, art and literature in terms of "who is our leading artist", and so on. Thus both personification and negativism can be served since the focus is often much more on the loser than on the winner, on the fading star rather than on the rising one.

(6) GOD OVER MAN: a perennial occidental theme, man as subordinate to the supernatural, the Supreme Being. However, we are living in a secularizing world, so Supreme Being becomes Supreme Value. And this makes one ask: what is the supreme value of news communication? What is the god of news? Probably just the first three letters, that it is new. News should not be olds, it is about as simple as that. With limited space this means a detachment of the recent from the lasting, of the event from the permanent. Typographically this can be counter-acted by having analytical articles on the front page and news items further back as is done in some newspapers, some of them known as papers of very high quality.⁸⁾ But generally the newness of the news will serve as the basic guideline, and distort the world image in the direction of the event.

More concretely, if the focus is on violence the primacy of newness would direct the attention towards direct violence rather than structural violence. People will be trained in conceiving of the world in terms of the former rather than the latter. In order to see structural violence at work, often referred to as injustice or exploitation, a higher level of education would be needed to compensate for the difficulties in reporting and conceiving of more structural categories, in slow process.⁹⁾

Conclusion: we have the news communication that we deserve. It sells on the market, it is demanded by people in the occidental world exactly the way it is because it is in strict conformity with the underlying social cosmology. If so much in our societies is pointing in the direction of events that can be seen as competitive between people struggling for elite positions, and countries struggling for elite positions, often with the focus on negative aspects of that struggle - well, then we get news of that type. People demand what their subconscious commands them to demand. It belongs to the picture that the production, distribution and consumption of distortions of the real world of which one is not oneself aware (because the underlying cosmology is exactly that, underlying, in the collective subconscious) is referred to as "freedom". I would imagine the same could be said about a person born inside a prison, living among others of the same kind, with no check on his consciousness: he will certainly not refer to the prison as a prison, but as freedom.

And then there is the other consequence of this. What happens when people become conscious of the nature of the constraints of news communication - in terms of the quantitative over- and under-representation of certain structural categories and relations, in terms of qualitative filters that are operating and favor certain type of dramatically constituted news - and particularly because it is compatible with the underlying cosmology? When somebody points out all this, and tries to shape the mass media in another direction, less immediately recognizable as a family member of a big family of social cosmology articulations? Well, then it is called "interference with freedom", even "censorship". Of course, this by no means implies that there could not also be censorship at

work in the second case, as also in the former. People can be forced to see only that which is compatible with the underlying filters. And, they can also be forced to have to digest that which is less compatible or even incompatible. Certainly, a "high quality" newspaper giving more attention to the periphery people in periphery countries, more to how structures operate day in and day out, also including positive factors, might require a higher educational level. But then, so what? Would that not be an argument for giving people that higher educational level? And is it not rather ethnocentric to assume that the image of reality compatible with certain prejudices of one's own civilization necessarily is correct, and that all other images can only arise because of lack of freedom?

My own position would be that this is to a large extent a problem of consciousness and education, not so much of the reader/listener/viewer as of the journalist/editor. However, it is mainly a market problem. Is it not to be expected that there is more demand for the cosmology-compatible than for the cosmology-incompatible? Is it strange if the night editor, as the final filter, makes the headlines super-compatible, cuts out the less perfect from a compatibility view of view (or gives it low visibility)? Is it strange that in the socialist countries counter-cosmology efforts are made - more periphery oriented, more structure/process oriented, ~~at the expense~~ - in the eyes and ears of whom? - That the result is inexpensive, but also somewhat boring, mono-chromatic?

Perhaps much of this boils down to one precise problem: do we need a new journalism, not only a new communication and editing? Conscious of cosmological constraints, able to transcend one thought-prison without entering another? Maybe the question is more important than the answer, and that the question will stay with us for some time.

4. Towards a new international information/communication order?

This is the background against which the current struggle for NII/CO could be seen: structure and process, power and underlying culture. Let us try to make use of it so as to understand what is happening right now. In doing so I shall make use of two basic assumptions, or ways of thinking. First, the idea of a new international economic order (NIEO) as providing a model of what is now happening, not only because it was initiated through the OPEC action in 1973 and the UN Special Session resolutions ten years ago (1974/75), but also because of a certain primacy of economic matters.¹¹⁾ Second, the assumption that the NII/CO above all will deal with more quantitative aspects, not so much with the qualitative dimensions of news communication. The awareness of underlying factors of the "social cosmology" type I have tried to draw attention to will be relatively low. New "order", but no new journalism.

