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Weaponizing Public Opinion; Analyzing Propaganda Starting from WWII

Humans are manipulated from the moment they can consume media; It is the nature of the information age. Governments including those of China, Russia and the United States have long used media in attempts to manipulate public opinion; meanwhile Nongovernmental Organizations often utilize meticulously crafted advertising to do the same. However, "manipulation" in this context is not necessarily malicious; rather it is by definition emblematic of the manipulators' veiled intentions, motivations including profit, idealism, or segregation. The years leading up to World War II are an ideal starting point for analyzing these archetypes. At the time, propaganda was just beginning to take on a modern silhouette and new forms of broadcast media allowed its dissemination at an unprecedented rate. This examination of the past and present aims to show you that propaganda is neither good nor evil, but instead is a covert persuasive tool that has often found itself used against the common good.

The year 1938: Fear of propaganda gripped almost every industrialized society. The American public was watchful of any official stances taken by their government. Great Britain had operated under a self-imposed "No Propaganda" attitude in their communications with other countries, especially the United States (Cull). Elsewhere, propaganda campaigns were already openly (inasmuch as such things can be overt) launched and entrenched in the minds of the populations to which they were administered. The Third Reich had been ascendant in Germany for the previous half-decade and its Reich Ministry for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda

was an integral part of manipulating German public opinion (Herf). In Japan, propaganda was an everyday cornerstone of life and the population at large was often solicited to assist in formulating it (Kushner).

To examine how the tenets of wide-spread social conditioning were implemented and evolved over a period of close to a century, we will start by recalling Germany under Hitler's regime. The mental campaign there was waged through news media, as was often the case. Journals and newspapers of the time are regarded as an important historical record of such depictions. The Völkischer Beobachter publication, overseen by Hitler's administration, reached vast swathes of the European public and doubly so in Germany itself. Throughout research of the time, Propaganda from all major nations has accomplished one particular aim with brutal efficiency: creating an isolating sense of superiority in its target audience (Denn).

The Völkischer Beobachter and its analogous agencies performed that task with grave efficiency, and simultaneously created a victimized mentality in the public that was central to enabling an atmosphere wherein genocide could spawn. The combination of Aryan superiority concepts and perceived persecution at the hands of what author Jeffery Herf reports as the Nazi-created figurehead of "International Jewry" in his 2008 book *The Jewish Enemy: Nazi Propaganda During WWII and the Holocaust* fostered an environment where anti-Semitism could be radicalized to the point of genocide (1). Herf also made an interesting note in his studies of the academic debate as to whether the Nazi leadership actually believed their own propaganda or not (2-3).

Philosophical debate over how to define a propaganda campaign based on its creators' intentions and whether they believed what they ceaselessly repeated to their audience is a valuable factor to consider while you engage in this paper's analysis of media in modern times.

Keeping in mind that the Nazi propaganda machine did knowingly use media and culture to mislead and incense the its audience against other ethnicities and nations, that aim and execution cements propaganda as the techniques' proper nomenclature.

The Völkischer Beobachter's writers worked to foster an Aryan cultural identity that was easy to gather around and that, fueled by fear of their totalitarian state's enforcement, made the people it was used to program willing to defend and expand it. Cultural mainstays such as Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo and even Rembrandt, who was very much Danish and not German, were appropriated and whitewashed by articles that depicted them as being nigh-superhuman vanguards of Aryan creativity. In his 2012 book *Inhumanities: Nazi Interpretations of Western Culture*, David B. Denn references the now-widely known fact that Michelangelo was far from heterosexual and how it was simply glossed over in Nazi caricatures of the artist (19). The appropriation of cultures and icons formed a keystone in Nazi propaganda that would continue in any campaigns that were inspired by it.

In an asymmetrical execution of Germany's protocol, Japan had been fine-tuning the engine of propaganda in their country for decades before WWII absorbed the rest of the world. Barak Kushner, recognized expert on Eastern Hemisphere WWII propaganda, discusses Japan during WWII in his book *The Thought War*. The appropriation of other ethnic identities to make propaganda palatable to the Japanese public was more secondary to the portrayal of an ascendant Japanese race. In this case however, it was no coincidence that Japan was executing similar media manipulation campaigns to those that history would recollect more completely. Indeed, propaganda in Japan was a science according to modern historians, an artform which was honed through practice and the dissection of other countries' strategy in similar pursuits (19).

