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Formative Battles:
**Cold War Disinformation
Campaigns and Mitigation
Strategies**

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During the Cold War, the U.S. and the Soviet Union refined covert methods of political intervention and conflict, making use of proxy wars, election interference, and disinformation campaigns to advance their respective interests. Work such as Dov H. Levin's research tracking election interference (2016) illustrates that both superpowers used disinformation as a core tactic throughout the Cold War and the subsequent decade. Throughout the Cold War, the U.S. and USSR competed in an arms race of fictions, attempting to cultivate ideological support internationally and domestically.

In response, presented with sophisticated and widespread Soviet disinformation, the U.S. created a then-groundbreaking interagency organization called the Active Measures Working Group (AMWG). The AMWG operated using a "Report-Analyze-Publicize" strategy that prioritized overt disinformation and successfully challenged Soviet active measures in the 1980s (Bailey, 1998). At the international level, both the Non-Aligned Movement, with its focus on non-intervention in the internal affairs of other countries, and the United Nations' General Assembly more generally attempted to address the issue.

Some have posited Cold War mitigation strategies could be used to combat the newest iteration of harmful propaganda and disinformation (Cull, et al, 2017; Neal, 2019; Selga & Rasmussen, 2017; Deeks, McCubbin, & Poplin, 2017), but while Cold War disinformation mitigation tactics may provide aspirational frameworks for modern efforts, they are largely inapplicable in a modern disinformation battlefield. The birth of the internet, the removal of centralized and shared information sources, and the increase in the number of actors involved in information dissemination creates a landscape substantially different in nature.

DECADES OF INTERVENTION

Foreign intervention, both overt and covert, was a core characteristic of the Cold War, as were the ideological underpinnings of these interventions. Countries where the U.S. or the Soviet Union perceived their ideological or economic interests to be in jeopardy became candidates for varied types of outside interference. Both engaged in large-scale election interference operations across multiple continents using covert funding, candidate training, defamation campaigns, and the spread of propaganda in strategic regions (Lucas & Mistry, 2009; Nilsson, 2012). This war of proxies, rumors, and plausible deniability was used in complement to the military occupation and overthrow, armed conflict, and state violence that both nations otherwise engaged in during the Cold War (Westad, 2007; Ziegler, 1997).

Elections offer a window into these practices because they are key moments in societal change where power is contested. Levin (2016) tracks election interference through the Cold War and into the decade following, covering 1946-2000. Levin's dataset shows that 64.1 percent of national elections worldwide were targeted in some way by either the United States or USSR/Russia during this time period (Levin, 2016). Similarly, O'Rourke and Downes



(2016) also found that the United States alone attempted to instigate 63 regime changes in foreign countries using only covert methods, with 24 of these attempts succeeding. Influence operations included payments to specific party members and organizations, as well as varied disinformation and propaganda campaigns (Levin, 2016). The United States Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) complemented specific coups with advanced disinformation campaigns in the international press to create confusion and hide the agency's activity (Grandin, 2007).

This pervasive, but covert, intervention arose at a time when overt conflict and traditional war would have countered U.S. and Soviet public narratives of non-intervention, peace, and mutually-assured destruction. Both countries' interventions followed patterns related to broader Cold War foreign policy patterns. For instance, the U.S. implemented a surge of interference operations at the onset of the Cold War, but then saw a decline around the time of the Vietnam War. A second surge of interventions in the 1980s coincided with the Reagan administration's aggressive stance on communist expansion (Westad, 2007, p.332). Likewise, Soviet activity saw a gradual climb until the mid-1970s, sharply declining once the war in Afghanistan began (Levin, 2016; Gaddis, 1990).

Most of the election interference activity was not, as common knowledge suggests, undertaken within the same elections (Levin, 2016). The U.S. and the Soviet Union only backed opposing sides in the same election in 8 percent of cases (Levin, 2016, p.98). For the most part, both countries intervened independent of any concrete confirmation that the other was already involved in the election (Levin, 2016). Occasions where the U.S. and the Soviet Union backed different sides in the same election, such as the Italian elections in 1948 and the Chilean election in 1970, were not the norm (Levin, 2016). This contradicts popular historical narratives that the superpowers only interfered to directly prevent the other from gaining influence; instead it is likely that the competitive climate motivated the two countries to seek influence in foreign countries as part of overall geopolitics, rather than the direct threat of their opponent's presence. Ideological competition and expansion characterized the Cold War and motivated the use of covert tactics that affect public opinion and political sentiments, such as disinformation campaigns.



The 1948 Italian elections were described at the time as no less than an “apocalyptic test of strength between communism and democracy.”



