

The Information Media and Perpetual Warfare

Via [Insurgência](#)

Information is both our basic product and the most destabilizing factor of our time," writes retired Lt. Col. Ralph Peters, in an article entitled Constant Conflict, published in 1997 in the military journal Parameters, a mouthpiece for Pentagon policy.

I never thought that information was capable of shaping societies, sectors and classes, perhaps because of an Enlightenment deformation that led me to trust in the autonomy of judgment of human beings. Nothing could be further from reality, as the panorama of submission of part of humanity to the power of the powerful teaches us.

Peters reasons like the privileged minority who feel themselves victorious. For the masses of the world, devastated by information that they cannot efficiently manage or interpret, life is unpleasant, brutal, and short-circuiting. He maintains that the pace of change is capable of devastating, i.e., paralyzing the ability to think.

He mentions that one of the decision-making bifurcations of the future will be the conflict between the masters of information and the victims of information. He writes shortly after the United States unleashed the Internet, which quickly became a hegemonic medium for communications in a volume of information that is impossible to digest

"Image triumphs over text in the psyche of the masses," Peters says, explaining the power of US popular culture. "If religion is the opium of the people, video is their crack," he says, paraphrasing Karl Marx.

The military man understands the deep reasons for the success of Yankee culture, without concessions to ethics or good taste. The films most despised by the intellectual elite, those that feature extreme violence and sex for the winners, are our most popular cultural weapon, bought or pirated almost everywhere.

This power lies in the fact that visual narratives, such as those practiced by Chuck Norris, require no dialogue for their understanding, since they are based on basic impulses as the engine of a culture that he defines as "vulgar" and at the same time "wonderful".

The "information war" is a central part of the superpower's perpetual war to survive in the midst of disorder. It is clear that there are no ethics here, but power and violence, no more, for the survival of the strongest, without the slightest concession to any kind of humanism. "Only fools will play fair," the military man sentences.

I think that it is necessary to understand in order to act correctly. Without judging, especially because certain intellectuals abuse concepts like fascism or democracy, which block understanding by abusing adjectives. The world is being shaped by the brutal violence from above, which is not irrational, and in the face of this we are left with only organization and collective action.

Regarding the information war and the monopolistic concentration of the big media, we need to stop and debate. Several paths have been taken. The left and progressives in government have tried to regulate the information monopolies, with little success. The European Union has been losing in its attempt to minimally regulate mega-companies like Google and Amazon. It is almost impossible, given the enormous power they wield.

The second option is to strengthen community, alternative or

popular communication. There is a huge variety of such media in every country in the world. In some, like in Argentina, they achieve an important audience that can reach 15% of the population, which is by no means little.

However, we are still far from broadcasting powerful messages as the American audiovisual industry does, capable of capturing the hearts and minds of the population. One of the most successful cases is the Colombian series *Matarife*, which denounces the alliance between former president Álvaro Uribe and the narcoparamilitaries that brought him to power.

Daniel Mendoza Leal, author of the series, defines it as creative subversion, from his exile in Spain due to threats from the ultra-right. His goal is to reach young people from popular sectors, who don't have access to platforms like Netflix and Amazon, so the series is propagated on social networks.

The third is that we will not be able to create powerful imaginaries if we are not part of realities in resistance. *Matarife* feeds back into the social struggle: it showed the brutality of state mafias, and was an important factor in the ongoing protest because it illuminated almost inaccessible areas of politics.

Finally, to say that "the mind thinks with ideas, not with information," as Fritjof Capra points out, based on the works of Theodore Roszak. In information there are no ideas. "Ideas are integrative patterns that are derived not from information, but from experience" (Fritjof Capra, *The Web of Life*).

We have a lot of work ahead of us.