

PSYCHOLOGY

Scientist Gives Principles For Practical Propaganda

IN THE MIDST of a political campaign and with the international pot of conflicts threatening to boil over, it will be an intellectual tonic to reason about the rise of propaganda. This most subtle and modern form of social coercion matured during the World War, when the Allies "made the world safe for democracy" and "God with us" ruled Germanic emotions. Propaganda has since been worked effectively in the whipping up of mass feeling and action on everything from breakfast food to life insurance.

Like democracy, Wm. W. Biddle observes in the *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, propaganda is dependent upon widespread literacy and rapid social communication, the telephone, the press, the radio, the motion picture. Many forms of coercion create emotional disturbance in the coerced, resentments, over-compensations, or desires for revolt. Propaganda is different in that it controls without occasioning antagonistic emotions. Each individual behaves as though his response were his own decision. Many individuals may be coerced to behave alike, each apparently guided by his independent judgment.

Education has as one of its major interests the development of rational or conscious control over conduct. Instead of acting instructively or according to habit, the truly educated person takes time to consider the problem.

The aim of propaganda is to prevent thinking and promote emotion. It uses

emotionally toned phrases which provoke impulsive action and are repeatable. Propaganda as practiced today is a process of indirect emotional conditioning on a large scale.

For practical propaganda, Dr. Knight Dunlap, Johns Hopkins professor of psychology, gives a list of principles:

(a) Repeat systematically and incessantly.

(b) Avoid argument, never admit there is another side; reserve argument for intellectuals.

(c) Connect the desired idea with the known wishes of the audience.

(d) Make statements in clear repeatable form.

(e) Use direct statements sparingly; use indirection, inuendo, implication. Use direct statement in such a way that the audience will take it in but not reflect upon it.

(f) For permanent results, aim propaganda at the children.

They are repeated here in the hope that they will be useful in defending the helpless everyday mortal from the menace of propaganda.

Science News Letter, October 22, 1932

Because so many fabrics now on the market, such as rough crepes and knit goods, are very elastic, the silk industry has had considerable controversy as to the proper method of determining yardage, and special equipment has been devised to meet the situation.



'Simmons

ALL ALONG the edge of Dixie, and up into the North so far as that noble tree will deign to grow, juvenile mouths have been watering for weeks, waiting for the frost to take the pucker out of the persimmon. There is only a moderate amount of pulp around the big, slippery seeds, but quality makes up for lack of quantity, and on a lazy autumn day there's plenty of time to gather 'simmons, anyway.

The possibilities of the American persimmon as a contribution to the world's fruit basket have had to wait for the coming of a foreign brother to be appreciated. Some years ago the Japanese persimmon, a huge fruit, big as a baseball but very well flavored, was introduced in the South. Its shipping and keeping qualities are only moderate, so that no more than a trickle of shipments has come through to the markets of the North. Yet it has met approval, and now efforts are being put forth to make a match between this rather delicate exotic tree and our sturdier native. It is to be hoped they will succeed.

For one thing beyond its fruit is the persimmon highly valued. Those most knowing of all workers in wood, the makers of golf clubs, prize its hard, heavy, even-grained timber very highly. The persimmon has a good ancestral claim to such quality, for it is the northernmost representative of the aristocratic clan of trees that includes the lordly mahogany.

Science News Letter, October 22, 1932

Just nineteen years ago in an air race, the prize was won by a plane traveling 45 miles an hour; now, in the same contest, 407 miles sets a record.

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