

THE LOWDOWN

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日本の歴史研究会

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INTRODUCTION

THIS, the first issue of THE LOWDOWN, is devoted exclusively to an analysis of propaganda all over the world, with particular reference to its use as an instrument in international conflict. The aim throughout has been to present the facts as objectively as possible, hiding nothing and documenting everything. We trust that no political, economic, or religious bias will be charged against the magazine, for certainly none has motivated its composition.

The general purpose of THE LOWDOWN in subsequent issues will be the same as in the present one, and so will the general editorial plan. Each issue will be given over wholly to a discussion of a single subject from all angles and by men and women who are trained in the field of social investigation.

PROPAGANDA, being a form of persuasion, is intrinsically on a moral par with any other form of salesmanship, and it becomes reprehensible precisely where all salesmanship becomes reprehensible, that is, when lying and other modes of misrepresentation enter. The misrepresentation, naturally, must be induced by fraud; otherwise it is as harmless as the use of lipstick by women and the tall talk of men before the ladies of their heart.

In no other field of the public business does fraudulent propaganda play so large a part as in domestic and international politics, and in no other form of government is its influence so nefarious as in a dictatorship. During the World War, for example, the Allied Powers employed one of the most complicated and widespread propaganda machines in history to get the United States in on their side. As subsequent events have shown, there was no real reason for us joining the war, but the atrocity stories

deliberately manufactured by the British and French "information" services, supplemented by a barrage of bogus idealism, also emanating from London and Paris, created a moral atmosphere over here that made it easy for President Wilson and his administration to declare war upon Germany. In brief, the Allies sold us a very bad piece of goods. One of the chief reasons the Central Powers didn't sell us an equally bad piece of goods was that their propaganda bureaus were not as efficient—and besides, the British cut the cables between Germany and the United States, so that German news, to reach us, had to travel via London, which edited the news to serve its purposes.

More recently the British have barraged this country with highly inspired stories calculated to make the American people "morally conscious" of their cultural duties to London and Paris. In one instance they so slanted a speech by our ambassador in Paris as to have him say that we would always stand behind England and France in any war on the Continent. Mr. Bullitt promptly denied it, but the damage had already been done. In another instance they performed the same sort of slanting to a speech by President Roosevelt, giving the impression to their own public that Uncle Sam stood squarely behind John Bull in whatever that paragon of all the virtues chose to do. The President was so embarrassed by this flagrant bit of high-tone lying that, for diplomatic reasons, he was forced to correct the British by putting the blame for the misrepresentation on the Washington correspondents.

The Germans, the Russians, the Italians, in fact, all the other peoples of the European and Asiatic Continents, have indulged in similar propaganda. The Germans spread the most picturesque lies about Czech atrocities in a suc-

successful effort to whoop up their nationals to pity their "brethren" in Sudetenland, which never was a part of Germany. The Russians, in order to obtain the support of the United States in a future Russo-Japanese conflict, have eaten their own words with regard to the murderous nature of Chiang Kai-shek, hailed him as a liberator, concocted pictures of Japanese atrocities in Manchuria, and otherwise done all in their power to arouse in our people a sympathy for China so profound that we would be willing to fight for its defence even though our economic interests there are negligible. In short, Russia is eager for us to fight its battles. In their endeavor to make America the protector of Stalin's régime, the Russians have spread their anti-Japanese propaganda through American organizations that ostensibly are purely cultural and devoted to the preservation of democracy but actually are blinds for the activities of Soviet agents. Needless to say, the Japanese have done likewise, and so have the Chinese.

The Nazis and Fascisti are busy spreading hatred of democracy in the United States, Mexico, and all the South American countries, using threats of every description and employing bribery, both open and clandestine. Many Latin American papers which have lately been so loud in their praises of the Hitler and Mussolini governments were persuaded with money—in the form of cash or of large advertisements of German and Italian steamship lines and railroads. The Nazis and Fascisti have done exactly the same thing here, as the investigations of the Dickstein Committee have shown.

