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PROPAGANDA BY REDEFINITION OF WORDS

A long term propaganda technique used by socialists (Communists and Nazis alike) is of interest to PR practitioners. I know of no place it is mentioned in PR literature. But the data had verbal circulation in intelligence circles and is in constant current use.

The trick is—WORDS ARE REDEFINED TO MEAN SOMETHING ELSE TO THE ADVANTAGE OF THE PROPAGANDIST.

A prime example is the word CAPITALIST. Once it meant "one who makes his income from the interest of loaning money to others". That is still the definition in economics. Through propaganda redefinition a capitalist became a person of wealth who invested in *business* (making him an owner, not a banker) and currently is someone who exploits others, urges war and stamps on workers! In short the word is changing in meaning by the efforts of those who are trying to own everything in the country under the guise of being the workers' friend. Totalitarian socialism must eradicate the private owner in order to grab the property for themselves. Hence, an intense concentration on redefining the word "Capitalist" and "Capitalism".

Many instances of this exist. They are not "natural" changes in language. They are propaganda changes, carefully planned and campaigned in order to obtain a public opinion advantage for the group doing the propaganda.

Given enough repetition of the redefinition public opinion can be altered by altering the meaning of a word.

The technique is good or bad depending on the ultimate objective of the propagandist.

"Psychiatry" and "psychiatrist" are easily redefined to mean "an anti-social enemy of the people". This takes the kill crazy psychiatrist off the preferred list of professions. This is a good use of the technique as for a century the psychiatrist has been setting an all time record for inhumanity to man.

The redefinition of words is done by associating different emotions and symbols with the word than were intended.

The American Medical Association and the National Association for Mental Health in England and South Africa and the "British Psychological Association" in Australia have been working very hard to redefine Scientology in the public mind.

Two things occur because of this—the Scientologists are redefining "doctor", "psychiatry" and "psychology" to mean "undesirable anti-social elements" and are trying to stabilize the actual meaning of "Scientology".

The AMA has even gotten US dictionaries to redefine "Dianetics" as a "pseudo-science from Science Fiction".

Fortunately the public does not respect and is not responding to Mass news

media. Mass news media believes it steers public opinion, but in actual fact can get a reverse effect.

“The capitalistic AMA is seeking to deny the people the benefits of new discoveries such as Scientology because it would eradicate the great profits the AMA makes from the psychosomatic illnesses of the people,” would be a statement reversing the reversal of meaning. One has to find, pinpoint and denounce the propagandists to make headway against such an effort of redefinition. One brands the propagandist and blows the effort to redefine, using a steady standard PR campaign to do so.

One can also use redefinition by exposing the effort to redefine.

A case in point is the word “Psychology”.

Webster’s International Dictionary of the English Language—1829 defines “Psychology: A discourse or treatise on the human soul; the doctrine of the nature and properties of the soul.”

Webster’s High School Dictionary—1892 “Psychology: The powers and function of the soul.”

Merriam Webster’s 3rd International Dictionary—1961 “Psychology: the science of mind or mental phenomena or activities; the study of the biological organism (as man) and the physical and social environment.”

Somewhere along the way, Man lost his soul!

We pinpoint when and we find Professor Wundt, 1879, being urged by Bismarck at the period of Germany’s greatest militarism, trying to get a philosophy that will get his soldiers to kill men. And we find Hegel, the “great” German philosopher, the idol of super-socialists, stressing that WAR is VITAL to the mental health of people.

Out of this we can redefine modern psychology as a German military system used to condition men for war and subsidized in American and other universities at the time the government was having trouble with the draft. A reasonable discourse on why “they” had to push psychology would of course be a way of redefining an already redefined word, “Psychology”.

The way to redefine a word is to get the new *definition* repeated as often as possible.

Thus it is necessary to redefine medicine, psychiatry and psychology downward and define Dianetics and Scientology upwards.

This, so far as words are concerned, is the public opinion battle for belief in *your* definitions, and not those of the opposition.

A consistent, repeated effort is the key to any success with this technique of propaganda.

One must know how to do it.

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