

## A Review on Nazis' Persuasive Propaganda Approaches in Shaping the Germans Mind

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### Abstract

The German Great Depression struck in late 1929, affecting Central Europe. The significant implications of this downturn include an increase in unemployment rates of more than 20% in Germany, Austria, and Poland. The German Weimar Republic was severely impacted by the slump when the Americans' loan was terminated. It has led the unemployment soared and the Germans struggled living in this unemployment situation. The depression also led to an opportunity to ideologist in introducing its ideology to meet the Germans need and wants at that time. The Nazi party officially the National Socialist German Worker's party (Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei-NSDAP) is one of an active party during 1920 – 1945. Recognizing the depression endured by many Germans in their own country, while Jewish Germans monopolised the economy, has resulted in ethnic cleansing (Holocaust) and total war. The party led by Adolf Hitler (Führer) and Joseph Goebbels as publicity minister, which plays a vital role in gaining public support for Nazi actions. As a result, the current study aims to examine the propaganda initiated by Goebbels, as one of the leaders in the Nazi inner circle, which led to the victory of the Nazi dictatorship. The evaluations concentrate on printed media such as posters, speeches, commoners joke and songs using applied propaganda model.

**Keywords:** *Goebbels, Propaganda model, Nazi, Total war*

### 1.0 Introduction

Each of the items in propaganda aims to drive the individual into the desired and firmly established commitment. Man's psychological demand for value judgments in clear black and white terms aids propaganda's goal. In times of uncertainty, political propaganda is most powerful, and hatred is usually its most effective tool.

Between 1923 and 1945, Joseph Goebbels generated many documents daily, including typed and handwritten notes and spoken information. However, many of these records are incomplete due to missing or purposely omitted information. Furthermore, most of the remaining material is photocopies of originals that can no longer be found. A few of these documents were authored or compiled by Goebbels himself, while the majority were written or compiled by his workers.

Referring to Doob 1950 in his study, Goebbels created a journal entry using all these materials, which might contain up to 100 typed of materials which consists of 4-pages everyday entry [1]. Due to the large number of employees who contributed to the publication, there are significant differences in quality and numerous repeats. As a result, rather than a 'diary,' the journals should be considered a compilation. Overall, Goebbels' notes served as a foundation for his work as Reich Minister of Public

Enlightenment and Propaganda and director of the Nazi Party's national propaganda organisation. Their main goal was to defend National Socialist policies such as terror, crime, war, and inhumanity, all of which were hallmarks of the government. After Goebbels' death, his notes were not kept in one place but broken up into fragments that found their way to German and foreign archives.

In late 1929, while the economy was in a downturn, Germany was hit hard by the Great Depression's economic repercussions, with significant unemployment rates [2]. When Adolf Hitler was elected Chancellor of Germany in 1933, he implemented policies aimed at boosting the country's economy. Privatization of state companies, autarky (national economic self-sufficiency), and import taxes were among the reforms. From 1933 to 1939, weekly incomes climbed by 19 percent in actual terms with longer working hours [3], yet the wage rates remained close to the lowest levels reached during the Great Depression [2]. Furthermore, for many Germans, restricted international trade meant rationing of consumer goods such as poultry, fruit, and apparel. This is when Goebbels propaganda is used to get people's attention and support for the Nazis.

### 1.1 Great Depression in German

Central Europe was devastated by the Great Depression. In Germany, Austria, and Poland, the unemployment rate reached 20%, while output fell by 40%. The Weimar Republic in Germany was particularly hard hit by the depression, as American loans to help rebuild the German economy were no longer available. Unemployment has skyrocketed, particularly in major cities. Despite the fact that the German economy had recovered from hyperinflation in late 1923, the populace was dissatisfied with the government's policies. Taking advantage of the situation, the NSDAP attempted to set up propaganda cells across Germany to gauge public opinion.

In 1929 as the Wall Street Crash led to a worldwide depression. Germany suffered more than any other nation because of the recall of US loans, which caused its economy to collapse. Unemployment rocketed, poverty soared, and Germans became desperate. The advantage of desperations has been overcome by the NSDAP Party that led by Hitler. The Nazi's government minister of propaganda Joseph Goebbels portrays an important role on the success. This propaganda belongs to and is initiated by Goebbels, as recorded in his diaries, and is used as a template by many propagandists in launching propaganda to influence the people. NSDAP has a limited resources and its lines of communication were poor.

In fact, there was no real activity synchronisation. Yet, for the first time since 1924, the party ran in a national election in 1928. Even with the new emphasis on propaganda, the Nazis were a resounding failure at the polls, receiving only 2.6 percent of the vote. Nazi propaganda persisted, and the Nazis were able to seize power in federal elections held in Germany on 5 March 1933, six days after the Reichstag fire.