COLD WAR CAMPAIGNS: DISINFORMATION AS AN IDEOLOGICAL WEAPON

Historians have debated the motivations behind the Cold War conflict since before the conflict's end, arguing whether the USSR and U.S.'s strategic realist expansion or ideological commitment to Marxist communism and democratic capitalism fueled the conflict (Westad, 2007; Wohlforth, 2000). Although realist motivations may have driven the expansion of Cold War intervention in some part, ideological tactics were used to advance U.S. and USSR interests both domestically and abroad. Both countries viewed the Cold War, at least in part, as an ideological conflict, and as a result, the multi-decade "war" was fought using discourse and tools to affect ideology (Kramer, 1999; Gould-Davies, 1999; Westad, 2007; Wohlforth, 2000; Zake, 2010). Scholars of both historical and modern disinformation posit that conspiracy theories, smear campaigns, and similar disinformation located in the political discourse affords a sense of political drama that is accessible to wide portions of the informed public (Pearce, 2015; Schatz, 2009). These methods of harassment and political spectacle can be hard to trace back to their originators, cultivating a sense of general authorship and acceptance among the public (Pearce, 2015; Mejias, 2017).

Examples of these campaigns are diverse and widespread, with their motivations still debated (Kramer, 1999; Hänni, 2018). As seen in the case of CIA operations in Guatemala in 1954, the U.S. planted stories in both the Guatemalan domestic and the general international press for the direct purpose of fostering instability in the Arbenz government (Grandin, 2007). Likewise, the Soviet Union implemented disinformation campaigns both within its borders and internationally that painted émigrés from Latvia as Nazi war criminals (Zake, 2010). As the Soviets blamed the U.S. for the AIDS epidemic on the African continent, the Reagan administration help spread stories of "booby trapped" children's toys sold by the USSR to Afghanistan families (Bearden, 2003).

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The general use of disinformation, including the presence of conspiracy theories and rumors, were informed by the ideological currents of both the United States and the USSR. Although the extent to which each country sought interventions, covert or otherwise, varied throughout the decades of conflict, the above disinformation campaign examples can be traced to overarching ideological competition between the USSR and the United States.

Within the U.S., the use of disinformation as a foreign policy tool began as soon as the Cold War began. In an April 1950 National Security Council report, State Department director of policy planning Paul Nitze detailed the psychological nature of the Cold War and plans to spread democracy and democratic institutions across the globe. This document, commonly known as NSC 68, laid out the U.S. government's intention to combat any and all communist expansion through any means necessary, including fostering psychological vigilance against communist influencers and spreading disinformation campaigns designed to weaken communist support (National Security Council Report 68, 1950). Popular US ideology viewed democracy not only as a political and institutional structure, but also as a "state of mind" distinctly in conflict with communist modes of thought. This democratic ideology was capable of being spread, seeded, and cultivated. For example, George Atcheson, Jr., the



Political Adviser in Japan, stated in a 1947 letter to President Truman that the Japanese people's "love of freedom" would allow them to establish a democracy, despite communist voices critiquing the U.S. presence in the country (The Political Adviser in Japan..., 1947).

Communism was viewed as a hostile ideology spread through labor unions and schools that brainwashed people and deprived them of their individuality (Miller, 2019). In response, the U.S. participated in self-styled "psychological warfare" in Europe west of the Iron Curtain, spreading anti-communist literature, radio broadcasts, and pamphlets in Italy and France. Similar efforts were attempted in Soviet satellite countries, but the effect was largely limited (Lucas & Mistry, 2009). While not all of this was disinformation and much was legitimate news, these efforts were implemented using covert tactics to spread ideology and sway opinions (Lucas & Mistry, 2009). In Sweden, the United States Information Agency (USIA), and its local United States Information Service (USIS) office, ran disinformation campaigns during the 1950s and 1960s, in the hopes of disempowering labor unions on the grounds that such entities fostered Communist sentiments (Nilsson, 2012).

The Soviet Union also put extensive resources into information tactics in line with its global goals. At the onset of the Cold War era, the Soviet Union was getting its feet under itself as a fledgling superpower and it did so with genuine ideological commitment to Marxist-Leninist thought (Gould-Davies, 1999). Stalin-era Cold War policy focused on amassing flexible resources and the use of intelligence operations in both domestic and international contexts in support of this ideological stance. With this goal in mind, the USSR consolidated the different and varied national intelligence groups of the revolution and WWII eras into a single Soviet Department of International Information (Hutchinson, 2006). *Maskirovka*, a Russian word that translates into "masking," "deception," or "camouflage" approximately, characterized the operation of this agency (Hutchinson, 2006). *Maskirovka* as a conceptual category of tactics and ideology allowed the USSR to conceive a different kind of global capacity based on intelligence and covert operation, and not one necessarily dependent on traditional forms of alliance and diplomacy. Early on in the Cold War, the USSR used these tactics to secure material and protect resources from competitors. For instance, when uranium was discovered in Bulgaria's Rodopi Mountains, reports were forged to obscure the grade and amount to make it appear as if the Soviets would not have enough to make a bomb until much later in order to keep the U.S. at bay (Ziegler, 1997, p.18-19).

