

## PROPAGANDA

Propaganda is an important technique by which foreign policy aims to succeed. In ancient times, the ruling class used the technique of propaganda to influence people to accept its programmes and views. But scientific propaganda, according to Joseph Frankel, started its journey in the early twentieth century. Till the First World War (1914-18), the importance of propaganda in international relations was negligible. American and Western European scholars believe that during the inter-war period (1919-39), the former Soviet Union and Nazi Germany used propaganda extensively to garner support for their views and programmes. Since then, the use of science and technology for propaganda started in a huge way, and the journey of scientific propaganda began.

During the CW days, both the superpowers utilized their propaganda machinery against each other in order to maintain their sphere of influence.

### Definition

The idea of propaganda was first initiated by the Roman Catholic Church. According to Frankel, the Church 'had institutionalized the propagation of faith through a special Sacred Congregation (*de propaganda fide*) from the title of which the word "propaganda" is derived' (Frankel 1977: 131). The British Government during the First World War, and later, Soviet Union and Germany, started scientific propaganda in support of their views and programmes. Propaganda may be simply defined as follows: A systematic attempt to influence the minds and emotions of a target group for a specific purpose. For propaganda radio, TV, print media and Internet are used in modern times.

Propaganda is different from diplomacy. In the first place, diplomacy is a government-to-government affair, whereas propaganda is aimed at the people of other states. For instance, during the Cold War, Soviet propaganda was aimed at the populace of the US and West Europe; whereas American propaganda was aimed at the populace of the Soviet Union and East European countries. At the same time, the respective propaganda were also used to influence the minds of their own people as well. Secondly, diplomacy may sometimes consider the interests of other nations, but propaganda is intensely self-centred. It is not possible for any propaganda to highlight the policies and programmes of other nations. The sole purpose of a propagandist is to highlight the interest of his own nation and affect the minds of others. Propaganda only glorifies the propagandist nation, it does not think of others. Thirdly, while diplomacy has positive impact on international relations, propaganda contributes nothing positive to it. According to Frankel, propaganda, due to its selfish state-centric character, only contributes negatively to international relations. Self-seeking propaganda, glorifying the policies and programmes of a particular nation, may generate a negative mindset in other countries. This only breeds hatred and animosity in international relations. Diplomacy and propaganda are thus different, although they are both very useful arms of foreign policy.

Today both DIP & P are used simultaneously. Countries which are economically well off depend more on propaganda, whereas countries which are not so well off depend more on diplomacy.

Propaganda is a relatively new technique of F.P. Diplomacy is the oldest technique of F.P.

Propaganda is expensive whereas diplomacy is the cheapest technique of F.P.

Pen-Joshi [✓]

## Techniques

A successful propaganda may effectively be compared with advertising and sales. Like an advertiser or a salesperson, propagandists must fix their target group and area of operation and have adequate knowledge about them (the area in this case is a state). A propagandist must analyse, like an advertiser, the demands, aspirations, emotions and fears of his target group, as also the socio-economic-political milieu of his area of operation, and invent appropriate methods of propaganda. Propaganda has several methods. Palmer and Perkins have summarized all these methods to finally provide four important techniques of propaganda: (1) methods of presentation; (2) techniques of gaining attention; (3) devices for gaining response; and (4) methods of gaining acceptance. These techniques are analysed here.

## Methods of Presentation

The success of propaganda is highly dependent on the presentation of issues. The acceptance of any propaganda depends on its art of presentation. A propagandist can transform a lie or a half-lie into truth, and vice versa, through their ability of presentation. Palmer and Perkins cited a very good example of how Nazi Germany used a wrong document to ignite anti-Jew sentiments successfully among the Christians in Europe. According to them, Hitler's Nazi administration aptly exploited as 'proof' a document titled *Protocols of the Wise Men of Zion* to spread the message that the Jews were hatching a conspiracy against the Christians to rule the world. This propaganda created anti-Jew sentiments in Europe and served Hitler's purpose. However, it was discovered later that the infamous protocol was designed by a section of the Tsarist police to topple Tsarist rule in Russia.

