

Presentation on propaganda



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Presentation on Propaganda OBJECTIVE. The objective of this presentation is to examine propaganda and the psychological effects it has had in regards to totalitarianism. and genocide in the Congo. In addition,

DEFINITION: According to the American Heritage Dictionary propaganda is "The systematic propagation of a doctrine or cause or of information reflecting the views and interests of those advocating such a doctrine or cause" (American Heritage Dictionary)

H EFFECTS OF PROPAGANDA. " Bad names have played a tremendously powerful role in the history of the world and in our own individual development. They have ruined reputations, stirred men and women to outstanding accomplishments, sent others to prison cells, and made men mad enough to enter battle and slaughter their fellowmen. They have been and are applied to other people, groups, gangs, tribes, colleges, political parties, neighborhoods, and states, sections of the country, nations, and races." (Institute for Propaganda Analysis, 1938)

EXAMPLES OF NAME CALLING AS PROPAGANDA: The most obvious type of name-calling involves bad names. For example, consider the following:

Commie

Fascist

Pig

Yuppie

Bum

Queer

Terrorist The Institute for Propaganda Analysis ()

DISCUSSION: Although name-calling could be interpreted as trivial, name-calling is the basis upon which many instances of [propaganda is based The

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premise behind the name-calling and the beliefs associated with these names is in most instances fueled by propaganda.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF PROPAGANDA IN RELATION TO

TOTALITARIANISM: Propaganda can evoke varying degrees of psychological effects that depend on interpretation of the propaganda as can be seen in the example involving names that we discussed earlier in the presentation. The psychological effects of propaganda in relation to totalitarianism are complex. It is important to remember that in relation to totalitarian propaganda works most successfully when it psychologically affects the masses. Ellul elaborates on that premise by pointing out " when propaganda is addressed to a crowd, it must touch each individual in that crowd, in that whole group. To be effective, it must give the impression of being personal, for we must never forget that the mass is composed of individuals, and is in fact nothing but assembled individuals. Actually, just because men are in a group, and therefore weakened, receptive, and in a state of psychological regression, they pretend all the more to be strong individuals." (1965) These psychological effects are even more significant when being utilized by a totalitarianism government.

PROPAGANDA AND GENOCIDE IN THE CONGO: Propaganda can be very powerful. This becomes obvious when examining the genocide in Rwanda. " At least half a million people perished in the Rwandan genocide," the report notes. " Perhaps as many as three quarters of the Tutsi population. At the same time, thousands of Hutu were slain because they opposed the killing campaign and the forces directing it." (Shah) After careful perusal of the genocide that took place the role that propaganda played is obvious. This genocide resulted from the deliberate choice of a modern elite to foster

hatred and fear to keep itself in power. This small, privileged group first set the majority against the minority to counter a growing political opposition within Rwanda. Then, faced with RPF success on the battlefield and at the negotiating table, these few powerholders transformed the strategy of ethnic division into genocide. They believed that the extermination campaign would restore the solidarity of the Hutu under their leadership and help them win the war, or at least improve their chances of negotiating a favorable peace. They seized control of the state and used its machinery and its authority to carry out the slaughter.(Barnyard)

EXAMPLES OF PROPAGANDA IN RWANDA: Various propaganda techniques were being used by Habyarimana's inner circle, such as setting up a radio station (" a potent source of power in a country that is 60 percent illiterate," Robbins notes (p. 272)) to denounce attempts at peace between the government and the RPF, while also inciting more hatred. " Acts of violence against Tutsis increased," as Robbins continues, " after the president of neighboring Burundi was killed in an attempted coup by Tutsi army officers. Hutus were incited to kill Tutsis, and the RPF responded by killing Hutus: some 50, 000 peasants were reported killed, slightly more Tutsis than Hutus."

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