Propaganda in countries ruled by dictators is naturally more dangerous than in democracies, for in the former it is without opposition, while in the latter it sometimes must combat other propaganda. The Quai d'Orsay spends millions of francs misinforming Frenchmen and others about French affairs, but it is still possible, much of the time, for Socialists and others to expose it in public—just as it is still possible, much of the time, for British Laborites to denounce the devious machinations of Chamberlain and his group in the House of Commons. Truth has some chance when propaganda can be answered; it has no chance when propaganda is the only opinion allowed circulation.

The agencies of propaganda are various—the press, the radio, the lecture platform, the professorial study, the pulpit. The press can be bought, as in France, and it can be threatened with extinction, as in Germany, Italy, and Russia, if it doesn't print what it is told to print. The same with the radio. As for the church, it has ever been ready to chime in with the wishes of the ruling classes.

The Catholic Church for two thousand years has favored the totalitarian state, being one itself, and thus it has no qualms in supporting Franco and in echoing the philosophy of Hitler and Mussolini. The Protestant Church is little different. In the United States, during the World War, for example, it proved a strong agency for the manufacture and dissemination of lies about the Germans. And the professors, with all their learning, have from time immemorial been willing to lend their imaginations to their governments in whatever dirty business was afoot. The disgrace of present-day German biologists and anthropologists in their theorizing about Aryanism is probably no greater than the disgrace of American, French, and British biologists and anthropologists, twenty years ago, in their theorizing about the Hun. Is it worse to say that Heine was a fifth-rate poet than that Wagner was a fifth-rate musician?

THE AMERICAN people now more than ever before, are daily bombarded with every form of propaganda seeking their sympathy and their money for causes which, to say the least, are no concern of theirs. The foreign news they read in the press is largely misinformation handed out by foreign governments to our correspondents. What they hear over the radio in the way of comment, three times out of five, is from lecturers who wittingly or unwittingly spread French, British, Communist, Fascist, Nazi, Japanese, and Chinese propaganda.

If they join, say, the League for Peace and Democracy, they indirectly become stooges for Joseph Stalin, and if they put their names on the mailing list of the Casa Italiana at Columbia University they expose themselves to the Duce's philosophy of life. Should they join a German society, the chances are that they will sooner or later be told to look at the world through the eyes of Dr. Joseph Goebbels. And if they give in to the pleas of a young girl begging in the subway for money to help the Chinese war sufferers, they probably help preserve the racket of Chiang Kai-shek. And so on and so on.

There is no sense in getting overly alarmed about this state of affairs. Propaganda has always been with us. The first and perhaps the best way to combat it is to recognize it and be wary of its ramifications and snares. We trust that the following articles will enlighten Americans regarding the work of various propagandists in our midst, and thus help to save them from fighting other people's battles and succumbing to ways of life that are not consonant with our history, conditions, and psychology.

—THE EDITORS.



Peace: I hope your intentions honorable.

—Conard Enchaudé, Paris

Words Breed War

By Joseph Hilton Smyth

"Sticks and stones may break my bones
But words can never hurt me . . ."

OLD NURSERY RHYME

"The hell you say!"

CASUAL OBSERVER

TEN years ago the diplomats of Europe, in private conversation, looked forward to 1932 as the date of the next war. In that they were wrong to a certain degree. At the time the world-wide depression over-shadowed all else. There were disputes enough between nations, but empty bellies were more important.

A supplementary statement of the statesmen of a decade ago still holds true, however. That was one of the effects that the next war would be fought, in the main, on typewriters and in laboratories, that is, with propaganda and with science. Both poison gas, if you like, and both equally deadly.

Just what the scientists have managed to do, in the way of diabolical inventions of death, is a matter of rumor and carefully guarded state secrets. But the work of the propagandists is on public record.

Today the breeding of mass hatred, mass prejudice, and racial bigotry is an industry second only to the less vicious manufacturing of munitions. During the World War, propaganda was largely a matter of the printed word and whispering campaigns. Now, with the increased power of the radio, the ear is assailed twenty-four hours out of the day with special pleading in one form or another, and the result, unfortunately, is not deafness but blindness. Blindness to the actual issues at stake.

