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## Afghan People Need to be Vigilant

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Afghan people are passing through a crucial juncture of their socio-political history. During this period they have to be very much thoughtful and sensible and must fulfill the responsibility of responsible citizens – at least those who are educated and have some understanding of social and political lives must show such attitude.

They have to be careful not to believe in myths, rumors and propagandas and try to challenge different pieces of thoughts and information so as to be able to dig out reality and have a better understanding of the scenario.

In Afghan society, at the moment, different interest groups have launched a comprehensive policy of influencing the people through propaganda and change their way of thinking. Therefore, it is necessary for Afghan people to understand the reality and uncover all those propagandas and reach nearer to truth, which can take them to better future.

The propagandist seeks to change the way people understand an issue or situation for the purpose of changing their actions and expectations in ways that are desirable to the interest group. Propaganda, in this sense, serves as corollary to censorship in which the same purpose is achieved. Not by filling people's minds with approved information, but by preventing people from being confronted with opposing points of view.

What sets propaganda apart from other forms of advocacy is the willingness of the propagandist to change people's understanding through deception and confusion rather than persuasion and understanding.

Propaganda is a powerful tool in instable societies and during wars, tussles and important political processes; it is used to dehumanize and create hatred toward a supposed enemy, either internal or external, by creating a false image in the minds.

This can be done by using derogatory or racist terms, avoiding some words or by making allegations of enemy atrocities. Most propaganda wars require the home population to feel the enemy has inflicted an injustice, which may be fictitious or may be based on facts. The home population must also decide that the cause of their nation is just.

It is also one of the methods used in psychological warfare, which may also involve false flag operations. The term propaganda may also refer to false information meant to reinforce the mindsets of people who already believe as the propagandist wishes. The assumption is that if people believe something false they will constantly be assailed by doubts.

Since these doubts are unpleasant, people will be eager to have them extinguished and are therefore receptive to the reassurances of those in power. For this reason propaganda is often addressed to people who are already sympathetic to the agenda. This process of reinforcement uses an individual's predisposition to self-select agreeable information sources as a mechanism for maintaining control.

Propaganda may be administered in insidious ways. For instance, disparaging disinformation about the history of certain groups or foreign countries may be encouraged or tolerated in the educational system. Since few people actually double-check what they learn at school, such disinformation will be repeated by journalists as well as parents, thus reinforcing the idea that the disinformation item is really well-known fact, even though no one repeating the myth is able to point to an authoritative source.

The disinformation is then recycled in the media and in the educational system, without the need for direct governmental intervention on the media. Such permeating propaganda may be used for political goals by giving citizens a false impression of the quality of policies of their country, they may be incited to reject certain proposals or certain remarks or ignore the experience of others.

Afghan people in this regard need to be very much vigilant and must not leave the hand of reason while forming their opinion about any matter.