In another grim reflection, this one of America's later wartime media protocol, Japan's government often utilized privatized propaganda . The concept of social conditioning was viewed as an important nationalist protocol rather than the subversive and aggressive breach of social contract and trust as we would see it as today (Kushner 25). Cash prizes and public recognition were often offered as incentives during competitions where the populace would submit "homegrown" propaganda. Effectively, "crowdsourcing" content was an example of uniting a populace around the process of propagandizing, something that has usually been accomplished by the actual content that audience consumed.

In a slightly ironic microcosm of how propaganda often divides populations and insinuates that one group is superior to another, Japan's own media agencies jockeyed for supremacy as components of their nation's media engine. Each utilized their own style of populace manipulation: Kushner highlights how British WWI propaganda was a subject of particular study to Japanese media campaigns. Japan made a slight departure from Britain's style of wartime propaganda. Japan's twist on the strategy emphasized the emotional energy placed into propaganda's presentation and how powerful an emotional reaction it could elicit in viewers. More specifically, government agencies called on their civilian influencers to submit scripts for plays, song lyrics, and more as Japan's war efforts escalated on multiple fronts (30).

According to Philip Morgan, author of the 2007 book *The Fall of Mussolini*, no such nuance was present in the wartime propaganda produced by Italy's fascist government. Morgan directly quotes one of Mussolini's propaganda speeches; "Yes, you workers, this is, above all, your war, as well as the war of all Italians . . . for the glory of your country and for the well-being of the working masses." Morgan describes Mussolini's decision to enter WWII as being

akin to a flame that would temper the Italian peoples' cultural identity and will to fight to empower a fascist regime (39).

Morgan goes on to explain Mussolini's view was largely due to the dictator's brutally abstracted view of public opinion and how the state of the war effort affected it. Nevertheless, Mussolini's verbiage is almost archetypal in its alignment with other countries' strategies of uniting their populace. However, Mussolini's strategy seems to be one of the fringe cases where very little hidden intention accompanied the propaganda and what it was meant to accomplish. A counter to that point of view would be that a desire to engender support for a war is a veiled intention in itself, but dissection of Mussolini's exact philosophy on these matters is largely academic due to the grey area it occupies.

Setting aside the intentions of the propagandist for a moment, superior cultural or ethnic identity to be protected forms one of propaganda's capstone desired outcomes. Bandwagoning is the second of the tenets that transform an artifice of an information campaign into propaganda, and make it more accessible as a destructive tool against the common good. A dissociation from other identities that artificially creates separation is a recurring theme throughout history and in the present day.

The examples so far have demonstrated instances and applications of domestic propaganda, but what about propaganda used internationally? For that, we can turn to the Allied Nations and specifically Great Britain's "No Propaganda" policy and how it fell apart in the span of a few years. In the decades following WWI, the entire world had witnessed firsthand wartime propaganda from their home nations, and counter-propaganda from their neighbors, allies, and enemies (Cull, Kushner).

National avoidance of biased information campaigns was extremely influential and shaped governmental policies throughout the early 20th century and onward. International recoil caused by those past manipulations is highlighted in the policy of post WWI-Britain and in books which catalogue it like Nicholas John Cull's 1995 *Selling War: The British Propaganda Campaign Against American 'Neutrality' in WWII*. Cull is influenced by a recurring theme in research of the period's propaganda: a bad reputation that Britain had gained during WWI for its unscrupulous use of wartime reporting. Journalists and government agencies reportedly used brutal photography and forged evidence of war crimes to incite public ire and garner support for a misrepresented war effort. Upon widespread analysis of these tactics a few decades later, western fear of misinformation campaigns grew exponentially. Britain had become the global paragon of manipulating information to elicit responses and build support for given causes.

You will later see how the U.S. government subverted public aversion to government deceit by creating independent agencies that could modify public opinion on their behalf from the private sector. Britain however, kept their international communications centralized to the government (Cull). As a reaction to the damaged view the world had gained in response to Britain's past media manipulation, the country elected to take on a "No Propaganda" stance in their interactions with the populations of their allies. This stance was maintained until the threat of ongoing Japanese expansion and the rise of the Third Reich spurred Britain to garner greater support in the war effort, specifically from the United States.

Cull recalls the British Library of Information, a small New York bureau through which much of Americans' insight into British life and culture flowed at the time (11). The institution was originally intended to provide a passive stream of information but this sentiment, and that of "No Propaganda," would swiftly dissolve under the growing tensions on the Eurasian continents.

