

## COLUMN LEFT

### Propaganda Rhetoric & Spin

By Charlie Ara, President Emeritus,  
Hubert Humphrey Democratic Club

I first heard the word *propaganda* when I was a little boy (I am still little but approaching 75). My impression as a young child was that propaganda was an evil word, much like the word *cancer* was in those days. In general, the word propaganda referred to a method of exaggerating, using inflammatory rhetoric, spinning and distorting an event or idea to make someone believe that their version was the truth.

At that time, the American media kept referring to the evils of Nazi propaganda. We were told not to be fooled by the rhetoric of Adolph Hitler and his Nazi propaganda, which was filled with lies and half-truths.

I venture the opinion that George Bush and his administration use propaganda to fool the American people.

About two years ago, George Bush stood on an aircraft carrier and announced "Mission accomplished!" What a distortion! Some say we have already lost the war in Iraq as the country heads toward a theocracy and possible civil war.

As August began, 27 Marines were killed in Iraq. The rhetoric and spin from George Bush was that "this proves that Iraq is part of the war on terrorism."

Again, this is just another example of Bush propaganda. If anything, the war in Iraq has increased the number of terrorists around the world.

By now, most Americans are aware of the propaganda used by George Bush as the reason for going to war with Iraq. Contrary to Bush's spin, there were no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. The 9/11 suicide bombers were mostly from Saudi Arabia. None of the suicide bombers were from Iraq. There was no connection between 9/11 and Iraq.

The propaganda on why we went to war in Iraq has changed several times. This may explain why the American people now give Bush his lowest ratings ever. Even the frequent use of the expression "coalition forces"

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is seen as a gross exaggeration. The vast majority of fatalities and wounded in Iraq are American military.

After the destruction of Fallouja, the Bush administration announced we just had a little more mopping up to do to finish the war. That was nine months ago after 250,000 citizens had to leave their city. Now it is reported that Iraq's guerrilla movement is regrouping in Fallouja.

In the 1930s, Adolph Hitler's propaganda referred to Germany as a country that needed to return to its Christian roots. This kind of propaganda contributed to the murder of six million

Jews. One wonders if the Bush appeal to right wing Christians is just another propaganda tool to overturn our long history of separation of church and state.

We Democrats love our country and support our troops. We do not use the phrase "support the troops" to mean support the Bush war in Iraq. We Democrats loathe the propaganda tools used by the Bush administration to fool the American people.

Recent polls show that fewer Americans believe in the Bush use of spin, rhetoric and propaganda.

### Text of Article

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