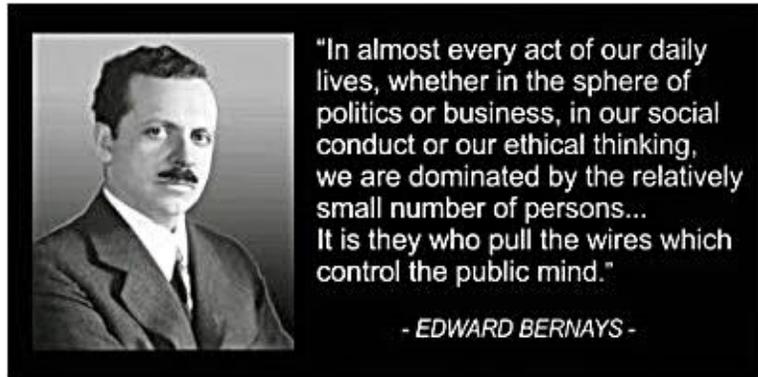


#### 4. THE ORIGINS OF CONTEMPORARY PROPAGANDA

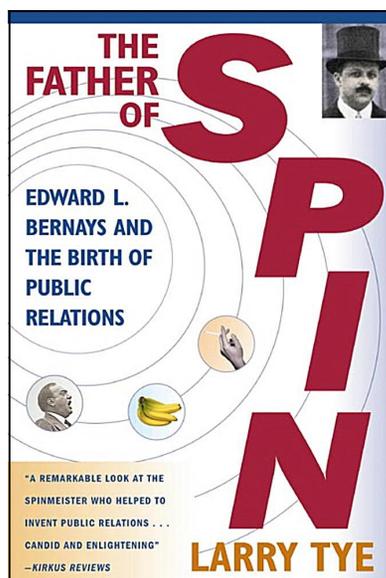


- In the early 1910s, the American intellectual and political commentator Walter Lippmann realized that *political ideology could be completely fabricated*, using the media to control both presentation and conceptualization.
- In this manner, he realized he could *create deeply-ingrained false beliefs in a population*, and also to *entirely erase undesirable political ideas from the public mind*.
- This was the beginning of the American hysteria for freedom, democracy, and patriotism, and also of *all manufactured political opinion*, a process that has been operative ever since.
- Lippmann created these theories of mass persuasion of the public, using totally fabricated “facts” deeply insinuated into the minds of a gullible public. But there is much more to this story.
- Edward Louis Bernays, nephew of psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud, was one of Lippmann’s most precocious students and it was he who put Lippmann’s theories into practice.
- Bernays is widely known in America as the father of *Public Relations*. However, he could be much more accurately described as the father of American *war marketing* as well as the father of *mass manipulation of the public mind*.

- Bernays claimed “If we understand the mechanism and motives of the group mind” it will be possible “to control and regiment the masses according to our will without their knowing about it”.
- He called this scientific technique of opinion-molding the ‘ENGINEERING OF CONSENT’, and to accomplish it he merged theories of *crowd psychology* with the psychoanalytic ideas of his uncle Sigmund Freud.
- Bernays regarded society as irrational and dangerous, with a “herd instinct”.
- The multi-party electoral system which was created by a group of European elites as a population control mechanism.
- Bernays believed that if this system were to survive and continue to serve those elites, *massive manipulation* of the public mind was necessary.
  - These elites—“invisible people”—would then have, through their influence on government and their control of the media, a monopoly on the power to *shape thoughts, values, and responses* of the citizenry.
- His conviction was that this group should flood the public with misinformation and emotionally-loaded propaganda to “engineer” the acquiescence of the masses and thereby rule over them.
- To him, this manufactured consent of the masses, creating conformity of opinion molded by the tool of false propaganda, would be vital for the survival of democracy.
- In this context, democracy is understood as the absolute freedom of the powerful to do absolutely as they please.

Excerpts from pp. 23-28

## Chapter 2– Lighting Up America



U.S. TOBACCO TYCOONS SCORED NEARLY AS STUNNING A TRIUMPH as did U.S. troops during World War I. When America joined the war, cigarettes were considered unsavory, if not unmanly; most men preferred cigars, pipes, or chewing tobacco.

But cigarettes proved more convenient in the trenches, new blended tobaccos produced a milder and more appealing product, and Uncle Sam began putting cigarettes in soldiers' rations, with the result that many doughboys changed their smoking habits.

Cigarettes were many things now, the stuff of warriors. And as their use among men soared, so did the profits of the companies making them. All of which convinced cigarette companies that the time was ripe to open a second front, this time targeting females.

In 1928, as they were beginning that push, Edward L. Bernays began working for George Washington Hill, head of the American Tobacco Company . . . The war and changing social mores already were helping Hill tap that lode.

Many women who'd replaced men in factories or served abroad had taken up the habit, defying the taboo against female smoking, and college coeds were trying to tear down barriers against women smoking in public places.

The quickest way to rally more women to his cause, the tobacco man believed, was to zero in on their waists.

His theory was simple: slimmness was coming into vogue, and cigarettes could be sold to the public, and especially to women, as a fat-free way to satisfy their hunger.

He'd already settled on a slogan— "Reach for a Lucky Instead of a Sweet"— and to bring it to life he turned to the thirty-six-year-old Bernays, whom he'd been paying \$25,000 a year just to be available.

It was a wise choice. Bernays didn't invent fashions like the pursuit of a svelte figure, but he was becoming the acknowledged master of *accentuating* those trends and *capitalizing* on them for his clients, a process he termed "CRYSTALLIZING PUBLIC OPINION."

And during his eight-year association with the tobacco tycoon he would make clear his willingness to employ *whatever antics or deceptions it took* to do that crystallizing, including trying to *discredit new research linking smoking to deadly diseases*. . .

Bernays understood they were up against a social taboo that cast doubt on the character of women who smoked, but he wasn't sure of the basis of that inhibition or how it could be overcome.

So he got Hill to agree to pay for a consultation with Dr. A. A. Brill, a psychoanalyst and disciple of Bernays's uncle Dr. Sigmund Freud.

"It is perfectly normal for women to want to smoke cigarettes," Brill advised.

"The emancipation of women has suppressed many of their feminine desires. More women do the same work as men do. Many women bear no children. Feminine traits are masked."

"Cigarettes, which are equated with men, become "TORCHES OF FREEDOM."

That rang a bell for Bernays. Why not organize a parade of prominent women lighting up their "torches of freedom"? And do it on Easter Sunday, a holiday symbolizing freedom of spirit, on Fifth Avenue, America's most prestigious promenade?