### 2.0 Goebbels Principle of Propaganda

The principles obtained from the Goebbels Principles of propaganda are as follows obtained from Doob (1950) in his article [1]: -

1. Propagandist must have access to intelligence concerning Events and Public Opinion
2. Propaganda must be planned and executed by only one authority
3. The propaganda consequences of an action must be considered in planning that action
4. Propaganda must affect the enemy's Policy and action
5. Declassified, Operational information must be available to implement a propaganda campaign
6. To be perceived, propaganda must evoke the interest of an audience and transmitted through an attention-getting communications medium
7. Credibility alone must determine whether propaganda output. should be true or false

8. The purpose, content and effectiveness of enemy propaganda, the strength and effects of an expose, and the nature of current propaganda campaigns determine whether enemy propaganda should be ignored or refuted.
9. Credibility, Intelligence and the possible effects of communicating determine whether propaganda materials should be censored.
10. Material from enemy propaganda may be utilised in operations when it helps diminish that enemy prestige or lends support to the propagandist own objective
11. Black rather than white propaganda must be employed when the latter is less credible or produces undesirable effects.
12. Propaganda must be facilitated by leaders with prestige
13. Propaganda must be carefully timed
14. Propaganda must be label events and people with distinctive phrases or slogans
15. Propaganda to the home front must prevent the raising of false hopes which can be blasted by future events.
16. Propaganda to the home front must create an optimum anxiety level
17. Propaganda to the home must diminish the impact of frustration
18. Propaganda must facilitate the displacement of aggression by specifying the targets for hatred
19. Propaganda cannot immediately affect strong counter tendencies, instead it must offer some form of action or diversion.

Synopsis of the propaganda Goebbles' principles are strong and detailed in terms of how to create persuading propaganda. Jowett and O'Donnell discussed the dimension of propaganda, also known as subpropaganda. At this stage, the propagandist's task is to spread an unfamiliar doctrine, considering the time required to build a frame of mind in the audience toward acceptance of the doctrine [4]. The term "subpropaganda" also refers to facilitative communication, which frequently takes the form of financial assistance, radio newscasts, press releases, pamphlets, posters, seminars, cultural programmes, or personal social contracts [1]. The term of subpropaganda originates by Doob also assisted by the purpose model of propaganda [4].

## **2.1 Purpose of Propaganda Model**

The "Purpose Propaganda Model" introduced by Jowett & O'Donnell and has been widely used among the propagandist as guidelines [4]. Figure 1 depicts a model that was built to better justify the elements utilised by Goebbels as successful propaganda during the Nazis' power in Germany.

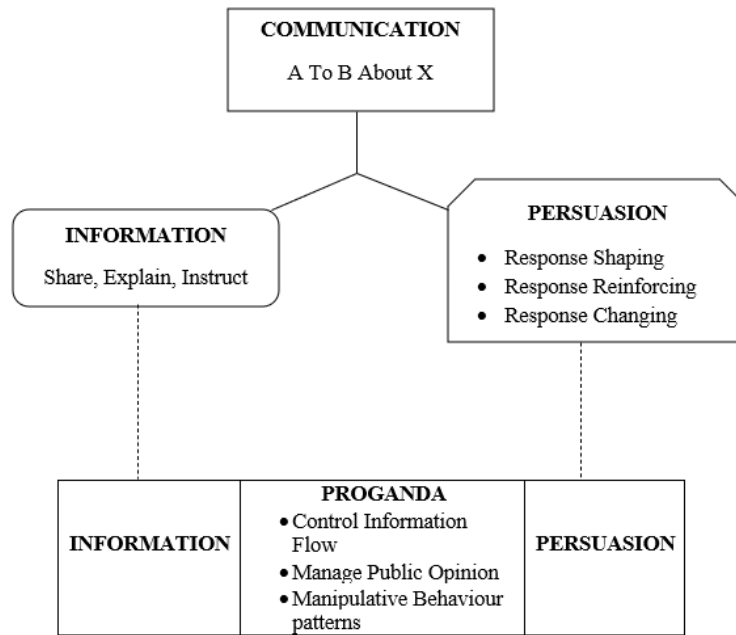


Figure1. Purpose Propaganda Model [4]

The communication process is an interaction between among human beings. It’s also part of the essential life process of exchange through which humans create, acquire, transmit and utilize information. The process happens when A (sender) communicates with B (receiver) about X (the issue to be highlighted) [5]. The receiver can be an individual, a group, or the social system. In the case of Goebbels propaganda, the sender is the Nazi party/government, and the receiver is the German people/public. The current study expands on Goebbels' persuasive propaganda delivered during his tenure as Nazi Propaganda Minister. It applies to all the propaganda materials or forms used.