The synthetic creation of the Sudeten-German problem in Czechoslovakia provides not only an excellent example, but in view of similar situations elsewhere, serves as a warning as well. In this case the German propaganda machine, while no more subtle than it was twenty years ago, was certainly more thorough.

From May 21 to June 21, to illustrate, the German radio blanketed the Czech citizenry with no less than 992 broadcasts whose sole purpose was to create disorder. According to a record kept by the journal *Branna Ploitika*:

1. It criticized the Government or the President 194 times.
2. It slandered the good reputation of Czech officials and courts 172 times.
3. It insulted the Czech army 106 times.
4. It agitated for the Sudeten German Party 336 times.
5. It supported the autonomist demands of the Slovaks and the Poles 34 times.
6. It attempted to create the impression that Communists would rule Czechoslovakia 31 times.

At this writing, with Czechoslovakia but lately sold down the river by Great Britain's Cliveden set, the radio

static and caterwaulings of the late spring appear to be of only historical interest; unfortunately, their effects in the near future will be momentous. Hitler's statement that Germany's territorial interests stop with the pre-emption by the Third Reich of the Sudeten provinces of Czechoslovakia has undoubtedly been of needed assistance to Chamberlain in his attempts to explain away diplomatic duplicity, but its honesty is open to question. That Germany also hankers for far more was obvious as long ago as July.

In propaganda manifestly approved by Dr. Goebbels, Henlein on the twelfth of that month beckoned "fraternally" to nationalist minorities within the Third French Republic. Thus the weekly Bulletin of the Sudeten German Party as of that date:

"For some months past there have been appearing overnight in the Breton towns and villages big inscriptions on the walls demanding 'Brittany for the Bretons' or 'A Free and Neutral Brittany!'"

"Since the creation of the equally Celtic Irish Free State," the Henleinist *pronunciamento* continues, in upper case, "the National Consciousness of the Breton People has been awakened throughout the widest circles of the people."

In a style curiously suggestive of the best agitational vein of Dr. Goebbels, particularly in dealing with the persecution of Germans in Sudetenland, the Bulletin lists the alleged sufferings of Breton "patriots." It concludes, moreover, with the categorical statement that today Brittany and Alsace-Lorraine are united in a demand upon Paris for autonomy.

If German efforts to enlist sympathy in regions as distant as western France appear ridiculous, the nation's propaganda efforts in the Near East will seem equally incredible. They have been obscured by the present crisis in Central Europe, but as long ago as July 27 the *Daily Herald* of London published a dispatch from its Jerusalem correspondent, in part as follows:

Leading German journalists from Egypt, Palestine, Transjordan, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq are believed to be meeting in Jerusalem to study German interests in the Near East and methods of Arabic propaganda.

I learn that German propaganda in the Near East is about to be largely extended with the object of creating an effective, bargaining instrument with Britain and France when the time comes for discussions on the return of colonies.

Agents here are seeking to enlist sympathy for Germany by the argument that she alone among the great Powers has no territorial ambitions in the Near East, and that her objects are simply altruistic friendship and trade.

In Egypt alone, an additional £13,000 a month is being provided by Berlin for propaganda. . . . German agents are scattered in all occupations, at least half of the posing as correspondents.

Accredited German correspondents in the Near East have shown themselves consistently ready to feed the Ministry of Propaganda and Public Enlightenment with "comment"—rather than strictly news stories—unfavorable to Britain. A biased point of view might be normally expected of them; but not to make that partiality too blatant these dispatches often take the form of "judicious interpretation" by the correspondent. An example appeared in the *Voelkischer Beobachter* on the occasion of the anti-British riots in Palestine.

The Cairo correspondent telegraphed that "certainly, the conditions in Palestine have become more aggravated, despite all prophecies, than one should have believed possible a year ago. And, significantly, the crisis has developed out of the uprising of individuals and groups. Thus it is felt, in the political as well as the military field—all assurances to the contrary notwithstanding—that England is up against a front of a united people, the determination of a unit which had been promised, once upon a time, autonomy."