Let us then have a look at the new international economic order. I assume that it is essentially a structural rearrangement not challenging capitalism as such but improving the position of the Third World (usually called "south") relative to the First World (usually called "north") on the world capitalist market. NIEO is a process, and as such it may perhaps be said to have the following five phases that do not necessarily come in the temporal order indicated here:

- (1) better terms of trade for TW (leading to decreased North-South trade)
- (2) more TW control over productive assets (nature, capital, labor, technology)
- (3) more TW interaction - South-South trade (TCDC, ECDC)
- (4) more TW counter-penetration (investment in "rich" countries, etc.)
- (5) more TW control over world economic institutions,
 - World Bank, International Monetary Fund, UNCTAD, etc.
 - trans-national corporations

The first phase is relatively conservative. The division of labor is not challenged, but there is an effort to change the terms of trade so that more processed goods can be obtained for the same amount of unprocessed or semi-processed goods. In the second phase the Third World goes one step further and tries to control the productive assets, if necessary through nationalization. In the third phase there is much emphasis on more Third World interaction, south-south trade in the form of technical cooperation between developing countries and economic cooperation between developing countries.

More interesting, in a sense, from a global perspective are the last two phases. They start with Third World counter-penetration in the sense of investment, buying real estate, stocks, etc. and then - more significantly - Third World control over world economic institutions such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and ultimately also transnational cooperations may take place.

I am not here saying anything about how far this process has come, except the following. By and large I think the Third World has not even entered the first stage except for oil from the OPEC countries. The so-called North-South conflict in its articulation is essentially a "dialogue" about the first phase, with the Third World becoming less optimistic in believing that the First World has any intention of structural change - or of using the dialogue fora for anything but exactly that, for a dialogue, in other words using each conference in order to prepare the agenda for the next conference.

This, however, does not mean that there is no process of this kind going on in the world. To the contrary, the program as here described for NIEO can be seen as a recapitulation of the history of Japanese economic penetration. carefully watching the terms of trade for their early export products, keeping control of productive assets, interacting with neighbors in East Asia they (the Japanese) are now certainly in the stage where counter-penetration has come very far, where Japan is cooperating with First World partners inside transnational cooperations (for instance car-makers) and for a long time

have been in a position to claim the number 2 rank in the World Bank. May be it could also be added to this that the analytical category for this quick progress through the stages necessary in order to arrive at the top of the world capitalist system is not "Japan" so much as the "Fourth World". With the world focusing on Third World claims - with all possible justification - on the First World the Fourth World simply goes ahead and translates words into actions. A slow/quick process going undetected.

The assumption now, as mentioned above, is that NIEO functions as a model. If this is correct, it is easy to predict what will happen in the field of NII/CO:¹²⁾

- Better news ratios for the Third World - meaning more news about the Third World in the First World, less about the First World in the Third; better terms of exchange with equal processing level.
- TW control over communication assets - meaning control over which events newsmen from the First World are supposed to extract from the Third World and process into news; and control over local media.
- More news about other TW countries in all TW media, less about the First World
- More TW control in the First World of which events should be processed into news, and control over local media (buying up papers and television and radio stations)
- More TW control over world communication institutions, including UN agencies in the field, if established, and the international wire agencies

Imagine for a moment that this process is carried out in its full range of consequences. Would one then get a balanced picture of the world, or an exaggerated picture with the world turned up-side down, as seen by eyes used to the present world?

There is some evidence in the latter direction. Anybody used to reading Indian press will know how India-centered it is; the Indian press writes almost exclusively about India. Of course, India is, if not a continent, at least a "sub-continent". Nevertheless, the rest of the world, including the classical center countries appear as very small news items, and usually in a rather unfavorable light. The Malaysian press, and the Caribbean press to take two other examples, will tend to write about their regions, and much less about the "mother" countries than used to be the case in these areas of the world.

In other words, the process in this field is already on the way, and has been on the way for some time. But then there is one major difference where the process has even come much further than for the NIEO. I am thinking of the fifth and final phase where there is little in terms of Third World control of the international wire agencies. There is an effort to set up their own, such as Prensa Latina and the Inter-Press Service (IPS),¹³⁾ but this is not the same as penetrating and even partly controlling the classics in the field such as Reuter (originally designed for stock exchange reports), AP, UPI, AFP, TASS, and so on. The difference lies in the fact that the Third World commands already the forum chosen for this structural transformation: UNESCO. And the result is well-known: the Western accusation, led by the United States, that this constitutes one more example of "politicization", and the threatened withdrawal of the United States from UNESCO.¹⁴⁾

In this one would have to admit that the United States has fully understood the significance of what is going on. In one sense a new international information/communication order would be even more important than a new international economic order. It would make people all over the world look at the world in a new way. They would be much more interested in their own countries and regions and less mesmerized by powers and super-powers. They would distribute positive and negative coloration of what happens in the world differently, with the (former) First World seen as a dangerous place, exposed to sudden unexpected events, partly from nature, partly from wicked people inside

the social structure. They would see their own countries more in continuity with the past, as a structure unfolding in a sometimes slow, sometimes quick process. Instead of seeing the center as the part of the world from which salvation comes it will be seen as a risky place, a place from which dangers originate, among them the possibility of a nuclear war. In short, they would have a more realistic perception given the realities of today's world. But also a new thought prison.