## 2.2 News Media and propaganda

Another study was conducted to explain the relationship between media and propaganda dimensions in order to increase the power and success of propaganda. As mentioned in the previous review, the crowds attending and participating in Goebbels' speech in Berlin for Total War were carefully selected. Furthermore, the use of radio as a medium for delivering the speech has been widely disseminated to a larger number of people in German.

Scholars who believe the news media has a propaganda function point to their integration into the state-corporate business linkage as well as the influence of powerful lobby groups [6]; [7]; [8]; [9]. This has justified the careful selection of attendees and participants at the Berlin Hall.

Herman and Chomsky's propaganda approach to the news media is perhaps the most widely used [9]. One of the central objectives of the Propaganda Model is to integrate news media with ideology, news media propaganda truth, and demonize News Media Propaganda and Outrage [10]. As a result of these institutional constraints, propaganda models suggest that news media content is generally aligned with state-corporate elite interests across time and space [11].

### 3.0 Methodology

To achieve the overview of the Nazis persuasive propaganda approaches during his governance in German to shape the Germans mind has been conducted by reviewing subjective evidence such as posters, music and song lyrics, speeches, and recorded interview to be further analyse on the use of items in the propaganda model used by Nazi's propaganda minister in shaping and building the public agrees with the government decisions. Share, explain and instruct elements further been observed in materials used by the Nazis during its time.

Total of four (4) secondary data materials including (1) Nazi's propaganda Posters, (2) The Host Wessel Song Lyrics, (3) Goebbels speech on Total War and (4) Recorded Hitler Youth Member Interview was used to review and analysed its content. Findings obtained is further elaborated in the following section.

### 4.0 Findings

#### 4.1 Nazis Propaganda Visual



Poster 1

Poster 2

Poster 3

These are some examples of posters in support of the National Welfare Program from 1934. The National Welfare Service is responsible for national, health, national community, child protection, mother protection, and traveller care. The readings in the present study describe the Nazis' efforts to consolidate power and establish a German "national community" in the mid-1930s as per in poster 1. One of the most effective tools used by the Nazis to achieve these goals was propaganda information, which was designed to persuade an audience to accept a particular idea or cause, often by using biased material or stirring up emotions.

In 1935, posters 2 and 3 were used to encourage youth by suggesting that young people serve the Führer. With images of youth and Hitler (the Führer) shadows, this is depicted as Hitler Youth. A depiction of a Jewish man feeding a rat in a meat grinder appeared on other anti-Semitic Nazi propaganda posters, such as Anti-Semitic propaganda in poster 3. These are examples of propaganda obtained by Hitler and Goebbels, who did not invent it. The Catholic Church used the phrase in the 1600s to characterise its efforts to undermine Protestant beliefs. Throughout history, almost every government has employed propaganda to unite its people during times of war. Both sides employed propaganda to their advantage during World War I.

Another significant aspect was the Germans' melancholy at the period, which helped to the propaganda's success.

The “exploitations colony of international Jewry,” which controlled Germany's railroads, economy, and currency, monopolised the German economy as a result of the Jews' “murderous economic war” against the Germans [6]. Government propagandists now employ the same tactics as Goebbels, with elements such as accessing intelligence about current events and public opinion remaining relevant to this day. Before introducing a project, it is customary to weigh the benefits and drawbacks. This is confirmed by historical examples of propaganda materials, that were dropped across countries participating in World War II as well.

#### 4.2 Nazis Propaganda through Music and Song

On top of that, the propaganda works through music and song. Germans were required by law to make the salute during the singing of the “The Horst Wessel Song”. This song was also played in the large gathering of Hitler Youth and any Nazis official events and parade. Nazi Germany provided its own selection of catchy tunes. The most ubiquitous Nazi song was the “Horst-Wessel-Lied.” The lyrics were written in 1929 by Horst Wessel, a commander of the SA storm troopers. In 1930, Wessel was shot by Communist street fighters in Berlin and died in a hospital. His death made him a martyr for the Nazi cause, and his song became the official anthem of the Party and later the co-national anthem of Nazi Germany. Since 1945, the lyrics and tune of the song have been illegal in Germany. The song lyrics in table 1 fit the purpose in increasing the spirit of fanaticism that led the thinking of whether to win or die.