German propaganda activities elsewhere, for many months rumored but not supported documentarily, have just been revealed factually in a French volume, "Hitler en Espagne," by O. K. Simon. The book is predicated on documents found at Nazi party headquarters in Barcelona when raided by the police. One section deals illuminatingly with the financing of Nazi propaganda in the Iberian Peninsula.

As the pace of German propaganda has been accelerated in recent weeks, the impression has become universal that such propaganda has been restricted to the instrumentalities of the press and the radio. But the Third Reich has an enormous book-reading public. Chancellor Hitler's inflammatory speech of September 26, when he stressed the invincibility of the army in terms that were more emotional than military, has just been given a factual basis by a reissue of a pamphlet entitled "The Organization of German Military Power."

This propaganda item, sold at the low price of 20 pfennigs through the offices of Dr. Goebbels, is calculated to reassure the German public. It is one of a series describing country by country the world's defence forces and armaments on land, sea and air.

While it is largely statistical and, consequently, fairly persuasive to the German reader, the style of the work is a curious mixture of unadorned military fact and sentimental *amour-patrie*. The pamphlet is designed, apart from its adult civilian audience, for wide circulation among the secondary-schools, as this excerpt plainly indicates:

"The great German Army, once again freed from all restrictions, is the overwhelming expression of the martial character of our country. It was brought back into being by the Fuehrer and his Movement, and built into the fabric of the Third Reich. . . . A martial outlook, expressing itself in bravery, a sense of duty, modesty and, above all, in a will to achieve, is the predominating characteristic of the manhood of the Third Reich. . . . Service in defence of the country is a sacred duty to the German people. . . . To the call of Hermann Goering—"the German people must be a nation of airmen"—the young people of Germany responded enthusiastically by flocking to the colors in tens

of thousands. And so the air arm of the Third Reich has become a symbol of the victory of movement and of the new German defence ideal, which is inconceivable without air arms and air transport."

Thereafter follows an impressive statistical survey of the German army, naval and air forces.

The ramifications of Nazi propaganda abroad are not fully realized in this country. It is particularly voluminous in Latin America, where the interests of the United States are vitally concerned. There accredited propagandists carry on their activities under the guise of commercial agents. Germans proposing to enter the Latin American field are given a special six months' course in "Foreign Political Training" at the institute established by Alfred Rosenberg. The emphasis of the course is on language and methods of dealing with the press, but the curriculum also includes "society manners and sports."

Fourteen newspapers in South America are avowedly Nazi. They organize "conferences" at which the virtues of National Socialism are expounded, and they handle arrangements for the exhibition of pro-Nazi films and distribute an enormous quantity of pamphlet material. Throughout the continent there are a large number of *turnvereins* and *bunds*. Apart from subsidies from Berlin, such propagandist activities are financed by compulsory contributions from local German merchants. There is no refusing to pay, even if the merchant is an anti-Nazi, for refusal results in an immediate boycott.

