

migrants' problems, and to arrange appropriate broadcasts for the different ethnic groups in their own language. The National Film Board and the commercial film producers were asked to produce films that would give the newcomers a fuller appreciation of Canada, and films that would help develop a sympathetic and understanding attitude on the part of Canadians towards the new immigrants.

That the newcomers have many skills and much culture to contribute to Canadian life was agreed, and it was recommended that every effort should be made to use these skills to the fullest, and to make available opportunities for the expression and enjoyment of the immigrants' cultural attributes. Books and pamphlets telling of the contributions of their people to Canadian life should be produced, and others, about Canada and Canadian life, should be provided in their languages. Free and early association with their ethnic groups and national associations should be encouraged; for even though such association might in some instances slow down the process of developing a Canadian "feeling," it would materially aid in the growth of an "at home" feeling.

From immigrant to citizen—this is the road the newcomers want to travel. We are concerned about the kind of immigrants who come to our country—we show it by our strict screening process overseas. We should be even more concerned as to what kind of citizens they become.

It is important that suitable training programs be set up to enable the immigrants to secure the basic knowledge and use of language, ideas and customs. It is important that they get settled in occupations commensurate with their skills, and have suitable housing. But it is even more important that they acquire an understanding and belief in democracy as a way of life. Some of this will come through courses they take, in books they read, but most of it will result from the day to day contacts with Canadians, and from the manner in which they are accepted at work, in their neighborhoods, and by community organizations.

In the old era of colonization we looked on the immigrant as additional labor force; in this new era of immigration we must accept him as a friend and neighbor, as a future fellow citizen.

## Praise and Condemnation of Propaganda<sup>1</sup>

By KASPAR NAEGELE

AS members of society we are daily involved in influencing one another. This interaction takes many forms, is caused by many factors and has many consequences. Influence may be unde-

signed or systematic, temporary or permanent, reassuring or disruptive. We may convert the other person, or turn him against us through the very act of trying to win him for us. Our appeals stop short of no subject of human concern: we proselytise in religious matters and persuade concerning the use of soap flakes; we hope to swing political votes as well as to spread favourable or negative attitudes to prohibition and birth control.

Propaganda, a word with an interesting history, is now used to refer to this diversity of activity and to imply, even if

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1. This is a shortened version of a paper on "The Sociology of Propaganda" read at the session of Graduate Teaching and Research, Arts Section, which formed part of the program of the University Conference held at Mount Allison University, Sackville, N. B. May 28-29, 1948.

The chief references for this paper are:

Lee, A. M. "The Analysis of Propaganda: A Clinical Summary." *American Journal of Sociology*, 51 126-135, September 1945  
 erton, R. K., *Mass Persuasion* (New York: Harpers, 1946)

unwittingly, some unity behind apparent contrasts.

The proverbial visitor from Mars would find much popular and professional concern with propaganda amongst us. Obviously enough, propaganda is a tool used by the state. It is, of course, also a tool used by political parties, the church, pressure groups and protest organizations. Propaganda appeals challenge our apathy or our courage almost continually, in the name of minority rights or business interests, academic freedom or prevention of cruelty to animals.

Propaganda, then, is spread by institutions. It is also the object of varied sentiments and studies. It is easy to feel that in our society there exists a fear of propaganda. Yet there appears no ultimate escape either from propaganda itself or from the fear of it. This adds complication to fear. The label propaganda is extensively used, and all propaganda is considered untrustworthy. Scepticism develops in defence against propaganda and as a consequence of one's fear. The line between "propaganda" and what is still considered reliable becomes obscure and doubtful. Yet scepticism cannot become all-inclusive or else even doubt would have to be doubted. And so islands of trust, as it were, swim in a sea of distrust. Some commentator on the radio or some political analyst is singled out as a reliable and guiding star. Such trust makes distrust possible.

Faith and suspicion develop side by side, then, while people swallow some pat phrases as truths and reject some established facts as "mere" propaganda. News of Nazi atrocities, for instance, were disbelieved by many, though they were later substantially verified, while stereotyped arguments concerning the unassimilability of Canadian Japanese were swallowed again and again, although the inadequacy of these arguments was obvious to any one willing to probe behind generations. In this paradoxical psychological context of gullibility and

scepticism, cynicism and confidence, distrust and need for trust, propaganda operates with varying success and studied methods.

We study propaganda both to use it more effectively and to be able to guard ourselves against it. The studies of "effects" of speeches, films or radio programmes, the reports of the Institute for Propaganda Analysis in the U.S. and the related body of prolific literature on public opinion indicate the extent of propaganda analysis. We know now that the spreading of truths as well as of lies may have unwanted consequences and that propaganda needs great attention from the social scientist and the moral philosopher alike. Much human shrewdness goes both into the development of propaganda and into the analysis of it. It was, for instance, possible during the war to record Hitler's speeches and to detect the places where the previously instructed clacks distributed through the audience failed to arouse the intended applause. Such failure exposed the absence of sentiments wished for by Hitler but no longer held by the Germans. Counter-propaganda from the Allies could now go to work.