One big question, however, is whether this is really going to happen or whether the First World, and to some extent perhaps also the Second World, will understand this and intervene through their various channels. More particularly, I am thinking of the First World control of whatever goes into producing, for instance, a newspaper. There is, above all, newsprint, the paper itself; then the labor needed in the form of trained journalists; then the capital needed to finance the paper or the media in general; the research underlying the enterprise not only to get events transformed into news but also to understand the whole process; and then finally the administration which is management of a sometimes very difficult kind. The only answer to these types of strategies would be for Third World countries to become independent on all five production factors, singly or together with other countries in the same situation.¹⁵⁾ It would be hoped that this will be done in pluralistic manner with different types of news media within any given Third World country and with several new wire agencies coexisting, each one with their particular specialty or tendency, rather than one recipe common for them all. We have had more than enough of one recipe in the world, with the occidental tradition that seems to have guts strong enough to refer to itself as freedom, in spite of all the constraints under which it is operating.

But let us speculate a little further. Let us assume for the argument that the successful part of the world right now, economically speaking, is not the First World with its crises, nor the Second World with its rigidity bordering on stagnation, nor the Third World with its bottomless misery and increasing discrepancy between elites and people, but the

Fourth World, where to a large extent elite and people seem both to be undergoing processes of economic growth in a fairly parallel manner. If this is the case, how would that be reflected in a new international information/communication order?

It is difficult to tell. I think any analysis of the structure of foreign news during the last twenty years would reveal very clearly how much more prominent the Fourth World has become in First World news reporting. It has probably also become much more prominent in its own news reporting,¹⁶⁾ but what about the Third World? Has the Third World really discovered what goes on in East Asia or are they still basically obsessed by First World-Third World relations, with an occasional element of Second World events, to the exclusion of that rather major part of the world in East and Southeast Asia? Do they just tend to see Japan as a part of the West, which it evidently is not, and the other countries just as a part of the South, which they equally evidently are not, as witnessed by their very rapid industrialization and increasing share in world market?

I mention this because it should be remembered that the West is not the only civilization in the world that sees itself as the center. So does China, perceiving the rest less as periphery than as barbarian dangerous, uninteresting, exotic but definitely not something of which China is a part. And does not Japan also see itself as a center, with a tendency to see the rest of the world as one big resource, in earlier stages for market and advanced technology, in later stages for market and raw materials?¹⁷⁾ Would that, then, not lead to a news image with other parts of the world becoming exotic, but distant, also dangerous places that exist für mich and not an sich? And, if this is coupled with a possible major revolution where telematics is concerned, giving a certain ascendancy to Japan with teleprinters, telex and so on, would the conclusion not be that the new international information/communication order could be like the old one, only with the center in the Fourth World rather than the First World?

I doubt it for one simple reason: the centers in the Fourth World do not have the same missionary interest in propagating themselves, their values and structures, as does the First World. Propagation of products certainly yes, out of commercial interest - but that is something else. If anything should happen it is more likely that the Fourth World will be a relatively self-contained news system, circulating detailed news among themselves, being less interested in what goes on in Barbaria and Resourcia, except insofar as it is directly relevant to their own operations.

So the statistical distribution of news items will probably become less First World centered. But neither the Second, nor the Third world will command enough economic/political/cultural power to say: we are the new centers (or, more precisely, they may say so, but not convince many, perhaps not even themselves). The Fourth world has the economic power, also considerable political and cultural "Ausstrahlung". But their world concept is different; they may be less interested in being seen as the center.

Hence, the situation where this is concerned is, perhaps, not so bad. A center is slowly being dethroned, there is no obvious throne successor. A more symmetric world image is possible. What a challenge for a truly global newspaper, and not only one, many! And not like International Herald Tribune, so extremely biased towards the West in general and the United States, its country of origin, in particular. We need other efforts, more efforts. We need not only a new journalism, but a global journalism, problem-conscious, socially conscious, at home in the world as a whole.

5. Conclusion: towards a new and global journalism

In this effort to look for some major lines in the structure and process of international news information and communication there might be two phenomena that should warrant closer examination.