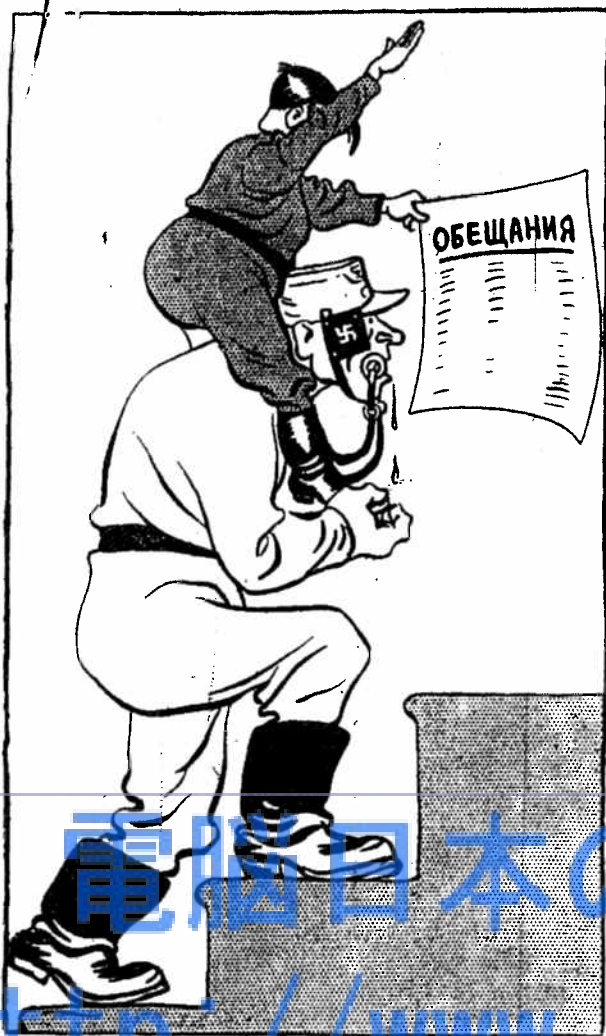
In Latin American countries that have a large population of Germans, as for example the Argentine, the Third Reich maintains embassy attachés of "Nazi Kultur." Gestapo agents shuttle north and south over the entire continent. Hitler agents have been known to take violent measures against various agencies hostile to National Socialism in Latin America, as witness the attempted firing of the *Argentinisches Tageblatt*, a daily paper opposed to Hitler.

As in Germany itself, the Nazi anti-Semitic propaganda is rife in Chile, Brazil, Argentine and Mexico, where the work done by native agents is subsidized by the Berlin Government.

"These efforts," writes Carleton Beals in "The Coming Struggle for Latin America," "have led the Germans to attempt also to persuade the respective governments and populations to embrace Nazism. To this end, short-wave broadcasts from the Charlottenburg district in Berlin and elsewhere are sent out in Portuguese and Spanish. . . . The Germans have developed a narrow beam broadcasting technique which hashes up all other transmission and rides supreme on the air waves, despite even troublesome tropical static."

This propaganda, directed at South America and devised by the Reichrundfunk organization, is unremitting for sixteen hours of the day. Dr. Goebbels also produces phonograph records by the thousands, for local use in South American cities. They are very popular because the Reich propaganda organization gives them a topical slant.

The Latin American dictatorships, for their part, are also active in launching propaganda, if not on the same scale as Germany. A public opinion strongly favorable to Franco has been created by flatly suppressing all news of the Loyalists and their cause. The easiest avenue to imprisonment in Brazil, for example, is the writing of an article favorable to the liberal government.



Led on by promises. (Cartoon by Boris Efimov)

It is unwise to dismiss European propaganda in Latin America as of no immediate concern to the United States. Our investments in South America are considerable.

While it is to the advantage of certain powers—varying from issue to issue—to capture our emotional and later financial sympathies on one side or the other in national disputes abroad, it is equally to the advantage of these same powers that we concern ourselves as little as possible with events south of the Rio Grande until such time as foreign policies have solidly entrenched themselves there and it is too late for us to do anything about it.

Thus, as the result of Soviet propaganda, we send money, supplies, and eventually volunteers (until the switch in Loyalist policy) to Spain to fight against German, Italian and Moroccan soldiers. To what purpose, is highly questionable and, considering the fact that we are rallied to arms under the pressure of "peace" groups, slightly ironical.

It might be far more constructive to the progress of civilization—international as well as domestic—if we stuck to our own shores. A more active interest in the affairs of the State of New Jersey, for example, might do more to promote "peace and democracy" in the long run than the sending of aid to foreign nations.

Geographically, the United States is in the envied posi-

tion of an isolationist. But a weathervane is also more or less isolated. And like a weathervane, American sympathies shift with the winds of the propagandists.

For the past year those winds have been blowing alternately due East and due West—pointing either to Spain or to China—two spots where Soviet Russia has definite interests. And where, parenthetically, the United States should have none.