During the Cold War, both the US and the Soviet Union resorted to convincing propaganda. The Soviet Union, in all its official documents, projected the picture of a very strong and solid economy. It, however, became evident after the disintegration of the Soviet Union that the Soviet economy was in poor shape. The Soviet Union had to resort to such propaganda to protect its image of a superpower and to compete with the US during the Cold War period. The purpose of a propagandist is to win the confidence of his target-group by any means. Before attacking Iraq in 2003, the US had declared that it had 'clear evidence' to 'prove' that Iraq was stockpiling WMDs (weapons of mass destruction). But till date, no such 'evidence' has been found in Iraq. Behind this propaganda, the purpose of the US was to mobilize public opinion against Iraq. The purpose was fulfilled. Several such examples could be cited from international politics to show how the art of presentation made propaganda successful.

## Techniques of Gaining Attention

After presentation, the next target of the propagandist is to gain the attention of his target group. The propagandist adopts various means to gain attention. To attract the attention of the government of another country, methods like TV or radio speech, open letters, protest marches are arranged. Where the target group is the people of another country, several other methods are followed. A very subtle yet sober method is to run educational and cultural missions in foreign lands to spread the policies and programmes of a particular state. Organizations like The United States Information Agency or the British Council are spread across the globe to implement the programmes and policies of the US and the British governments respectively. Besides providing



services like library facilities to the people in a foreign land, these missions also attract the attention of the local people towards the policies of their governments through seminars, exhibitions and workshops. In today's world, the technique of gaining attention through direct show of military strength has become almost obsolete. Yet, rich nations try to show their prowess indirectly. The posh, air-conditioned, sophisticated educational and cultural missions silently announce the economic prosperity of the US or Britain. The rich industrial nations also promise to give economic or military assistance to other countries. Such promises are generally accompanied by extensive propaganda. Normally, declarations for economic or military assistance are made during the visits of the heads of government to a foreign land, because such visits are covered extensively by the media in both countries. Thus, when the US President visits India, several American assistance or cooperation programmes are normally announced before the American and the Indian media. The visits of the heads of government are now exploited by every country to gain attention to its foreign policy. During such visits, extensive propaganda on friendship and cooperation are taken up. Although propaganda is a continuous activity, it may become forceful at certain times, like the visits of heads of government. The availability of modern tools such as satellite TV, radio, internet, fax and mobile services has added more teeth to propaganda. Nowadays, even the terrorist groups are taking the benefits of modern methods to gain public attention toward their policies.

### Devices for Gaining Response

A major aim of propaganda is to elicit response from the target group. The propagandist follows various methods to elicit response. They use sentimental appeal, nationalism, the emotion of the people of their own nations and that of others, too—as well as reason, to gain response to their propaganda. A very effective method is the use of slogans to ignite the passion of people. Slogans like 'Liberty, Equality, Fraternity' or 'Workers of the world unite' or 'Herr Hitler' touched the emotions of the people to a great extent and elicited tremendous response. In independent India, slogans like 'Garibi hatao' (eradicate poverty) or 'Green Revolution' or 'Hum do Hamaare do' (we are two, we have two) became very popular as well as effective to attract people's attention to different domestic programmes. Apart from slogans, the use of national flags, symbols and images are quite frequent in eliciting responses from the people. The American 'eagle', British 'lion' or Indian 'lion pillars of Asoka' (Asokastamva) can ignite a sense of nationalism. According to Palmer and Perkins, the 'Swastika' symbol of Nazi Germany generated intense nationalistic feelings and emotional attachments. Sometimes, Charismatic appeal by individual leaders is used to garner response from the people. Mahatma Gandhi, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, Abraham Lincoln, Hitler and Mussolini, to name a few, had such charismatic appeal. Nowadays, the charisma of renowned personalities from the world of sports or of cinema besides that of political leaders is used to gain support for official policies. They are frequently used as a part of propaganda to elicit popular response as its impact over public opinion is quite high.

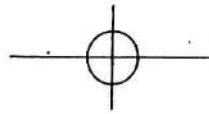
### Methods of Gaining Acceptance

A propagandist uses different methods to make his campaign acceptable to people. He tries to project himself as very friendly to his target group. If the propagandist can successfully convey the message that 'I am one of you,' his chances of getting accepted are always high. During elections, candidates use this strategy in all countries. Even politically and financially strong candidates try

Slogans  
charismatic appeal  
national flag symbols

Hitler





to establish a 'people's man' image of theirs to garner support. A clever portrayal of this image can help them win elections. The propagandist also invokes religion or sycophancy around a national icon, or talks in terms of morality, ethics and altruism to make his propaganda acceptable. In international relations, states also try to make their propaganda acceptable on similar lines. For example, India frequently refers to the Gandhian principle of non-violence and peaceful coexistence in its foreign policy. The United States of America termed its invasion of Iraq as 'humanitarian intervention', required urgently to establish human rights in Iraq. In this instance, the US tried to make its policy acceptable to the world by invoking the principle of morality.