Ironically, The German Library of Information and the German Railroads Information Office were simultaneously disseminating propaganda that encouraged American *neutrality* in the war from headquarters also in New York; an almost perfect reversal (MacDonnell 123).

Why was it so contentious to draw America into the war? Cull's perspective is that the United States were entrenched in neutrality at the time on both political and public levels. The majority of any overt ill-will harbored towards Great Britain was likely centered in diaspora communities who had personally experienced strife at the hands of England. For instance, Irish and German immigrant groups in America were certainly less likely to express sympathy toward Britain thanks to nationalist schisms. Farmers in the American interior are also cited as being acutely aware of British support for railroad construction that fractured their agricultural livelihoods.

Cull notes that regardless of overt pushback, "A Gallup poll of April 1937 found that 55 percent of American voters considered Britain to be the 'European country' they 'liked best'; the closest runnerup was France, with a meager 11 percent" (7). Britain's greatest obstacle to attaining powerful support for their oncoming war effort (other than their self-imposed avoidance of propaganda) would be America's own neutral entrenchment after the previous World War, more than specific resistance toward Britain. Regardless, even as far forward as 1939, Britain still refused to propagandize on a wide scale in America or twist any war narratives to further their position. Propagandists were only to provide information through establishments like the British Library of Information, and only when requested by visitors.

The neutral sentiment would not be long-lived.

In the first half of 1941, a crack appeared in the United States' isolationist armor. A sympathetic Franklin Delano Roosevelt pledged financial and logistical support of the Allied war effort and Congress drafted legislation to match. The move was the trigger Britain needed to fully unleash their propaganda aimed at the United States. The two nations' leaders formed political connections and the fresh interactions between the United States and Britain shifted the "No Propaganda" policy into an effectively indefensible light. While Britain's emissaries might have alienated the American public through cultural gaffes and an air of superiority, public opinion was shifting (Cull). By mid-1941 British journalists released imagery of atrocities committed by the Nazi forces invading Poland to the public. With the violence visible to all, the creation of an Allied identity around which to rally against Hitler's forces was well underway.

It is inadequate to refer to the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor as the straw that broke the camel's back, but the sentiment is not far afield. Specifically, Cull notes that British propagandists operated under a strategy of pushing United States public opinion just far enough away from isolationism that an inevitable act of war from an Axis nation would perfectly tip the scales in favor of entering WWII. Once the Hawaiian harbor was assaulted, pre-war British international propaganda could tidily fade into the rear-view mirror, and a new propaganda campaign could begin in the United States: one by the people, for the people.

American Propaganda during the war looked somewhat dissimilar to the pre-war campaigns analyzed thus far. The US Government employed no Gestapo or Japanese Special Higher Police (referred to as "Thought Police" at the time) to administrate propaganda directly. FDR's administration and the British propagandists were pressuring American public opinion from multiple angles throughout 1941. Thomas Howell reinforces how leery the American public was of propaganda being used on them after seeing its results in totalitarian regimes and

their opposition alike at the dawn of the 20th century, in his 2000 article for the *Historian*: "The Writer's War Board: Domestic Propaganda In World War II."

Just as Britain's "No Propaganda" policy fell by the wayside, the United States Government would nevertheless adopt its own official "Strategy of Truth." As Howell himself put it, "Public support [for the war] was considered so vital… that means were found to circumvent the government's official position."

Learning from other countries' brazen usage of journalism and media, FDR's administration elected to create an agency in the private sector that was less restrained by a policy of directly reporting unbiased facts. The Writer's War Board was thus born. Howell reveals that the agency's members aimed to gather writers and wordsmiths of all trades who could mobilize propaganda to audiences that they had already built up. The Writer's War Board was not technically part of the United State Government and so could operate more freely and publish content to vast swathes of Americans that was not beholden to the federal "Strategy of Truth."

Howell quotes the meeting minutes of the Writers' War Board itself to describe how the US Government's unique relationship with the board worked: "[T]here was no need for government censorship, as the board strongly supported the Roosevelt administration and, as a matter of policy, never criticized President Roosevelt or any government agency. It wholeheartedly agreed with the [Office of War Information] mandate that 'your program should be the furtherance in every way at your command of government programs designed to help with the war.'"