III

Certainly, warfare in China is no new tune to American ears. Nor, for that matter, a new expense to American pocketbooks. The history of China has been one of plunder and exploitation, mostly domestic. Graft and corruption have always been rampant. Dynasties have arisen and fallen in monotonous succession through the speculation and greed of government officials, high and low. It was graft and corruption that finally brought the downfall of the Manchu dynasty in 1911. Succeeding Republican régimes proved no better—and many of them proved definitely worse.

To these various governments and groups of Chinese war lords the American people have been led to contribute directly and indirectly millions of dollars to succor hundreds of thousands of famine victims; more millions to feed and clothe the victims of China's perennial Yangtze floods. The miseries of China have, all in all, been more highly publicized than any others in modern history.

In the normal course of events, then, the present conflict in the Far East should have effected us no more than similar occurrences in the past. We would have dug down, as usual, and supplied money and Red Cross supplies and more money. And we would have deplored the war—undeclared though it was—as we always deplore war waged by others . . . and in the end partially supported by us.

But this time the warring groups in China had other support, namely, the U. S. S. R. There came a time when the Soviet interests and those of the opportunist Chiang Kai-shek neatly coincided in a growing anti-Japanese movement. To quote from Vernon McKenzie's "The Turbulent Years":

In the early days of the clash between Japan and China there was evidence that the U.S.S.R. was employing methods of aiding the Chinese which were patterned after the Italian and German activities in Spain. In August (1937) China signed a non-aggression pact with the Soviet, and there were immediate reports that the agreement contained secret military clauses. By these it appeared that China expected to get from her Communistic neighbor 360 planes, 200 tanks, 1,500 tractors, 150,000 rifles, 120,000 shells, and 60,000,000 cartridges well before the end of the year. The Soviet was also expected to furnish technicians in all branches.

One of the most important of those branches was propaganda. It was not long before the American League for Peace and Democracy was engaged in a vigorous boycott and money-raising campaign. On nearly every street corner in mid-town Manhattan, bewitching Chinese girls and clean-cut Chinese students began soliciting funds. Chapters of them were set up in twenty-two cities under the direction of Philip A. Jaffe, who visited the Communist Army headquarters in China in 1937, and is an indefatigable propagandist for Soviet China.

In the interim, China itself engaged an American press agent. The whipping up of American sympathy for an oppressed China continued, although at times the personal fortunes of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek and his attractive American-schooled wife have somewhat shadowed the real issues at stake.

