



Celine's Second Law [edit]

Accurate communication is possible only in a non-punishing situation.^[2]

Wilson rephrases this himself many times as "communication occurs only between equals". Celine calls this law "a simple statement of the obvious" and refers to the fact that everyone who labors under an authority figure tends to lie to and flatter that authority figure in order to protect themselves either from violence or from deprivation of security (such as losing one's job). In essence, it is usually more in the interests of any worker to tell his boss what he wants to hear, not what is true.^[3]

In any hierarchy, every level below the highest carries a subtle burden to see the world in the way their superiors expect it to be seen and to provide feedback to their superiors that their superiors want to hear. In the end, any hierarchical organization supports what its leaders already think is true more than it challenges them to think differently. The levels below the leaders are more interested in keeping their jobs than telling the truth.

Wilson, in *Prometheus Rising*, uses the example of J. Edgar Hoover's FBI. Hoover saw communist infiltrators and spies everywhere, and he told his agents to hunt them down. Therefore, FBI agents began seeing and interpreting everything they could as parts of the communist conspiracy. Some even went as far as framing people as communists, making largely baseless arrests and doing everything they could to satisfy Hoover's need to find and drive out the communist conspiracy. The problem is, such a conspiracy was greatly exaggerated. Hoover thought it was monolithic and pervasive, and any agent who dared point out the lack of evidence to Hoover would be at best denied promotions, and at worst labeled a communist himself and lose his job. Any agent who knew the truth would be very careful to hide the fact.

Meanwhile, the FBI was largely ignoring the problem of organized crime (the Mafia), because Hoover insisted that organized crime did only does the leader of the hierarchy see what he wants to see, but he also does not see what he does not want to see. Agents who were sometimes marginalized within the organization or hounded into retirement.

In the end, Celine states, any hierarchy acts more to conceal the truth from its leaders than it serves to find the truth.