The Writers' War Board was certainly not innocent of similar identity politics and manipulation to other propaganda campaigns like that of Britain's previously and even to certain angles the Axis powers used. Content disseminated abroad and to target audiences in the United States often leveraged grave racism towards the ethnicities of Axis countries, including Germans and the Japanese. Specifically, the Writers' War Board used abstractions in media to make certain groups easier to hate for their audiences. The most notable instance of this was the lack of distinction drawn in WWB media between the people of Germany at large and the Nazi regime which lorded over them (Howell). The two were effectively described as being one in the same, an inaccuracy that was by no means accidental. Recall how propaganda is often used to draw stark lines between groups to make each more defensive and isolated.

The Board also happened to be skilled multitaskers. Their racially charged propaganda regarding foreigners would become just as prevalent as their building of domestic nationalism. Howell elaborates on the timing and format of this dualistic style implemented when anti-German sentiment was especially prominent in the minds of the WWB in his article: "[s]omewhat paradoxically, while the WWB condemned the entire German nation, it also initiated a campaign for racial tolerance at home. Although occasional efforts against racism had appeared in the board's own house-generated editorials and war scripts, this area was not emphasized until 1944." In a nation of immigrants, you cannot rely on building a racial identity that appeals to every member of your audience.

Despite its widespread influence and ties to a sympathetic government, the Writers' War Board would find itself becoming an anachronism in the latter years of World War II. It would partially evolve into a new format after the war's conclusion, when the public became intolerant of daily wartime propaganda. Evolution of public opinion necessitated a change into the Writers'

Board for World Government, in the hopes of staying relevant (Howell). This change in format is reflective of how propaganda itself changes intensity and style depending on the context in which it is produced and the mindset of its target audience.

Donald Pease blends all of these propaganda elements together in his 2010 autobiography of none other than Theodor Seuss Geisel, whose subject is better known by his pen name "Dr. Seuss." Pease recalls Geisel and his family had weathered similar anti-German sentiment during and after WWI, and that the famed author and illustrator had not forgiven it by the advent of WWII (62). Also mirroring Britain's dissatisfaction with the American public's neutral stance toward the war, Geisel set to work utilizing his substantial influence to spread propaganda portraying America's neutrality as negligent and cold toward the plight of the outside world.

The artist would even describe such isolationist schools of thought as directly subordinate to the Nazis, which Pease theorizes was likely due to the public ill will toward all German-Americans individuals like Charles Lindbergh could engender, through sympathy for the Third Reich (Pease 63). Geisel worked hard to distance himself from racist stances he previously had taken in his career. Nevertheless, in a perfect microcosm of American public opinion and propaganda's structure at the time, he preached an end to segregation and the rebuking of antisemitism at home while simultaneously publishing frequent racist caricatures of the Japanese people. At the age of 39, Geisel joined the military, where his talents would be utilized differently until his return after the war. Once again, we see powerful emotions manipulated to form a nationist identity and mobilize it in the U.S., while denigrating other races and nations and encouraging this collective identity to go on the offensive against them.

Linking these sentiments fully, the last Allied nation's propaganda to be discussed here is that utilized in Russia. Author Carol Berkhoff highlights important sentiments in Stalin's

creation of WWII propaganda in her 2012 book, *Motherland in Danger*. She highlights several points that seem reflective of other nations that you have analyzed in this paper. The first point is Russia's lack of distinction made between the Third Reich's administration and the German population generally, reminiscent of that which blighted Theodore Geisel's youth, as well as similar obfuscation committed by the Writer's War Board in the United States (167). Creating a singular Germanic enemy to hate, Berkhoff claims, was a definite reversal of more sympathetic stances taken previously by Stalin's regime and certainly cognitively dissonant for the Russian lower class, who are said to have seen a chance for freedom from Stalin's administration if Germany's war effort succeeded.

An abstraction of how Russia's people (or any of the populations this paper discusses) were meant to view Germans begins what Berkhoff entitles "hate propaganda;" an apt description which makes itself known across research regardless of the nation (167). Some propaganda is internal, meant to tug at nationalist and even racist heartstrings. It stirs the pride in shared identity in the audience; camaraderie positioned to surpass opposing forces. Elsewhere though, lies hate propaganda: wherein the logical fallacy of bandwagoning becomes weaponized against a particular individual, group, or groups. Hate propaganda idealizes eradication of an enemy, internal propaganda encourages strength in numbers: Neither sentiment is mutually exclusive and as you have now seen, the two are often used in conjunction.