A propagandist has to adopt various methods, depending upon his target-group and area, to make his propaganda sharp and successful. Appropriate and meaningful propaganda is essential for the success of foreign policy and protection of national interests. Therefore, all nations try to have an effective propaganda machinery. Successful propaganda, however, is not an easy task. It demand intellect, money and adequate infrastructure. It is frequently observed that, in this, rich nations are ahead of poor nations who lack money and infrastructure to launch massive propaganda operations in support of their policies and programmes.

(Palmer and Perkins refer to propaganda as "any attempt to persuade persons to accept a certain point of view or to take a certain action" which has a specific aim and method of action.

(Coulombis and Wolfe<sup>[28]</sup> point out that propaganda has been effectively defined as a process involving a communicator whose attention is to change the attitudes, opinions and behaviour of a target population <sup>or audience</sup> using spoken, written and behavioural symbols and employing media such as books, pamphlets, films, lectures and so on. They also project the disaggregation of the cooperative from the conflictual types of propaganda in terms of white, gray and black propaganda.



**White Propaganda:** (It is referred to as those cooperative and straightforward campaigns designed to explain the policies of a state to audiences across its borders and over the seas. This generally involves activities in cultural and educational domains involving cultural and educational exchange programmes. Magazines, pamphlets, films and lectures are the usual methods of orchestrating the message for cultivation of mutually beneficial friendship and cooperation.)

**Gray Propaganda:** (It begins when the relationship between the communicator and the government of the target state begins to deteriorate. Therefore, exaggeration and falsehood creep into the communications and propaganda becomes combative and competitive in content and philosophy (of propaganda).)

**Black Propaganda:** (It usually refers to those techniques, that are used during the time of war when actual hostilities break out and diplomacy and formal negotiations fail. Verbal and audio-visual weapons are used in communication hiding the true identities of the communicators and producing forged and fabricated documentations aimed at creating confusion and chaos in the ranks of the enemy, for example, forecast for large-scale unemployment, food scarcity, labour, ethnic unrest, and famine.)

According to Joseph Frankel, propaganda is generally understood as any systematic attempt to affect the minds, emotions, and actions of a given group for a specific purpose. Like diplomacy, it is also verbal, but it is different from diplomacy in two respects, though the dividing line is not fully clear.

• (Propaganda is addressed to the people of other states and rarely to their governments.)

• (Propaganda is often guided by selfish motives, governed solely by national interests of the propagandist and is therefore, usually unacceptable to other states.)

(Selection of targets is essential in conducting propaganda. The important factor is the identification of the targets whose attitudes have to be changed. It is undeniable that despite increasing development in communication, media, computer technologies, internet, only a relatively small section of people in any given society has access to the newer technologies and means of communication. Therefore, this section of people becomes the likely targets of foreign-oriented information because, in many developing countries, most of the population is denied access to the means of communication and is confined to their small region or province. Propaganda again seems to be effective when directed towards people sharing wholly or partially, the attitudes of the communicator. The job becomes an easier one in strengthening the existing attitudes or crystallizing the predispositions than in converting those that are already hostile. It is often seen that propaganda becomes effective when targeted towards the crowds. Holsti points out that there is some evidence that the arousal of any strong emotion may make the individual in the crowd more suggestible, even if that emotion is directed initially against the leader of the crowd.)

and are interested  
or involved  
in international  
affairs.



It is the propagandist's job to find the key groups in society and determine what kinds of appeal will arouse the desired response in the selected targets.

To influence the target population or group is a difficult job and it becomes tougher when the targets are hostile to the communicator. Therefore, the propagandists use devices that tend to be spectacular, colourful, unusual, and in no way related to the substance of the message. The assumption is that the images of other states, which the foreign populations possess, are generally based on news reports, movies, cultural events, television programmes and information on the Internet, rather than direct experience. The effort, therefore, is to present spectacular news-making foreign policy actions, which will be noticed by a larger section of the foreign population whereas regular government information will reach only to a smaller audience. The objective of foreign information programmes is to sustain or alter the attitudes and behaviours of politically relevant groups within the society.

