

The corporate PR machines will be going flat out very s...

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I [noted this report in the Guardian](#) this morning:

Advertising giant WPP has unveiled a £2bn savings plan to shore up its balance sheet in the face of the coronavirus pandemic.

WPP is the world's second-largest advertising company, with more than 107,000 staff around the world. It said it was implementing the measures after revenues in China slumped by 23% in the first two months this year.

Advertising is, of course, the only industry dedicated to the promotion of unhappiness, discontent, and ill-feeling. Its activities are premised on the creation of a sense of inadequacy. Unsurprisingly as a consequence I am not too troubled by a downturn in its fortunes at present.

I cannot help wondering, however, about what all those advertising executives might be doing right now. The suspicion that they might be working hard with their clients to justify the bailouts that they will receive, and to fight back against any potential conditions that might be attached to them is very strong.

Corporations around the world know that they are the subject of considerable disquiet right now. The reasonable question as to why they were so ill-equipped to face a downturn in trade will be asked, and they have no answers, barring the stripping of their balance sheets of every penny of worth that they could find within them for the sake of supposed shareholder reward, which is something they are hardly going to admit to. In that case the corporate PR machines are going to be going flat out sometime very soon, seeking to tilt the post-coronavirus consensus in their favour. We all need to be aware of it.