Russia, having already been discussed and its WWII-era information campaigns analyzed in this paper, forms a nation that can easily be followed forward to the next epoch wherein propaganda proliferated: the Cold War. On Russia's side one particular archetypal shift in strategy becomes evident: manipulating and brightening other countries' perceptions of the Soviet nation. Specifically, authors Richard Lentz and Karla Gower highlight how important

outward image was to the Soviet Union in the 2010 book *The Opinions of Mankind : Racial Issues, Press, and Propaganda in the Cold War*. The authors directly quote a Soviet memo to Moscow, sent soon after the end of WWII: "Anglo-Americans have not curtailed but enhanced their propaganda apparatus, retargeting it to the ideological struggle against the USSR" (18).

The Soviets' sensitivity to public opinion turning against them shows the mentality that put the Soviet propaganda machine on the defensive for most of the 20th century, and set the stage for global media campaigns shifting their focus. Throughout the civil rights movement in the United States, Soviet propaganda would seize upon racial divides in the U.S., using them as ammunition to highlight insincerity and moral failings of the country in which they took place. Portrayals of the U.S. and its hypocrisy were intended to bolster perceptions of Russia directly and indirectly. The almost simultaneous launch of Sputnik in Russia and the complete disaster that blighted Little Rock Arkansas during the desegregation of the school there meant that Russian propaganda had the perfect comparison. Societal highs and lows portrayed stark lines between Soviet intellectual achievement and the intrinsic racial hatred of their American rival (Lentz and Gower 94). Therein, lies the telltale shadow of a more nuanced and interconnected world producing and disseminating increasingly complex propaganda at a faster rate.

In their 2010 volume of essays *Pressing the fight: Print, Propaganda, and the Cold War*, Catherine Turner and Greg Barsiel collect unique insights that continue to portray Cold War propaganda's elegant additional shift of form, from primarily inflammatory to more introspective, after WWII. The Sword of Damocles that was Mutually Assured Destruction likely made any notions of acts that could turn the war hot unappealing to the public. Edward Brunner's essay in *Pressing the Fight,* "How Can I Tell My Grandchildren What I Did in the

Cold War," references an almost perfect example of period propaganda incarnate: newspaper comic strip artist Milton Caniff (169).

By the end of WWII, Caniff was already producing the widely syndicated propaganda comic strips *Male Call* and *Terry and the Pirates*, both of which had earned him prestige beyond compare in the industry. However, as his career progressed and a nuclear arms race escalated, his art in the style of previous years, I.E. outwardly aggressive towards America's opponents, became less relevant. Caniff modified the messages in his art to produce a consolidation of domestic identities instead of a readiness to see enemy forces met in righteous battle.

On a macro level, stylistic changes in both countries were likely due to the notion that there would be no battlefields on which to meet if nuclear superpowers went to war, only craters. So you see, as the context and subject matter of an information campaign change, so too will the content therein shift from one side of the spectrum to the other. In the case of capitalist and communist ideologies colliding, propaganda went from stoking the flames of the public's hunger for war against the enemy to building camaraderie at home and creating a strong national identity, in the span of a few decades. In other words, it slid from the side of the spectrum that vilified the external enemy to the end that idolized the domestic ideal.

Portraying a particular cultural, nationalist or ethnic identity as superior has certainly made itself prominent in propaganda throughout history, but what about the subtle intonations and cultural modification of the modern day? Peacetime and the Information Age have their own unique execution of bombastic wartime identity politics. In order to explore this topic in a satisfactory way, the time has come to more precisely define propaganda's outer reaches and the point beyond which it becomes detrimental toward the best interests of the greater population.

Before moving further forward in time and granularity of philosophical analysis, a disclaimer is prudent. At no point in this paper is an attempt made to portray the atrocities committed in WWII and beyond as any more or less than what they very much are. For the sake of academics and applying knowledge gleaned from the past to society's future, a certain ironic dissociation between tactic and tactician, propaganda and propagandist, must be made. With that said, the analysis can progress to the modern day.

Marshall Soules examines the boundaries of propaganda in his 2015 book, *Media, Persuasion, and Propaganda*, when he quotes author Joseph Nye's concept of "soft power" persuasion being used by governments instead of aggressive action to bring a population or audience into line (120). Physical force in this case would be an example of "Harder Power." Soules describes the Janus-like relationship between large-scale persuasion and propaganda. The line between the two is crossed when, first, the intent behind the information campaign is to persuade the populace of something without paying heed to the truth or full complexity of the given subject and secondly, when the propagandists' intent to manipulate the audience is hidden behind a facade of altruism or red herring logical fallacies.