## TECHNIQUES OF PROPAGANDA

Holsti lists several techniques of conducting propaganda with the ultimate aim to deliver the specific message to the targeted group. These techniques are now enumerated.

**(Name Calling):** (It is the attaching of an emotion-laden symbol to a person or country, for instance, calling the Soviet Union as the "evil empire" during the Cold War days, or the "axis of evil" (used by president George Bush) for Libya, Iraq and North Korea after the Cold War, or naming the communists as "Reds" or constitutional governments as "capitalist cliques".

**(Glittering Generality):** (It is similar to the previous one but aimed at describing a policy rather than an individual, for example, "free world" used by the Western propagandists, or "Socialist solidarity" used by the communists.)

**(Transfer):** It means identifying an idea, person, country or policy with some other in order to make the target approve or disapprove it, for instance, evoking hostility among religious people against communism is equating it with atheism.

**Plain Folks:** It is to do away with the image as foreigner propagandists appear to identify themselves as closely as possible with the values and lifestyle of the targets using local slang, accent and idiom.

**Testimonial:** It means using an esteemed person or institution to endorse or criticize an idea or a political entity.

**Selection:** It refers to the selection of facts, although seldom, specific in factual content. Propagandists tend to use those facts only which are required to prove predetermined objectives.

**Bandwagon:** This technique plays on the audience's desire to belong to or be in accord with the crowd. Similar to the testimonial, but rather a mass of people and not a single esteemed person or institution, serves as the attraction. The



# Propaganda

## Propaganda Techniques

Edward Filene helped establish the Institute of Propaganda Analysis in 1937 to educate the American public about the nature of propaganda and how to recognize propaganda techniques. Filene and his colleagues identified the seven most common "tricks of the trade" used by successful propagandists (Marlin 102-106: Propaganda Critic: Introduction). These seven techniques are called:

- Name Calling
- Glittering Generalities
- Transfer
- Testimonial
- Plain Folks
- Card Stacking
- Band Wagon

These techniques are designed to fool us because the appeal to our emotions rather than to our reason. The techniques identified by the Institute for Propaganda Analysis are further refined by Aaron Delwich in his website, Propaganda where he "discusses various propaganda techniques, provides contemporary examples of their use, and proposes strategies of mental self-defense." By pointing out these techniques, we hope to join with others who have written on this topic to create awareness and encourage serious consideration of the influence of contemporary propaganda directed at us through the various media and suggest ways to guard against its influence on our lives.

**Name Calling:** Propagandists use this technique to create fear and arouse prejudice by using negative words (bad names) to create an unfavorable opinion or hatred against a group, beliefs, ideas or institutions they would have us denounce. This method calls for a conclusion without examining the evidence. Name Calling is used as a substitute for arguing the merits of an idea, belief, or proposal. It is often employed using sarcasm and ridicule in political cartoons and writing. When confronted with this technique the Institute for Propaganda Analysis suggests we ask ourselves the following questions: What does the name mean? Is there a real connection between the idea and the name being used? What are the merits of the idea if I leave the name out of consideration? When examining this technique try to separate your feelings about the name and the actual idea or proposal (Propaganda Critic: Common Techniques 1).

①  
radical, anti-social, fascist - calling the SU as the "evil empire" during the Cold War days.

for 2 techniques of P. 102-106  
Note: (A propagandist may use different words to achieve the same aim to deliver a specific message to the targeted group)  
Name Calling, Card Stacking

or an emotion laden symbol



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This is similar to the preceding technique, but is used to describe an idea or policy rather than individuals.

**Glittering Generalities:** Propagandists employ vague, sweeping statements (often slogans or simple catchphrases) using language associated with values and beliefs deeply held by the audience without providing supporting information or reason. They appeal to such notions as honor, glory, love of country, desire for peace, freedom, and family values. The words and phrases are vague and suggest different things to different people but the implication is always favorable. It cannot be proved true or false because it really says little or nothing at all. The Institute of Propaganda Analysis suggests a number of questions we should ask ourselves if we are confronted with this technique: What do the slogans or phrases really mean? Is there a legitimate connection between the idea being discussed and the true meaning of the slogan or phrase being used? What are the merits of the idea itself if it is separated from the slogans or phrases?

