

How do you view Propaganda?



or



Please consider ... (1)

“The conscious and intelligent manipulation of the organized habits and opinions of the masses is an important element in democratic society. Those who manipulate this unseen mechanism of society constitute an invisible government which is the true ruling power of our country.”

continued ...

Please consider ... (2)

“Whatever attitude one chooses to take toward this condition, it remains a fact that in almost every act of our daily lives, whether in the sphere of politics or business, in our social conduct or our ethical thinking, we are dominated by the relatively small number of persons ... who understand the mental processes and social patterns of the masses. It is they who pull the wires which control the public mind, who harness old social forces and contrive new ways to bind and guide the world.”

continued ...

Please consider ... (3)

"In theory, every citizen makes up his mind on public questions and matters of private conduct. In practice, if all men had to study for themselves the ... data involved in every question, they would find it impossible to come to a conclusion about anything. We have voluntarily agreed to let an invisible government sift the data and [prioritize] the issues so that our field of choice shall be narrowed to practical proportions. From our leaders, and the media they use to reach the public, we accept the evidence and the demarcation of issues bearing upon public questions; ... we accept a standardized code of social conduct to which we conform most of the time." *continued ...*

Please consider ... (4)

"To avoid such confusion, society consents to have its choice narrowed to ideas and objects brought to its attention through **propaganda** of all kinds. There is consequently a vast and continuous effort going on to capture our minds in the interest of some policy or commodity or idea.

"It might be better to have, instead of **propaganda** and special pleading, committees of wise men who would choose our rulers, dictate our conduct, private and public, and decide upon the best types of clothes for us to wear and the best kinds of food for us to eat." *continued ...*

Please consider ... (5)

“But we have chosen the opposite method, that of open competition. We must find a way to make free competition function with reasonable smoothness. To achieve this society has consented to permit free competition to be organized by leadership and **propaganda.**”

continued ...

Please consider ... (6)

Some of the phenomena of this process are criticized—the manipulation of news, the inflation of personality, and the general ballyhoo by which politicians and commercial products and social ideas are brought to the consciousness of the masses. The instruments by which public opinion is organized and focused may be misused. But such organization and focusing are necessary to orderly life.

Please consider ... (7)

"This invisible, intertwining structure of groupings and associations is the mechanism by which democracy has organized its group mind and simplified its mass thinking. To deplore the existence of such a mechanism is to ask for a society such as never was and never will be. To admit that it exists, but expect that it shall not be used, is unreasonable."

continued ...

Please consider ... (8)

“It has been found possible to mold the mind of the masses so that they will throw their newly gained strength in the desired direction. In the present structure of society, this practice is inevitable. Whatever of social importance is done today, whether in politics, finance, manufacture, agriculture, charity, education, or other fields, must be done with the help of **propaganda**.”

“**Propaganda** is the executive arm of the invisible government.”

continued ...

Please consider ... (9)

"I am aware that the word 'propaganda' carries to many minds an unpleasant connotation. Yet whether, in any instance, propaganda is good or bad depends upon the merit of the cause urged, and the correctness of the information published.

"In itself, the word 'propaganda' has certain technical meanings which, like most things in this world, are 'neither good nor bad but custom makes them so.'"

continued ...

Please consider ... (10)

" 'Propaganda' in its proper meaning is a perfectly wholesome word, of honest parentage, and with an honorable history. The fact that it should today be carrying a sinister meaning merely shows how much of the child remains in the average adult."

These excerpts come from ...

- ▶ *Propaganda*, published in 1928
- ▶ The author?

Edward L. Bernays

“the Father of Public Relations”