**TABLE 1**  
The Horst Wessel Song Lyrics

Song lines translated in English	Remarks
<i>The flag on high! The ranks closed tightly!</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SA, also known as the “brown shirts</li> <li>Red Front,” was the paramilitary organization of the Communist Party of Germany</li> </ul> <p>Source:Metapedia [12]</p>
<i>SA marches with calm, firm steps.</i>	
<i>Comrades shot by Red Front and reactionaries</i>	
<i>March in spirit within our ranks.</i>	
<i>Clear the streets for the brownshirts,</i>	
<i>Clear the streets for the stormtroopers!</i>	
<i>Already millions, upon seeing the swastika, are filled with hope</i>	
<i>The day of freedom and bread is dawning!</i>	
<i>The call has sounded for the last time</i>	
<i>We all stand ready for the fight!</i>	
<i>Soon Hitler's flags will fly over all streets.</i>	
<i>Our bondage will only last a short time more!</i>	
<i>The flag on high! The ranks close tightly!</i>	
<i>SA marches with calm, firm steps.</i>	
<i>Comrades shot by Red Front and reactionaries</i>	
<i>March in spirit within our ranks.</i>	

#### 4.3 Nazi propaganda through Speech

Review in one of Goebbels speech towards the declaration of total war by Nazis was a speech delivered by German Propaganda Minister Joseph obtained in many of the scholars writing, this is one of the most powerful speech made by Goebbels at the Berlin Sportpalast to a large, carefully selected audience on 18 February 1943, as the tide of World War II was turning against Nazi Germany and its Axis allies. Speech in table 2 below is the original (German) and translated English version.

TABLE 2

Goebbels speech on Total War

Original text in Deutsch	Translated text in English
<i>Deutschland jedenfalls hat nicht die Absicht, sich dieser jüdischen Bedrohung zu beugen, sondern vielmehr die, ihr rechtzeitig, wenn nötig unter vollkommen und radikalster Ausr... -schaltung [Ausrottung / Ausschaltung] des Judentums entgegenzutreten.</i>	"Germany, in any case, has no intention of bowing to this Jewish threat, but rather one of confronting it in due time, if need be, in terms of complete and most radical erad... suppression ["cutoff"] of Judaism."
<i>Ich frage euch: Wollt ihr den totalen Krieg? Wollt ihr ihn, wenn nötig, totaler und radikaler, als wir ihn uns heute überhaupt erst vorstellen können?</i>	"I ask you: Do you want <b>total war</b> ? If necessary, do you want a war more total and radical than anything that we can even yet imagine?"
<i>Nun, Volk, steh auf und Sturm brich los!</i>	"Now, people, rise up and let the storm break loose!"

*Source: Facing History & Ourselves [13]*

Above is the original German text on Goebbels speech and its translation. Studies have shown, the analysis of the Goebbels speech that contains of the principles that he wrote in his diaries. The analysis results in understanding the propaganda speeches delivered by Goebbels. This speech was further analysed by researchers onto looking the reaction towards the lines delivered by Goebbels when the defeat at Stalingrad that followed with bombing raids on the Reich, burning cities. The Nazi regime is under pressure at that situation and has forced Propaganda Minister Goebbels delivered his task force ready to win public support. In Berlin, he commits the nation to total war. He starts using enemy's perception towards the Germans to spark the spirit of the Germans and to attend the crowd attention that led to the agreement of total war.

Total war is warfare that includes all civilian-associated resources and infrastructure as legitimate military targets, mobilizes all the resources of society to fight the war, and gives priority to warfare over non-combatant needs [15]. In the mid-19th century, scholars identified total war as a separate class of warfare. In a total war, the differentiation between combatants and non-combatants diminishes due to the capacity of opposing sides to consider nearly every human, including non-combatants, as resources that are used in the war) effort.

#### 4.4 Recorded Interview by Hitler Youth member

In one of the interviews conducted to Hitler Youth member in his confession, he told his experience after being part of the Hitler youth. The Hitler Youth was the youth organisation of the Nazi Party in Germany. Its origins date back to 1922 and it received the name Hitler-Jugend, the largest gathering usually took place annually at Nuremberg, where members from all over Germany would converge for the annual Nazi Party rally. The Führer came and delivered his speech that consists. Part of his speech

*"Heil Youth! We are one people one nation! You are going to be that people and that nation!"*

*~Hitler*

*Source: Facing History and Ourselves Website [13]*

The moment, He address that line, they youth attending the rally felt the belongingness to Hitler body and soul and further Hitler continue his line.