Soules also highlights the unique effects that living in an age of information has on the human psyche, and how overloading the mind with advertising imagery could theoretically be used to break down the audiences' resistance to external suggestion. In other words, exponential growth of interaction through technology and economics could enable (on multiple levels) manipulating a population over time. Nevertheless, propaganda and mass suggestion have been used as critical motivators toward societal progress throughout history, as in mobilizing efforts against forces committing atrocities. Neither "soft power," and persuasion over a population, nor

subversive propaganda itself are intrinsically evil and both have been used for positive purposes, though the latter is by definition more predisposed to institutional abuse.

Another telltale mark of a propaganda message has survived even into the modern day, and it can be found in the advertising of corporations even more easily than the missives of a nation's government. In her 2012 book *Propaganda in the Helping Industries*, Eileen Gambrill, Berkley Professor and noted author on critical thinking skills, codifies a propagandists' tactic of misrepresenting or outright omitting evidence and contextual information in claims and content they present to customers (23). Her writing shows that direct misinformation is the least subtle of misinformation strategies, which makes it the most identifiable to critics.

Kate Keller, writer for the Smithsonian Magazine, analyzes a possible modern day abuse of propaganda in her article for the *Smithsonian*, "Ads for E-Cigarettes Today Hearken Back to the Banned Tricks of Big Tobacco." She claims that Juul specifically targets advertising toward youthful audiences with whom the e-cigarettes or "vapes" they produce are popular, despite the company's official statements to the contrary. If the claims of unscrupulous marketing are born out by continued scrutiny on Juul and businesses like it, these tactics would be an example of hidden motives of continued profit, towards a target audience in youths, supported by not only a classic bandwagoning portrayal of their products as "cool" or "hip," but even subversive usage of subconscious manipulation tactics like fruity flavors. This manipulation would essentially amount to a new propaganda perhaps even surpassing its predecessors in complexity .

How is the population affected when they are swept up in the modern "media maelstrom" (Soules 1)? Propaganda like that which is utilized in unscrupulous marketing, war profiteering, or political pandering, needs an audience to influence. Critical analysis of claims is dangerously necessary, now more than ever in an era defined by rapidly shifting data sets.

Cognitive dissonance is the human mind's fractured reaction when viewing evidence that directly contradicts a belief it previously held to be true. It has been used as a tool for centuries to keep audiences averse to new ideas, but the sensation should further spur audiences forward to reconsider every tenet they hold to be true.

Because of proclivity towards abuse and the tenet that propaganda is partially defined by speakers hiding their true motivations from the audience, there is a case to be made that propaganda is intrinsically malicious. Consider for a moment a car driven by bank robbers speeding away from the scene of their latest violent crime. The car itself is not evil, though people do use it to enable their own malicious deeds. However, the ambulance dispatched to the robbed bank is not intrinsically moral either. Years of honing the inner workings of both vehicles has made them uniquely capable of enabling constructive or vicious behaviors through their functionality.

It is no coincidence in the motor vehicle metaphor that the mechanical subjects are ubiquitous in our world, because streams of information that carry propaganda are even more so. Grasping how widespread both facets of the analogy have become provides a new way to conceptualize propaganda: nothing more or less than a vehicle which can be artfully piloted to manipulate the general public opinion. No situation shown in propaganda is black and white, though it has been close in the past, and that is why propaganda's use in and of itself can never truly be ascribed a moral ethos.

Such moral detachment obviously does not apply to those utilizing propaganda as a vehicle. Altruistic and nefarious campaigns alike find an ally in it. However, neither have claim to the rhetorical techniques and misrepresented intentions behind its use. As discussed, propaganda has been very easy to mobilize for reprehensible purposes, but that does not make it

entirely obsolete in civilized and balanced society. For better or worse, the primarily capitalistic society we call home has absorbed propaganda into its fabric in such a way that it is unlikely to ever be fully extricated.

Therefore, it becomes the responsibility of citizens and voters to understand how appeals to pathos and emotionally based value claims can and are usually used against them with good intentions, and to question them regardless. In turn, this clause in the social contract charges policy makers and role-models of any kind with the lofty goal of communicating their veiled intentions with tact and fair consideration. There is an unspoken trust in this global acceptance of distrust. Propaganda is neither good nor evil, but instead is a covert tool for myriad actors and shows no signs of weakening. The future will be full of lies told for every reason under the sun; the key will be separating those which serve only the interests of their speakers from those which are aligned with the greater good.

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