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**Transfer:** Transfer is a technique used to carry over the authority and approval of something we respect and revere to something the propagandist would have us accept. Propagandists often employ symbols (e.g., waving the flag) to stir our emotions and win our approval. The Institute for Propaganda Analysis suggests we ask ourselves these questions when confronted with this technique. What is the speaker trying to pitch? What is the meaning of the thing the propagandist is trying to impart? Is there a legitimate connection between the suggestion made by the propagandist and the person or product? Is there merit in the proposal by itself? When confronted with this technique, question the merits of the idea or proposal independently of the convictions about other persons, ideas, or proposals.

One way to evoke hostile attitude among religious people against communism is to equate it with atheism.

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**Testimonial:** Propagandists use this technique to associate a respected person or someone with experience to endorse a product or cause by giving it their stamp of approval hoping that the intended audience will follow their example. The Institute for Propaganda Analysis suggests we ask ourselves the following question when confronted with this technique. Who is quoted in the testimonial? Why should we regard this person as an expert or trust their testimony? Is there merit to the idea or product without the testimony? You can guard yourself against this technique by demonstrating that the person giving the testimonial is not a recognized authority, prove they have an agenda or vested interest, or show there is disagreement by other experts.

It means using an esteemed person or institution to endorse or criticize an idea or a political entity.

Free word used by Western propagandists or "Socialist solidarity" used by the communists.

It means identifying an idea, person, country or policy with some other in order to make the target approve or disapprove it.



Any propagandist is aware that his problems are compounded if he appears as a "foreigner" or stranger to the audience.

⑤

**Plain Folks:** Propagandists use this approach to convince the audience that the spokesperson is from humble origins, someone they can trust and who has their interests at heart. <sup>he is nothing different from the people</sup> Propagandists have the speaker use ordinary language and mannerisms to reach the audience and identify with their point of view. The Institute for Propaganda Analysis suggests we ask ourselves the following questions before deciding on any issue when confronted with this technique. Is the person credible and trustworthy when they are removed from the situation being discussed? Is the person trying to cover up anything? What are the facts of the situation? When confronted with this type of propaganda consider the ideas and proposals separately from the personality of the presenter.

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this technique plays on the audience's desire to "belong" to or be in accordance with the crowd. Here a mass of people serves as the attraction.

⑥

**Bandwagon:** Propagandists use this technique to persuade the audience to follow the crowd. This device creates the impression of widespread support. It reinforces the human desire to be on the winning side. It also plays on feelings of loneliness and isolation. Propagandists use this technique to convince people not already on the bandwagon to join in a mass movement while simultaneously reassuring that those on or partially on should stay aboard. Bandwagon propaganda has taken on a new twist. Propagandists are now trying to convince the target audience that if they don't join in they will be left out. The implication is that if you don't jump on the bandwagon the parade will pass you by. While this is contrary to the other method, it has the same effect: getting the audience to join in with the crowd. The Institute of Propaganda Analysis suggests we ask ourselves the following questions when confronted with this technique. What is the propagandist's program? What is the evidence for and against the program? Even though others are supporting it, why should I? As with most propaganda techniques, getting more information is the best defense. When confronted with Bandwagon propaganda, consider the pros and cons before joining in.

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**Card Stacking:** Propagandist uses this technique to make the best case possible for his side and the worst for the opposing viewpoint by carefully using only those facts that support his or her side of the argument while attempting to lead the audience into accepting the facts as a conclusion. In other words, the propagandist stacks the cards against the truth. Card stacking is the most difficult technique to detect because it does not provide all of the information necessary for the audience to make an informed decision. The audience must decide what is missing. The Institute for Propaganda Analysis suggests we ask ourselves the following question when confronted with this technique: Are facts being distorted or omitted? What other arguments exist to support these assertions? As with any other propaganda technique, the best defense against Card Stacking is to get as much information that is possible before making a decision.

⑧ **Euphemism:** It tries to pacify the people. Purpose - Don't reject, don't accept, just pacify and let things happen.

Several of these techniques may be used simultaneously to create the maximum effect.



