

When you attack the government....

you are only hurting YOURSELVES

Regarding the request by President Obama to develop a propaganda campaign that would convince insurgents in Afghanistan to lay down their weapons and cease the battle with the government, we have prepared the following report. The chosen media for this campaign will be handbills that will be dropped by U.S. forces over Afghanistan. In this campaign, we will stress the theme safety, specifically as it relates to innocent victims of insurgent attacks. To ensure that our message persuades both insurgents and civilians, we will use the propaganda technique known as transfer

The medium used in this propaganda campaign will be handbills dropped by United States aircraft. These handbills will be distributed over densely populated areas. This method was utilized by the Germans in World War II.[[1]](#endnote-2) The Germans dropped handbills over large cities in Russian territory attempting to convince the Russians to not fight against the Germans, but to join them against the United States.

The main theme of this propaganda campaign is “safety for the innocent”. We will attempt to elicit an emotional response from the recipients. The intended emotional response would be sympathy for the innocent bystanders harmed due to collateral damage. According to the Afghanistan International Security Assistance Force, a NATO organization, less than a month ago, eleven civilians were killed or wounded in an insurgent attack just east of Afghanistan. A group of Taliban insurgents fired four rounds of mortar in a civilian populated area.[[2]](#endnote-3) This attack was intended to weaken the link between the Afghan people and their security forces. We must stress in this campaign that these kinds of attacks do not aid in their main objective, but only weakens them in the eyes of their fellow Afghani.

There are, of course, many techniques that can be used in a propaganda campaign. Given that we are trying to appeal to the emotions of the recipients it is believed that “transfer” would be the most successful persuasive technique to use in this situation. The Science of Modern Propaganda states that transfer is one of the first seven propaganda techniques listed by the Institute for Propaganda Analysis[[3]](#endnote-4). This technique links two objects together in the mind of the receiver. This can be used negatively, as in the above case; it can also be used positively. By using transfer, there will be a link created in the mind of the Afghani between the image of the child to the idea of innocence and vulnerability. The image will then symbolize the lives of the innocent that have been lost due to the insurgents.

In conclusion, it is believed that this campaign will be extremely effective. The appeal to emotion should generate a positive response from the intended recipients, due to the fact that the safety of children elicits an almost universal parental response.

1. The Center for the Holocaust, Diversity, and Human Understanding <http://www.chdhu.org/collections.asp> Last Visited: May 2011 [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
2. The International Security Assistance Force [www.isaf.nato.int](http://www.isaf.nato.int) Last Visited: May, 2011 [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
3. The Science of Modern Propaganda. <http://www.propaganda101.com/> Last Visited: May, 2011. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)