### Definition

While propaganda is the focus of many of our thoughts and emotions, our minds are not agreed on any one definition of it. Originally propaganda referred to the spread of Roman Catholicism. Pope Gregory XIII instituted a Commission of Cardinals, which eventually became the Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide. To-day some would define propaganda merely invidiously as our opponents' attempt to convince us, usually by dishonest means. It is the alleged dishonesty of propaganda which makes people think of it only in negative terms. Yet surely any view, including our own (which is presumably honest), can be the subject or the result of propagand

There is an alternative definition which goes to the opposite extreme and defines

propaganda as the expression of any point of view for the purpose of influencing the thoughts and actions of others. Such a definition seems too inclusive: it would, as it stands, describe even a lecture in forest mensuration as propaganda. It is more useful to assume that propaganda, like education or advertising, is a particular instance of "influence." In that sense these three instances converge. In other ways they differ.

Propaganda is essentially the usage of the specific methods outlined below for the purpose of calling out and maintaining attitudes which make possible conduct desired by a given group. Such conduct is related to social and political institutions which already exist or are intended to exist in the future. As such, propaganda differs from advertising, which is directed only to commercial transactions (but often shares its methods with propaganda), or from education, which by avowed ideal implies in our society not only the spread of values but also the learning of mental or manual skills and discipline as well as the growth of intellectual independence. Propaganda thus involves a propagator, who may or may not agree with the interests of the group for whom he works (he may be a paid technician), an audience which is intended to listen, interpret and respond in particular ways, and ideas and sentiments imparted usually in a one-way stream of communication. These ideas and sentiments express a particular group's interest and may be, but need not be, in the interest of the larger group among whom they are propagated. They may, but need not, involve demonstrable untruths.

### Methods

Propaganda is possible on the basis of old and well known methods: frequent repetition or phrases or arguments, simplification or misrepresentation of issues, discrediting the opponent or calling him names, half true generalisations or, to put

it more generally, exploitation of human weaknesses through the direct appeals to sentiment, irrespective of reason or through the use of pseudo-logic. Advertising makes especial use of the latter method, when it persuades through irrelevance and tries to sell soap, for example, not on the basis of the quality of the soap but on the basis of the attractiveness of the wrapping. Testimonials too involve a curious logic, since they ask us to buy cigarettes, for instance, because someone in Hollywood smokes them. Testimonials also are intended to make us accept the claims advanced in favour of some product. We are asked to believe the claims because some one, whom we supposedly know, admire or trust, has endorsed these claims with his name. Yet we know that such endorsements are paid for and that there exists a good chance that they were made not out of conviction in the claimed qualities of some product, but out of a desire for financial gain.

It is the supposed absence of some or all of these methods in education, which allows us to distinguish, at least theoretically, between propaganda (or advertising) and education, and to hope that the educated person is precisely he who recognizes propaganda where and when it occurs.

### A Case-Study

Fortunately there exists now an excellent case-study of propaganda which adds the necessary concrete details to the previous abstractions. On the 23rd of September 1943 Kate Smith, a radio star, sold 39 million dollars worth of U. S. warbonds in an all-day radio drive. How was that possible? R. K. Merton, who answered this question, suggests a closely reasoned solution which has many ramifications. There is no substitute to reading the book itself and the following cursory summary is intended merely as propaganda for this type of social analysis and as advertising for the book.

Given the war and its emotional context and given also the popularity of Kate Smith (of 1000 people interviewed in New York 14 were ignorant of Wendell Willkie's identity and only one did not know who Kate Smith was), one must still see the success of this campaign in terms of the form it took and the appeals it used. Smith appeared for one minute in every fifteen from eight o'clock one morning till two the next. A quota was set for different cities and she performed a marathon race on CBS to realize the quotas. War bonds were the goal but Smith was the center of the drive. She did what she asked for. She asked for sacrifice through an act of sacrifice. Her attempt at lasting for the 65 different occasions during which she had to appear on the air added strain and adventure. People listened to a venture that was thrilling and that might have to be discontinued if Smith could not last. Some listeners became caught by the strain and found listening a compulsion and the end of the campaign a relief. The twist of the dial that could have relieved them earlier was apparently made impossible by the effectiveness of the radio marathon.

Smith, then, used propaganda of the deed as Roosevelt had done on an earlier occasion when he drove through the rain in an open car during a Presidential campaign. Smith used propaganda of the word as well: she appealed especially with the theme of sacrifice. The sacrifice of soldiers, civilians and herself was a model to be imitated through bond purchase. Guilt was inspired through her appeals and removed through pledges phoned to the radio station. The anger often associated with guilt and directed against him who made us feel guilty could not in this case, be directed back to Smith. She could not, like others, be accused of "merely talking without doing." She was a talker and a doer.