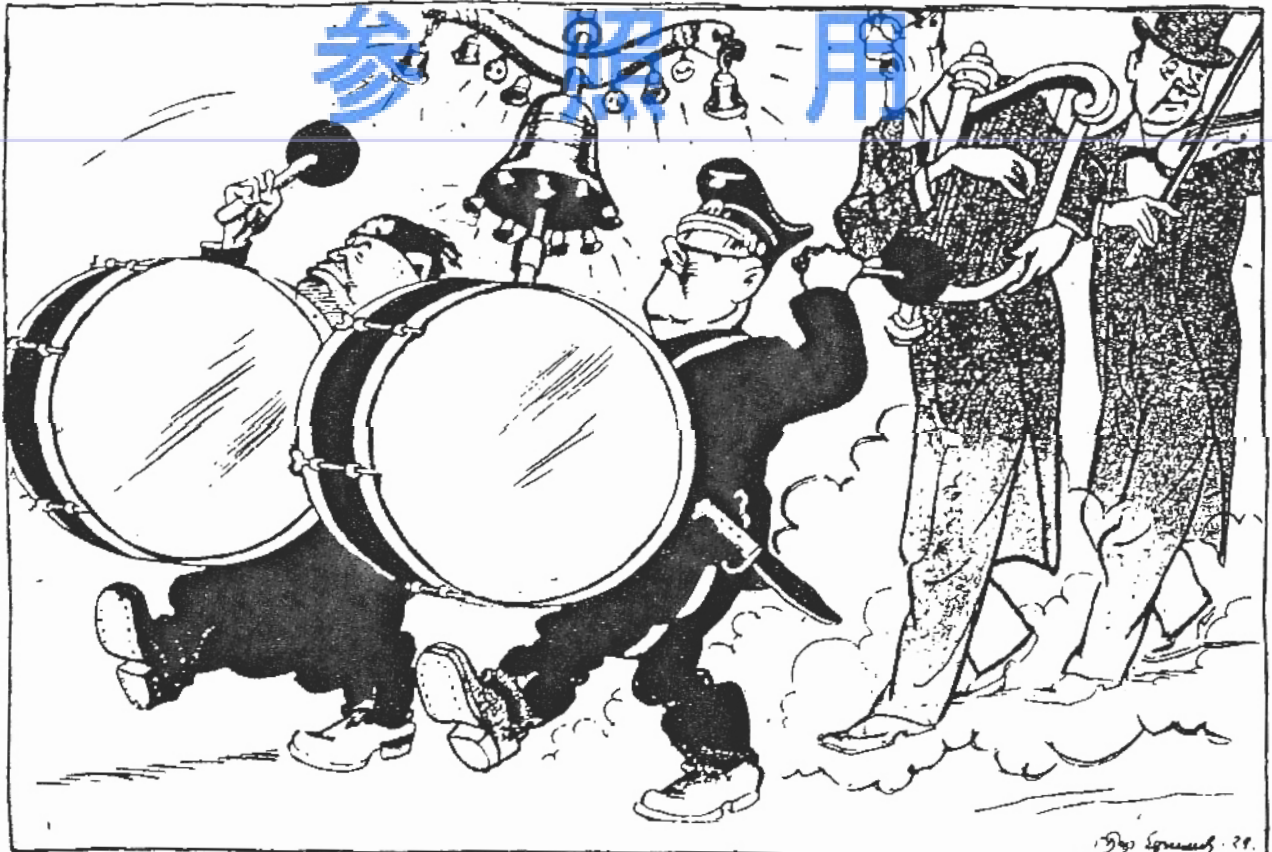
Soon, along with propaganda "news" releases a variety of atrocity pictures started flooding the newspaper offices. Most of these emanated from the Trans-Pacific News Service, headed by a former Shanghai newspaperman. Few of the atrocity pictures bore close examination—the majority being manufactured by the same process used in the Belgium atrocity stories and pictures released by the Allies more than twenty years ago. One of the most lurid of them was given to the highly reliable Associated Press. Its subsequent publication raised the proper reaction in the gullible American mind. The photograph depicted a Japanese officer doing sword practice on the body of a Chinese prisoner tied to a cross. Another Japanese officer, with a theatrically wide grin, is looking on. The Associated Press insisted that the picture was genuine; later, however, it was forced to back down and confess to have been duped.

The history of that one picture is interesting, in that

it throws light on the history of most such pictures. It was first placed on sale, as a post card, in Shanghai in 1919. At that time it was presented as propaganda against one of the war lords who was ravaging an interior province. A year or so later it was brought out again depicting Communist Chinese officers torturing a Chinese prisoner of one of the northern provinces. It did not rest for long, as it was soon hauled out again as propaganda against the Japanese when they went into Manchuria. When the Manchurian crisis had ceased to be news it was put away only to be unearthed again to illustrate the atrocities committed by the Chinese Soviets when Chiang Kai-shek was attempting to wipe out the Chinese Red Army in 1934.

In its most recent appearance it was used for the customary purpose of enlisting American sympathies—and arousing anti-Japanese sentiment in this country.

Thus, it is scarcely intelligent to associate propaganda with the one or two nations that shout the loudest—Germany and Italy, for example. It is sound theatre that the soft word is more eloquent and persuasive than the bellow. Today we are subject to propaganda, 'round the clock and 'round the world, from every nation on the globe that craves something from the richest nation. Possibly, but not certainly, that excludes only the Hottentots.



Редкий дипломатический случай, когда первую скрипку играют барабаны.

A rare diplomatic occurrence when drums play first fiddle

—Зрочодил, Москва

<http://www.history.gr.jp>