



PROPAGANDA

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Introduction:

- It is a significant instrument of Foreign policy.
- It was used and misused throughout the history of INRs.
- It played a significant role in international politics.
- With the development of mass politics & increased role of people in politics propaganda played a major role.
- F. Policy has been greatly influenced by psychological factors & public opinion.
- The press, the radio, television and all means of communication has influenced the formation of policy.
- Propaganda was first employed by the Roman Catholic Church and then followed by the communists, Nazis, Fascists & others also.

Meaning & Definitions:

- Propaganda is a systematic attempt at influencing the minds and actions of the human beings.
- It is an attempt at persuading persons and nations to accept a specific point of view.
- “Propaganda refers to any attempt to persuade persons to accept a certain point of view or to take certain actions” – Morgenthau.

Meaning & definitions

- “Propaganda is the deliberate manipulation of symbols with purpose of affecting men’s ideas, attitudes or behaviour in a particular way.” – Pedelford and Lincoln.
- It is the art and science of controlling the mind of mankind by overwhelming insistence upon a point of view.(Munson)
- Propaganda and diplomacy are distinct in the sense that the former is aimed at the people while the latter involves the relationship with the government.

Meaning

- Propaganda means the following –
 1. It is an organized effort on the part of individual/ governments.
 2. It is the means through which the states fulfills its foreign policy goals/ objectives.
 3. There are various means and ways for propaganda depending on the nature of the problem.
 4. The purpose of propaganda is to make the community of people to accept their view point.
 5. Propaganda is neither moral nor immoral.
 6. Propaganda is concerned with beliefs and view-points dispensed by one nation state to another.

Propaganda and Education:

- Under propaganda only the brighter side of the picture will be presented.
- Education is an impartial or non-biased activity of presenting both the sides of the picture.
- Spreading of Marxism in capitalist countries is propaganda but advocacy of Marxism in communist countries is education.
- The Nazis and Fascists utilized propagandas to spread their ideology.
- Thus it is an essential element of national power aimed at changing the minds of the people.
- The person who makes propaganda is called propagandist and the person to whom it is directed is called propagandee.

Methods/Techniques of Propaganda:

- According to a study there are at least 77 techniques of propaganda.
- Palmer & Perkins has classified these various techniques under four heads, like
 1. Methods of Presentation,
 2. Techniques for gaining attention,
 3. Devices for gaining Response,
 4. Methods of gaining acceptance, etc.

I. Methods of Presentation:

- A state usually presents its view point to assert only its side of the picture.
- A propagandist state always present its argument in such a way as to prove his side of the case as just and valid, rational and righteous to pursue what it wants.
- It normally present only a partial truth and not the whole truth.
- Generally the evidence which is harmful to its interest is omitted.
- It may commit some deliberate omissions and distortion of truth.

Methods of presentation

- It may go to the extent of telling lies and may present fake documents.
- Even the reputed leaders some times resort false means to deceive others in order to carry on their propaganda.
- Even sometimes, fake incidents may be created for the sake of propaganda.
- By distorting the facts, Pakistan has successfully kept the Kashmir issue alive in the international form.
- Thus the effectiveness of propaganda depends not on the truth or falsehood but mainly on its ability to give the people what they are waiting for in terms of knowledge and action.

2. Techniques for gaining Attention:

- To be effective, propaganda must be in a position to draw the attention of the people and nations to whom it is directed.
- Issue of press-notes, protest speeches, official remarks, demands for apologies, requests, publication, declarations, etc. attract the attention of the foreign countries.
- Military parades, show of war potentialities, nuclear weapons, naval or air-force demonstrations are also used to attract the attention of nations.

Techniques for gaining attention

- Likewise, the visits of Heads of State, foreign ministers, other officials, cultural delegations, etc. also serve the purpose of gaining attention.
- Similarly the conduct of events like Olympics, Asiads, games and sports events will bring reputation to the country and serve the purpose of propaganda.
- Rendering assistance to other countries in times of distress is a more effective way of propaganda.
- The voice of America & BBC are conducting propaganda for USA & UK.

3. Devices for gaining response:

- Propaganda aims at kindling the basic emotions of people in order to get a response favourable to their values and attitudes.
- Many a times emotional appeals are made to rouse immediate response.
- Sensitive matters like religion, justice, liberty, self defense are often used to get right response from other nations.
- Slogans or catchy phrase could be employed to secure favourable response, e.g. “Do or die”, “No taxation without representation”, “Blood, sweat & tears”, etc.

Devices for gaining response

- Apart from slogans symbols are also effective in gaining response.
- E.g. the communists are associated with 'red' Hitler with 'Swastika' and so on.
- National Anthem, National Flag are also symbols which evokes strong emotions.
- Apart from the above, the national leaders like Mahatma Gandhi in India, Winston Churchill in UK, Stalin in USSR, Roosevelt in USA, are national symbols for gaining right response and emotions of nationalism.

4. Methods of gaining Acceptance:

- In order to gain acceptance with the masses the propagandist has to convince the people that he is their man – mass appeal.
- In politics propagandist usually resorts to exploiting more inclusive characteristics such as race and religion.
- Hitler's use of Aryan race & Pan Germanism is an example of such type of appeal.
- The Japanese used the slogan 'Asia for Asians' in order to appeal to common interests.
- One more approach used by the propagandist is to invoke higher sanction of God, justice and history.

Methods of gaining acceptance ...

- Propagandist also uses history to lend force to their arguments.
- Common religion & common racial ties are often used as instruments of propaganda.
- To gain the support of the Germans Hitler stressed the 'purity of the Aryan race'.
- The slogan 'Islam in danger' united the Arabs against Israel.

Limitations on Propaganda:

- One of the main limitations on the effectiveness of propaganda is the sharp competition for the attention, response and acceptance of those to whom it is directed.
- Propaganda efforts are followed by counterpropaganda.
- Many countries deals with counterpropaganda, e.g. the Russians portray the Americans as the 'capitalist imperialist war mongers of wall sheet'.

Limitations

- Propagandists often associate their opponents with something bad.
- E.g. the allies in the world war I referred to the Germans as 'Huns', the Russians have highlighted the unsolved Negro problems in the USA, etc.
- Thus, there is always a competition to restrict the effectiveness of propaganda.

Conclusion:

- Propaganda plays an important role in the national and international affairs.
- Propaganda is an important tool for the implementation of the objectives of foreign policy.
- Propaganda in itself is not good or bad or right or wrong or truth or lies but it is a means to achieve certain goals.
- It is significant as it aims to shape political attitudes or actions. In the words of Martin, 'the effectiveness of propaganda in the field of international politics cannot be ignored' .