

PSYCHOLOGY

Propaganda in Europe Less Effective Than World War's

This is an authoritative article prepared by the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues for release through Science Service. Such articles present results of current research on propaganda and war.

PROPAGANDA in the present war is "a distinct disappointment to the students of propaganda," says Prof. Ralph H. Lutz of Stanford University, one of the outstanding historians of the World War and author of several studies of World War propaganda techniques.

Prof. Lutz, who is director of the Hoover Library on War, Revolution and Peace, has just returned to his post at Stanford University from a seven-months' trip through Europe, during which he visited all the belligerent and most of the neutral countries.

He was in Russia when Russia was whipping up popular fury against the Finns, in Germany both before and after Hitler marched against Poland; he stood with Raemaekers, the celebrated Dutch artist-propagandist of the first World War, watching troops march in Amsterdam. Nowhere did he find the rousing of effective war attitudes as successful as it was 25 years ago.

"One reason for the disappointment of propaganda in the present war," Prof. Lutz reported on his return to America, "is that 'name-calling' had been so thoroughly developed by early summer that it lost its effectiveness as the crisis heightened. The people have become so well-conditioned that enemy propaganda is ineffective."

Underground channels of communication are working full time in every belligerent country Prof. Lutz said. Listen-

ing to forbidden enemy broadcasts is seemingly impossible to prevent. He told of one German who remarked to him, "I dreamed last night that Chamberlain made an announcement of his policies."

"That's funny," Prof. Lutz replied, "I heard the announcement over the radio at the American consulate."

Arrangements for the collection of propaganda and other categories of historical materials bearing on the present war were completed by Prof. Lutz during his seven months' European stay. The powerful name of the Hoover Library is a magnet to European collectors, accustomed to regard it as one of the leading storehouses for World War records. In particular, the Library will have, following the war and barring their destruction between now and then, outstanding collections on Fascism in Italy and Nazism in Germany.

A survey of the materials in the Library reveals how important a role propaganda played in winning the war for the Allies. A handbill, distributed by the officers to the men of the 18th German Army in September, 1918, testifies to the power of Allied pamphlets as psychological weapons:

"The enemy has defeated us not as man against man in the field of battle, bayonet against bayonet. No, bad contents in poor printing on poor paper has made our arm lame."

And a month later, this from a high officer of the German Army on the Western Front to a German newspaper back home: "What caused the most damage was the paper war waged by our enemies who daily flooded us with hundreds of thousands of leaflets, extraordinarily well arranged and edited."

Part of the effectiveness of the Allied propaganda lay in its purely informative character. Some of the leaflets gave accurate accounts of the food situation in Germany, of the arrival of American troops in France, of the advances made in certain sectors, including the number of casualties and prisoners. To the extent that the German officials had attempted to conceal these facts, actual information (at least some of which was known to be true) had the desired effect of producing distrust of the German officers and government. If the odds had not in

fact been against Germany, such propaganda might not have been successful.

Although it has been estimated that the war was shortened by at least a year through the success of the propaganda it cannot be assumed that the effect was due solely to the cleverness of the propagandists. In addition to informative propaganda, much of the material was devoted to creating an atmosphere of despair with respect to the possibility of a German victory, and to creating hope for a satisfactory peaceful settlement of the war.

A strong feature of the later propaganda of the Allies was the idealism of Woodrow Wilson. This was effective both in building Allied morale and in breaking German morale through the hope which Wilson held out for welcoming a democratic Germany among the society of nations in a peace without victory.

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War Propaganda Wanted For Research Collection

PROPAGANDA wanted! If your morning mail contains a chain letter of propaganda for one of the warring nations or if you are handed a handbill or a leaflet, don't wad it up and throw it into the wastebasket.

It will be welcomed at the new "Propaganda and Promotion Archives" of the Carnegie Library, Washington and Lee University, Lexington, Virginia. A collection of such propaganda documents is being gathered there by Foster Mohrhardt, librarian of the university, and Prof. O. W. Riegel, director of the Lee Journalism Foundation at Washington and Lee. The archives will be available to present and future historians and students of propaganda methods.

"Libraries customarily receive a certain amount of such material," said Mr. Mohrhardt in requesting cooperation in building up his unusual collection, "but as far as I know, little systematic effort is made to collect all of the documents available. In addition to the more elaborate or formal pieces of propaganda, there are many types of fugitive material, such as posters, handbills, cartoons, chain letters and leaflets, which can only be preserved with the cooperation of persons who happen to receive them.

"We are particularly interested in the propaganda of foreign governments and of their agencies in this country. Persons who receive such material can perform an important service both to the university and to future historians and

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