Merton notes that her appeals contained no mention of the economic and matter-of-fact functions of bond-sales.

It was not explained that government loans of this kind were, amongst other things, instruments for sound investment and for money drainage to forestall inflation. The opportunity to help educate the public about the economic workings of its society was foregone.

The decision to phone in a pledge expressed diverse motives and sentiments, aroused patriotism or attachment to Smith, a wish to be like innumerable others who also bought a bond, or a need to alleviate feelings of guilt. Loyalty to Smith was expressed in definite, recurrent ways. She was considered sincere, philanthropic (without being blatant about it), patriotic, "just plain," a guide, motherly, virtuous, an entertainer, a success.

These adjectives contain deeper commentaries on our society. The very frequent emphasis on Smith's sincerity is the expression of modern man's need for trust and opportunity for distrust mentioned previously. Smith was a reassurance. For once, it seemed, one was not the dupe of manipulation.

Today manipulation is not confined to the exploitation of nature. It includes the exploitation of human nature as well. We have made human relations and human acts the object of a growing technology which is found all the way from radio or film mass persuasion to a salesman's conversation with a housewife. It is of the essence of manipulation where it is to one's disadvantage that the manipulator withholds information or dissimulates his motives and pretends to be concerned for us when in fact he is merely concerned for himself. Smith was considered to have no ulterior motives. She was, people felt, a change from the salesman. One could rely on her and trust her. She was an outstanding hope in an otherwise deceptive world. "If she were fake, I'd feel terrible," as one interviewed person put it, sums all this up.

Smith was genuine, an escape from fake and a success in her followers' eyes.

She was of the people. She had climbed the social ladder without becoming a snob or, as one person tellingly formulated it, without becoming 'distocratic.' Her success reflected glory on the less successful ones who were once her equals and who could say of her: "I knew her when . . .". Her success, moreover, lay not so much in specific achievement as in the general virtues of kindness, forbearance, charity and compassion. These were not just the result of effort. The battered egos of those whose efforts had failed could now breathe more freely again: "other values still count."

Smith was a success without being glamorous in appearance. That too was a reassurance. Her homeliness, instead of standing in her way, became one of her assets. Apparently, and to the relief of many, one can be popular without being glamorous and perhaps "the cultural accent of feminine attractiveness may be safely abandoned."

Smith, although a spinster, also became a symbol of motherhood. To quote Merton again:

Her spinsterhood does not preclude an honorary life membership in the Blue Star Mothers of America. In the modern Pantheon Kate Smith is the goddess of the household. The advertisements show her, plump and rosy-cheeked in a neat white apron, at work in the kitchen. And on June 17, 1944, the press carried an account that the "National Father's Day Committee" their membership and authorization not being indicated in the article had awarded the "coveted" Eisenhower medal to Kate Smith because she had laboured successfully "to cement fine relationships" between fathers and their children . . . Whatever else the pin-up girls may contribute to the life of father, they could hardly be given an award for strengthening his ties to his children.

These images in the minds of people living in a stratified, manipulated and distrustful society helped to make Smith's drive successful, especially amongst women.

As a matter of fact, in the absence of their husbands, some women phoned in pledges which had to be cancelled on the husbands, return in the evening. The

husbands had different plans or other bond salesmen from whom they wanted to buy. Consequently, in her second bond-marathon Smith appealed to the men during the evening and greatly improved the total bond-sale.

### In Search of Truth

Kate Smith's efforts are an example of recent propaganda, but propaganda itself is an old human problem. It has gained attention to-day because it is so frequent, well-organized and far-reaching. We are the heirs not only of Plato, Aristotle or Hobbes, who were concerned with propaganda in the name of rhetoric, but also of Marx, Nietzsche and Freud, who persuade us that we are surrounded by deception and trappings and who ask us to look behind the scenes and for the "really real." Such a search can be endless, dissolving everything. Besides, it poses a peculiar question: how can we live together *without* deception?

Benjamin Franklin once instructed us:

Virtue will do in appearance where in fact it achieves what genuine virtue would also achieve.

and Jeremiah warned us: "Cursed is the man that trusteth in man." Yet we know that without mutual trust and confidence we could not live together. We know too that in a society as divided as ours most of us and most groups are almost continually engaged in influencing and persuading others to come to their point of view. All available methods are used and no issue, whether sacred or secular, is immune to propagandistic usage. Most of us use propaganda some of the time, and all of us are exposed to it most of the time. It will be the continued task of our educational institutions to maintain the will to truth, even if it be part of the truth that hardly any one is willing to give up precious illusions and that some deception is a necessary ingredient of tolerable social relations.