*Essay 3 - Propaganda Campaign against the Insurgents of Afghanistan*

In order for our government to change the Afghanis’ opinion of the United States, some form of propaganda must be used to lead the Afghani citizens into believing that the United States of America can bring peace, resources, and understanding to their nation. Appealing to the needs and desires of the Afghani people is an extremely important theme to stress in the use of propaganda. Giving them what they want gives them an incentive to trust or at least work with the United States. There are many things that the Afghani people could want out of an agreement with the United States. It’s fair to say that the majority of the Afghani population longs for a stable government, a stable region to live in, and a stable relationship between their country and the United States.

The discussion could end there, but we cannot forget that the United States of America must also get what it wants out of the deal. We also want a stable, most likely democratic government, as well as peace and stability in the Middle Eastern region, and a government that cooperates with us. By determining the wants of the two parties, we can establish a basis for the propaganda that we wish to use to encourage Afghanistan to accept the changes that we would attempt to make in their nation.

This theme of compliance between parties can be applied to the matter of the various Afghan insurgency groups. It is somewhat difficult to determine what the insurgents want because different insurgent groups are fighting for different reasons. These groups are most likely interested in survival, keeping the Afghan population ignorant, having a voice in the legislative and judicial aspects of government, and freedom of religious practice. They may also want autonomy and freedom from the U.S. and its military as well as other foreign powers and cultures.

After determining the wants of both sides, we may now determine what must be done in order to win the hearts and minds of the Afghani people. Of the several types of propaganda at our disposal to convey our message, the best options in this case would be the card stacking, transfer, and glittering generality techniques.  We would spread this propaganda through media such as television, radio, and the internet. These three forms of media would allow us to broadcast our propaganda in ways such that the majority of the Afghani population would be aware of and interested in our plans to help their nation. If we got a hold of their attention, we could persuade them into agreeing with our agendas using the created propaganda, thus creating an environment in which both parties would be satisfied and any conflicts would be resolved.

Indeed, this strategy of creating positive relationships using propaganda to win the hearts and minds of the people can be instrumental in maintaining peace and stability between two nations.

*Samples*

**Glittering Generality –** This sample previews the technique of glittering generality. In this case the U.S.A. might try to make itself look good or might try to make others look exceedingly good in order to affect peoples’ perceptions of those affected. By doing this, the U.S.A. could affectively change the opinions of a significant amount of people, allowing them to pursue their goals further.

**Transfer** – Using the transfer technique, the United States could cite an occasion in the past in which a high ranking government official supported or endorsed an American Value. If they couldn’t cite an occasion, they could create an occasion, and use this to sway the people of Afghanistan into believing that since that person agreed with an American value; they must be supported or endorsed.

**Card Stacking –** The U.S. could purposely only present one side of a large argument or controversial topic to mislead the Afghani people into believing that the U.S. was the side to be on. Then the people would want to deal or negotiate with the U.S. and the U.S. would get what they wanted. For example, in order to get the insurgents to lay down their weapons, the U.S. could show the insurgents what they could be if only they would substitute their way of living for a civilized, organized government. Although there are flaws in organized government, we could only present the pros of deciding to create one and not the cons. This would encourage the insurgents to engage in negotiations with us, the U.S.A.

Additionally, providing social services such as hospitals and schools for the Afghani people could influence them and their decision to work with us. This could be a way to win the hearts and the minds of the people.[[1]](#footnote-1)

1. This isn’t necessarily included under one of the propaganda techniques, but it is a “sample piece” or way of winning the hearts and minds of the people. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)