

## AN ANECDOTE ABOUT DISINFORMATION FROM ORWELL

In contemporary times marked by the prevalence of digital technologies, the proliferation of disinformation has emerged as a prominent concern on the global agenda. Notably, the phenomenon of disinformation is not confined solely to social media platforms; historically, it has served as a potent tool for propagandistic purposes and as a means of instigating public outrage. Furthermore, beyond its utilization by intelligence agencies, adversaries, or competitors, disinformation encompasses a method employed for shaping and manipulating perceptions, often referred to as social engineering.

Illustratively, insights from George Orwell's War Diaries underscore the pervasive use of disinformation during the Second World War by both Britain and Germany. This involved disseminating misleading information not only to the populations of enemy territories via radio broadcasts and newspapers but also within their own societies. Orwell's diary entries vividly delineate the orchestration of disinformation campaigns in accordance with governmental directives [1]:

*“I have now been in the BBC about 6 months. Shall remain in it if the political changes, I foresee come off, otherwise probably not. Its atmosphere is something halfway between a girls’ school and a lunatic asylum, and all we are doing at present is useless, or slightly worse than useless. Our radio strategy is even more hopeless than our military strategy. Nevertheless, one rapidly becomes propaganda-minded and develops a cunning one did not previously have. E.g., I am regularly alleging in my newsletters that the Japanese are plotting to attack Russia. I don’t believe this to be so, but the calculation is:*

*If the Japanese do attack Russia, we can then say “I told you so”. If the Russians attack first, we can, having built up the picture of a Japanese plot beforehand, pretend that it was the Japanese who started it. If no war breaks out at all, we can claim that it is because the Japanese are too frightened of Russia.*

*All propaganda is lies, even when one is telling the truth. I don’t think this matters so long as one knows what one is doing, and why.”*

Thus, the evolving landscape of the contemporary era, notably the third decade distinguished by the omnipresence of social media platforms, stands as a pivotal epoch in the annals of human history – an era entrenched in an all-encompassing struggle against the proliferation of disinformation. This epoch represents a turning point wherein the convergence of technological advancements and the burgeoning dissemination of information has presented unparalleled challenges.

The battle against disinformation transcends mere technological skirmishes; it embodies a multifaceted war encompassing legislative, societal, and technological fronts. It demands collaborative efforts from governments, technological innovators, media entities, and vigilant citizens alike to fortify the citadels of truth and integrity. The potency of disinformation to manipulate beliefs, sway opinions, and sow discord underscores the urgency for concerted and unwavering action in safeguarding the sanctity of information dissemination. The determination to combat disinformation is not merely a response to contemporary challenges; it symbolizes a resolute commitment to preserving the essence of truth and authenticity in shaping the socio-political landscapes of the future.

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## REFERENCES

- [1] Orwell Diaries 1938-1942, <https://orwelldiaries.wordpress.com/2012/03/14/14-3-42/>.