

CHAPTER I

THE HOLY BRIGADE

Lord Halifax (formerly Lord Irwin, the Holy Christian) British Ambassador is working at the helm of a brigade of ten thousand British propagandists in America.

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It costs Britain four crores of rupees a year, while the amount spent from Indian tax-payers' funds is shrouded in secrecy by jugglery of various budgets at the disposal of Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai, world's costliest ambassador.

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British propaganda agents virtually crawl all over the city. There are hundreds of them here. They have taken rooms, placed their key representatives in almost every hotel where delegates and Press representatives are quartered. That gives them an advantage of keeping an eye on all that transpires. Every evening the B. I. S. toss cocktail dinner parties for 'strictly 'big shots.' Whenever they will line-up really powerful names such as top-ranking publishers, columnists and commentators, they bring in Mr. Eden the "dazzler" to give them a frank diplomatic

"off the record" sales talk. That is what is known in this country as "influencing the influencers."
—(SAN FRANCISCO CABLE TO THE HINDUSTAN TIMES.)

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America is the happy hunting-ground of anti-India propagandists. They are not to be found in tens or hundreds. There are nearly 10,000 of them engaged in the brisk trade of slandering India.

This is nothing new. Mr. Churchill, Viscount Simon, the late Lord Lytton, and many other noted British Imperialists have been deputed to America from time to time to do damage to the cause of India's freedom. Only, the platoon has swollen into a division under Lord Halifax, known as the 'Holy man.'

Why is Great Britain spending millions—of our money as well as hers—to defame India on the American continent? It is because India looks to the liberty-loving people of America for sympathy and moral support in her struggle and Britain is determined to deprive us of that sympathy and support.

No one knows exactly how far this campaign is run at India's expense, because most of the funds spent from India are "secret funds"

not votable by the Indian Legislature. One estimate has it that the Indian Government spends several lakhs of rupees a year and that the British Government spend about 10 to 12 million dollars a year (four crores of rupees) in the United States for defending British policy in India.

HOW IT BEGAN

For the British Government this is no new policy. They have been carrying on organized propaganda against India since the last war. Mr. Rustomjee was the first Indian propagandist imported to America. Montagu's declarations on India were extensively publicized in America and the people there were told that India would eventually get self-government, but that so far she was not fit for it. The excuses for British procrastination, as given by the propagandists, were: illiteracy, the caste system, child marriages, the Hindu-Muslim problem, etc.

After the war the British Government invited, at the expense of the Indian Government, many educationists, missionaries and others from America for the special purpose of maligning India. Katherine Mayo was the queen of these morale-boosters. Over 1,000,000 copies of her drain-inspector's report, *Mother India*,

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were distributed in America. All members of Congress, high officials of the country, educationists, clubs, societies, churches, business organizations, even schools and colleges, were supplied with copies of her book. Some received as many as three copies—free, of course. Even today copies of this book are distributed free by the British Information Service which is under the direct supervision of that great 'Christian,' Lord Halifax, ex-Viceroy of India. In the month of August 1942, people who were listening in on a radio broadcasting station in Boston were frequently exhorted to read Miss Mayo's book. The name of the sponsor of this programme remained a secret but it would not be difficult to guess.

BAJPAI'S JOB

For the past three years anti-Indian propaganda in America has been vigorously carried on by the British Imperialists both through their officials and their propaganda agents. The Government of India have, of course, been paying a prescribed quota of the expense on these campaigns. With the arrival of Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai as India's first Agent-General and of Mr. J. Hennessey as Information Officer, the office of the Agent-General became the centre of guidance on anti-Indian propaganda

to the various British publicity agents. Such guidance notes and data were usually received by cable or through the diplomatic mail-bag from the Secretary of State for India, the Home Secretary of the Government of India and the Information Officer in the India Office in London. The sources of inspiration until recently were Sir Frederick Puckle (now adviser to Lord Halifax), the Information Department in India and Mr. Joyce of the India Office.

Mr. Hennessey started issuing releases to a large mailing list which was prepared with the co-operation of the British Information Services (formerly called the British Library of Information). These releases were of three types :

1. Vital guidance notes—sent only to British officials and a number of well-tried and trusted pro-British Americans who were actively engaged in carrying on British propaganda in the United States.

2. Background material—confidential, but could be used publicly without revealing its source. Sent to a somewhat wider clientele.

3. Press releases—sent to a public mailing list.

These three mailing lists all reached several thousands of addresses. Hundreds of books, booklets, and pamphlets have also been printed and circulated free by this "mis-information

officer" of the Government of India. The British Information Services have, of course, their separate mailing lists which run into hundreds of thousands of names. Selected material on India, some of it based on Hennessey's guidance notes, and other releases, are frequently issued by the B.I.S.

OVER COCKTAILS

Much of the propaganda is arranged and carried on through personal contacts, correspondence, informal talks to select influential groups, besides the usual means of the radio, public meetings, etc. An endless stream of high-power propagandists flows from England every week by air and sea. They are sent round the country on schedules arranged in advance by the secret department of the British Information Services and the numerous British consulates scattered throughout America. These propagandists, who include members of the British Cabinet, make public speeches, give information talks, and try in every possible way to convince important groups of newspaper men, business men and educationists that Britain has honest intentions of granting freedom to the people of India. Cocktail parties and tea parties at the British Embassy and consulates are specially arranged in honour of these distinguished pro-

pagandists so that newspaper men, college professors, bankers, industrialists and others of influence and high standing, are invited to meet them. Strangely enough, the British are able to play upon an unexplained weakness of a certain class of Americans who get a thrill of superiority and feel proud when invited to a gathering that has as its guest of honour Lord or Lady So-and-So.