First, I do not think there is any doubt that a quantitative transformation is going on, with somewhat less emphasis on the center, and somewhat more emphasis on the periphery. However, I am not at all so sure that this is accompanied by a similar qualitative transformation where the character of what is regarded as news is changed. With more power to the periphery, both on the printed page and in the production of news, it is not at all clear that the product has changed. It might, in fact, even have become worse as it also has in many newspapers and in much radio/TV reporting in the First World, with even more elitism, personification and negativism than ever before. It is often referred to as the "personal touch" when the first page of a newspaper degrades itself, its journalists, not to mention its readers and those concerned by presenting rape and murder as the major constituents of world society.

Second, social communication has hardly become much more relevant to global problems than before, and may even become increasingly counter-productive. The vast array of detached space/time events that are presented as news constitute a set of events, not a set of problems. A problem has a beginning in its roots and a possible end in its solution; on the way alternatives have to be blossoming and carriers of those alternatives, strategic actors, have to be mobilized or at least pointed to. But this is not the way reporting is done. All such factors are regarded as "ideological", "biased", not worthy of attention, consuming too much valuable news space.

In short: I do not think much progress is being made. The structure is sliding and jumping over the globe - but remains the same, basically. The content is about the same, relevant, but biased. A new order is not enough. We need a new journalism, and a global journalism, liberated from visible and invisible repression, capable of reflecting in its social communication the global nature of our problems.

* Keynote address, International Association for Mass Communication Research, Praha, August 1984. I am indebted to IAMCR for the invitation to deliver the address, and to the discussants at the meeting for their incisive comments.

(1) See, for instance, my article "On the Dialectic Between Crisis and Crisis Perception", International Journal of Comparative Sociology, 1984, 1-2, pp. 4-32.

(2) See ~~my~~ article jointly with Mari Holmboe Ruge, "The Structure of Foreign News: The Presentation of the Congo, Cuba and Cyprus Crisis in Four Norwegian Newspapers", Chapter IV.4, Essays in Peace Research, Ejlers, Copenhagen, 1980, originally published in Journal of Peace Research, 1965, no. 1.

(3) For a further elaboration of this distinction from a methodological point of views, see ~~my~~ Methodology and Ideology, Ejlers, Copenhagen, 1977, esp. chs. 8 and 9.

(4) Thus, negative outcomes being seen as normal the news passes the filter, and are compatible with the anonymity of some disarmament functionaries, such as ambassadors. When top people are involved positive news may more easily be permitted, even should appear - compare the (in my view) overly positive reporting some a meeting between the two superpower foreign ministers, Schultz and Gromyko, in Geneva early January 1985.

(5) Nine reasons why disarmament negotiations tend to fail are given in chapter 4 of ~~my~~ There Are Alternatives: Four Roads to Peace and Security, English edition by Spokesman, Nottingham, 1984.

(6) See, for instance, "The Chinese Path to Development", Review, 1982, pp. 460-86, and "On the Possible Decline and Fall of Japan", East Asia, Campus, Berlin, Vol. I, 1983.

(7) I am thinking particularly of the tendency of developing countries to report what happens in other developing countries.

(8) I am thinking, of course, of newspapers like El País, Le Monde.

(9) See the excellent research done by Helga Theunert and Bernd Schorb, Gewalt im Fernsehen und ihre sozialen Folgen, Institut

Jugend-Film--Fernsehen, München, Februar 1983.

(10) I am, of course, thinking of the UNESCO debate in connection with the very important report by the MacBride commission, Many Voices, One World, UNESCO 1980 (the title is beautiful, but given the way the press has been standardized by the Western style the opposite title, "One Voice, Many Worlds" might have been more appropriate).

(11) For one view of the NIEO as a process, see "The New International Economic Order and the Basic Needs Approach", Alternatives, 1978-79, pp. 455-76.

(12) See also the article "Towards a New International Technological Order", Alternatives, 1978-79, pp. 277-300.

(13) In due time the creation of the IPS will stand out as a divide in the entire history of international news reporting, and the audacious and important work of people like Roberto Savio and Marc Nerfin in that connection will be duly appreciated.

(14) That withdrawal finally became effective as of 1 January 1985, an event that in my view should be welcomed as an opportunity for UNESCO to work on these important matters without the procrastinations from one former Member State. UNESCO on her side, however, might perhaps contemplate slashing staff salaries with the 25% that correspond to the US contribution -those salaries are much too high anyhow and might easily attract money-oriented rather than task-oriented people.

(15) Again, IPS stands out as a concrete effort in that direction.

(16) Thus, the boisterous, quite self-conscious Japanese reporting about Japan today is rather different from what it was only 15 years ago.

(17) See my "Japan and Future World Politics", Essays in Peace Research Vol. V, pp. 169-205.