*"Before us lies German, in us Germany marches, and after us comes Germany!"*

*~Hitler*

*Source: Facing History and Ourselves Website [13]*

This ends of his speech that sparked the spirit among the younger generation that totally will give their trust and loyalty to the Nazis. The relation of the idea of Hitler youth are significantly related to the decision of "Total War".

*"The English claim that the German people are against the government's total war strategy. The English say the people don't want total war, that they want surrender."*

~Goebbles

*"The audience was stirred up about innocent women and children and violating the public and carpeting our German homeland with bombs. And, of course, this fed the anger in the crowd. And when the questions came and the shouting started, all control was lost."*

~Sabine Boebe

*"Do you want total war?"*

~Goebbles

Goebbels' speech has begun to accomplish its goal of persuading the audience to support total war at this point [14]. Because of the overcrowding in the stadium at the time, Goebbels threw that line, and the audience erupted in applause, shouting Yes! Then continue with the rest of the gestures to show support, despite not fully comprehending Goebbels' propaganda message. At the same time, Goebbels successfully persuades the Führer to confirm his power and to proceed with the war on the people's side. Goebbels secretary has reacted to this line by visualising the predicament at the venue.

*"We were absolutely aghast that it was possible to move this overcrowded stadium into a frenzied delirium, just asking such a question: Do you want total war? Yes! Yes! All this screaming. It was a grim experience. We stood there, paralyzed. One of the people standing with us said 'Clap! You must clap!'"*

~Brunhilde Pomsel (Joseph Goebbels Secretary)

*"If necessary, do you want a war more total and radical than anything that we can even imagine today?"*

~Goebbles

*"I couldn't imagine anything being more total. Were we to not sleep at all now, have nothing at all to eat, see all the men killed, the civilian population too? I just couldn't imagine an escalation. It was horrible enough!"*

~Boebe

*"Now, people, rise up and let the storm break loose!"*

~Goebbles

It is uncertain how connected the general opinion was apart from the hall. The total war, on the other hand, resulted in defeat. Millions of Germans tuned in to hear Goebbels speak about the "misfortune of the past weeks" and a "unvarnished picture of the situation." By generating such widespread support,



Goebbels hoped to persuade Hitler to give him greater control over the war economy [16]; [17]. Despite his ministers' objections, Hitler was not ready to put the economy on a total war footing yet though [18]. Goebbels was ultimately appointed Reich Plenipotentiary for total war, with the task of optimising workforce for the Wehrmacht and the military weapons industry at the expenditure of non-war-related industries [18].

The speech also popularised a late-war whisper joke in Western Germany. Table 3 is the Late-war whisper joke that has been translated from Deutsch to English.

**TABLE 3**

Late-war whisper joke

Original text in Deutsch	Translated text in English
<i>Lieber Tommy fliege weiter, wir sind alle Bergarbeiter. Fliege weiter nach Berlin, da ham' se alle Ja geschrien.</i>	Dear Tommy, fly further we're all mine-workers here. Fly further to Berlin there they've all screamed Yes

Source: Gamm [19]

## 5.0 Conclusion and Discussions

The review exposes on the important events of Nazi movement in power. Managing the German at the situation of depression in 1929 has given an opportunity for Nazis (Hitler) to deliver his ideology that led towards total war. In the present review, we can observe how "Hitler Youth" propaganda has been employed to aid total war ambitions. Along the way to raising the German spirit, the employment of songs has effectively helped in growing the Germans' enthusiasm amongst them. Fanaticism is a subjective proof that ensures the success of having the public agree with the propaganda propagated and imposed since the early childhood of the German children at the time. The present study concluded that examples technique uses in delivering the propaganda such as, posters, song lyrics, speeches and jokes are among ways in communicating and blend in among the publics in shaping their mind.

The propaganda propagates by Nazis led by Goebbels has been initiate through many platforms of media. For future study, it is recommended that the idea of Hitler youth that has focus on to build the foundation and captivating the youngsters in shaping minds can be further explored through its school syllabus to gain the young loyal supporters. Exploring this is expected to learn strategy in preparing the nation onto the fight and defend for the German as planned. Overviewing the materials summarised that propaganda has persuaded the people to support and involved in total war since the beginning. Part of the initiative in captivating youngsters, the propaganda strategies in introducing racial science subjects at school also one of the propagandas propagate by the Nazis as research has shown that a young person's situation at school, and pupils' relationships with their teachers, is believed to have an impact on the processes which lead to young people being radicalized. However, more justification and proof were required. Nonetheless, the overview has effectively shown the general pictures of project that success completely and meticulously prepared under propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels as one of Nazis inner circle in shaping the Germans mind.

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