This is strengthened further by international marriages between the daughters of wealthy Americans and not-so-wealthy Europeans who are either 'pseudo' or can rightly boast of "noble blood-streams." This has often been the cause of unfavourable comment and criticism in the United States. It is difficult to understand why the Americans, who are so democratic by nature, should be so easily influenced by glamorous titles. Nevertheless, the fact remains that many American journalists are easily influenced by men like Lord Halifax.

Sir Frederick Puckle and Mr. Bozman, the new Information Secretary of the Government of India, who recently came on a visit, met some important newspapermen of influence at cocktail parties and other functions in the larger cities, and even in smaller towns with a population of 10,000 or so, and did their best—or worst—to prejudice their minds against India's cause for

freedom. It is a sorry fact that some American editors, who were friends of India, were "won over" to the other side by British propaganda. There was, for instance, an editorial in the well-known paper, *The Nation*, which was reprinted and widely circulated by Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai's office in Washington.

THE 'BRAVE' TEN THOUSAND

It is officially estimated that there are about 10,000 'British' propagandists in the United States who are devoting their time exclusively to India. They may be classified as follows :

1. British officials numbering some 3,000, whose work is to indirectly influence public opinion in England's favour on the question of India's freedom.

2. Many British citizens, who are not yet "naturalized" in America but who have 'settled' in that country. Many of them hold important positions in the Universities, business organizations, churches, societies, newspaper offices, etc. They number 2,000 or more.

3. Britishers who have become naturalized citizens of America during the past five to 25 years, with the sole purpose and intention of infiltrating into American institutions and administrative and educational groups. They continue to stress the necessity for the British to

continue their rule in India. It is estimated that since 1929 over 300 British economists, professors, business experts and other specially trained and educated Britishers have come to America and settled there as American citizens. These are often referred to as "Beaverbrook's Bright Boys" as it was originally Lord Beaverbrook's bright idea to send these men to America to capture key positions in the various walks of life. Many of them today are holding high and influential positions in the Universities, business and social organizations and even in the American Government. It is sufficient to say that practically every department of the United States Government has one or more of these ex-Britishers "planted" in key positions, and among those in this group who are actively carrying on anti-Indian propoganda are a thousand or more.

4. Pro-British Americans, about 4,000. These are people with British associations and sympathies due to social, financial or family relationships, business interests and educational background (*e.g.*, Rhodes Scholarships), etc. Many of these are American Missionaries who have been in India and have been won over by the British through special favours such as Kaisar-i-Hind medals, pats on the back by Governors and other high officials. The nature of the

propaganda carried on by members of this group seems to be of a particularly vicious type.

AT VICEROY'S HOUSE

I shall mention a few instances :

1. Mr. and Mrs. Peter Muir were imported to India as honoured guests of the Viceroy, Governors and ruling Princes in 1942. They enjoyed our hospitality for 15 months, then brought out a book, packed with poisonous propaganda, entitled "This Is India." Mr. Muir was an employee of the British Government during the first world war. He was regarded as a very safe American who could be relied upon to write a book against India. He stayed in India from March 1942 to the middle of 1943. The manuscript of his book was revised, checked up, rewritten and re-hashed in the United States by the B.I.S. The B.I.S. and its Indian appendage purchased 30,000 copies of his book for free distribution, labelled, "with the compliments of the publishers," who never knew where the copies were sent or actually mailed by the above two agencies.

2. Postwheller has brought out a book entitled "India Against the Storm." He was a diplomat in the American Consulate in India and was taken over by the British. He was given a "doctorate" by an Indian University and

then 'won over' to write this book. Prepared reviews of this book were sent by the B.I.S. to various newspapers. This book was also distributed "with the compliments of the author," under the publisher's label, all over America.

STATE DEPARTMENT'S "NO"

Attempts at dispatching certain Americans to India were recently made by the British Ministry of Information :

1. Mr. Archer, a Professor of the Yale University, who was in India for 19 years, was recently requested to go back to India. Lord Halifax took a personal interest in this matter. Mr. Archer, however, was discouraged by the U. S. Government and his trip did not materialize because the Government felt that his trip to India would harm the reputation of the American people in India. So the plan to plant an "independent" American observer in India failed. It is reported that Lord Halifax took the matter up with the higher authorities, but failed to make them change their minds.

2. The British Ministry of Information arranged to send a certain American photographer to India to bring back films for use in the United States. This photographer applied for a passport, but his application was turned down, no doubt for similar reasons.

3. A Negro lawyer was also similarly invited as an honoured guest by the British Government to visit India, but so far he has not been able to get a passport from the U.S. Government.

The American Government seem to be much wiser than the American newspapermen, some of whom easily fall into the trap of the British Ministry of Information. Among the leading U. S. journalists who are openly championing the cause of British Imperialism in the American Press are Walter Lippman, Dorothy Thompson, Major Fielding Elliott, Phillip Simms, Waverly Root, and Barnet Nover.

These American journalists have personal relations with high British officials, and are occasionally guests of honour, but the vast majority of the American newspapers are openly for India's freedom and the writers mentioned have miserably failed to prejudice American opinion against India.

"Britain can't fool us," is the common remark on American lips, when you discuss the question of India with Americans, and the average American strongly resents and hates the propaganda that the British carry on against India.