

This thinksheet reports on a two-hour adhoc college-program NYTS group 13Dec76-- all having agreed to see Paddy Chaevsky's just-out film, "Network," a seriocomedy on the control effects of the TV-industry/multinationals combine, and a continuation of Chaevsky's dramas [beginning with "Gideon"] raising issues from interfacing contemporary realities with the biblical-prophetic heritage.

1. For biblical orientation we spent the first half hour studying 1Sam.10 (cp.chap. 8), on the transition from theocracy to monarchy. If one uses the clock model, it comes out like this: (1) The Patriarchs, Moses, the Judges, all at 12 o'clock; (2) Samuel anointing Saul, Samuel at 1 and Saul at 7; (3) Samuel anointing David, Samuel at 2 and David at 8; (4) Nathan at 3 and David at 9; (5) the true prophets at 5 and Solomon at 11; (6) the false prophets at 6 [entirely prostituted to the monarchy] and Solomon's North and South king-sons at 12, with virtual divine powers and idolatrous practices; (7) in the Exile, virtual restoration of the prophets, especially 2Is., to position #1; (8) in the Return, Ezra at 3 and Nehemiah at 9; (9) in the diaspora and until the 1947-8 State of Israel, virtual return to position #7; (1) present State of Israel, virtual return to position #4. How [to use the title of a great WWII Friends tract] "speak truth to power"? The Bible, and this film, try....Thinksheet #89] gives details of the film + a personal interpretation [and therefore should not be used in a group until after #891A].

2. CAST DEVELOPMENT: Who are the characters in the TV generation? in the previous generation? What if any development does each undergo, personally and in relationship(s)? What crises of event/decision does each face? Which victimize/are victimized? coopt/are coopted? On what reality model does each operate? Who's in charge of the personal, interpersonal, systemic, and global dynamics--distributively and collectively?

3. FEELING DIMENSION: What feelings did you have right after experiencing the film? What now? Some of the responses--after sorting out and away the ideas and commentaries, which are reserved till later in the group process-- were "good," "scared," "detached," "involved," "mad," and "confused" [mixed complex emotions]. [Whether these feelings are those the dramatist and director intended will be discussed only after everything else in the process is complete.] Using this model of common-experience processing in group for many years, I find an almost inveterate schoolish tendency to present first not "feelings" but "ideas," notions, opinions. The process, in helping folk get in touch with and own their feelings, is both education and therapy.

4. INTELLECTUAL DIMENSION: What ideas did you have right after experiencing the film? What now? Intuitions, which are on the boundary between these two questions, often emerge before ideas. Ideas that did emerge, among others, were "We're all on stage!" and "What is reality [since TV is reverse reality for its addicts]?" Many referrals to the scripture read at the beginning of the session. A time when people feel lost is a savior-prone time: murdered-on-tube Howard Beal is a Christ figure who dies for what he believes to be the truth (first, his own intuitions from hinduist--"prana"--conversion; then, the propaganda from being brainwashed by a multinational Mr. Big). TV is protevangelical to Hindu and Buddhist conversion: all three treat the historical world [Jewish-Christian world-picture] as unreal, in the interest of treating as real its own realm [the tube, atma-Brahma, samsara-nirvana]. [When a man is literally in Faye Dunniway, her head is psychically in the tube.] Mr. Big makes a statement showing where 1776 [Adam Smith's freedom of business from government] has led us: The multinationals "are the nations of today." [Contrast Richard Falk and Wm. Stringfellow on this: will "peoples" succeed in power both nations and money?]

5. ACTION: What might you, could you, should you, will you do about all this? Use this process with a group of my people on this film; watch less TV; etc.

AF from Willis: Please put this group-processing-of-common-experience technique in your "June" folder.