"Active measures," a term translated directly from the Russian word *aktivnyye meropriyatiyare*, refers to Soviet efforts to influence the opinions and positions of governments and the public



to elicit a desired response (United States Department of State, 1986). The Kremlin spent billions to sustain its global disinformation machine in the first three decades of the Cold War (McMahon, 1982). The covert work was carried out by Service A of the Committee on State Securities' (KGB) First Directorate. Service A's overarching goal was to strain relationships between nations, to damage the image of the United States abroad, and to sow distrust and confusion about the efficacy of democracy (United States Department of State, 1981). This group used disinformation and forgeries, front groups, media manipulation, political influence operations, and nonruling communist and leftist parties to compromise democratic institutions and the United States' interests (United States Department of State, 1986).

In February 1980, after the USSR invasion of Afghanistan, the KGB sought to destabilize neighboring Pakistan as it grew closer diplomatically to the U.S. Disinformation campaigns were distributed in Islamabad and Karachi via leaflets denouncing government policies from alleged insiders, throughout Pakistani press outlets decrying military mobilizing, and in India in an attempt to isolate Pakistan from potential allies (Cull et al, 2017). Service A was notorious for devising conspiracy theories as well—circulating stories in foreign Soviet-financed newspapers that fostered anti-Americanism abroad. Some notable examples of these rumors include claims that the U.S. genetically engineered the AIDS virus to target black populations and gay men in the 1980s and a separate rumor alleging that the U.S. was behind the attempted assassination of Pope John Paul II in 1981 (Schoen & Lamb, 2012).



1984 downed Soviet jet in Afghanistan. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:1984_downed_Soviet_jet.jpg



U.S. RESPONSE TO SOVIET DISINFORMATION

The U.S. government was well aware that disinformation presented a major threat to its interests and took considerable steps to counter communist expansion with their own ideological campaigns. In the beginning years of the Cold War era, the United States tracked Soviet disinformation campaigns and interventions, but due to policy doctrines like Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) and *détente*, U.S. leadership chose at first not to confront it directly (Cull, et. al., 2017). However, this policy stance changed with creation of the Active Measures Working Group (AMWG) in 1981.

In 1981, the United States formed the Active Measures Working Group (AMWG) in an attempt to combat the Soviet misinformation and disinformation. AMWG was an interagency group with a narrow scope, composed of representatives from the FBI, CIA, the Department of Defense, the Department of Justice, and the United States Information Agency (USIA)—pooling intelligence from a variety of departments and minds. Little-known but influential, the Active Measures Working Group adopted an effective “Report-Analyze-Publicize” strategy that researched and debunked disinformation campaigns (Bailey, 1998). The Working Group was initially officially organized under the United States Department of State and then was later integrated into the USIA (Fedchenko, 2016, p.147). Leadership was well-defined under Dr. Kathleen Bailey and Ambassador Dennis Kux, who took responsibility for all reporting and representation to stakeholders (Schoen & Lamb, 2012).

AMWG’s general policy on when to publicly attribute and denounce Soviet misinformation activities was conservative, only doing so if their evidence could yield “a grand jury indictment” (Schoen & Lamb, 2012, p. 43). These tight parameters allowed the team to focus on information that could be quickly and definitively debunked. The success of the group came from its interagency cooperation, tight mission parameters that focused on refuting outright lies, and transparent motivations that transcended any individual loyalty to one agency (Abrams, 2016). AMWG’s early successes were publicized as well, which fostered public trust in their work and allowed the group to take an authoritative stance determining what was, and what was not, disinformation. AMWG developed their intelligence by coordinating and interviewing Soviet defectors—statesmen, intelligence officers, and KGB officers—who offered up intimate insights on active measures activities, tactics, and motives. Through press conferences and collaboration with journalists, the group endeavored to educate leaders in governments as well as the public by distributing evidence of interference and Soviet-manufactured disinformation materials.

In 1983, the Reagan Administration outlined a “political action” strategy National Security Decision Directive 75, which sought a substantially more aggressive stance against international Soviet influence and *Maskirovka* tactics (Bailey, 1998; United States, 1983). Meanwhile, chief members of the Active Measures Working Group toured on an educational



“roadshow” to over 20 different nations, beginning in the same year. Briefing teams, dubbed as “truth squads,” visited countries in Northern Africa, the Middle East, Latin America, and South Asia to brief foreign intelligence agencies, as well as local journalists on prolific Soviet disinformation activities at play within their respective nations and abroad (Schoen & Lamb, 2012, p. 41-42.) The group’s biggest success came from leveraging their publicity and public diplomacy against Soviet Premier Mikhail Gorbachev in 1986, eventually resulting in Soviet leadership disavowing claims that the US was responsible for the AIDS virus (Schoen & Lamb, 2012, p.43).

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE TO U.S. AND SOVIET DISINFORMATION TACTICS

The U.S. and USSR’s war of fictions, interventions, and ideological competition did not go unnoticed by the countries who were their targets. From the end of World War II onwards, the U.S. or the Soviet Union/Russia targeted one of every nine competitive elections with covert electoral intervention, impacting 60 different countries (Levin, 2016, p.94). While some of this intervention included force, most included some level of disinformation as well. In response, other countries attempted to create international agreements that would stop the interference. However, overall, the international community did not succeed in slowing either the US’s or the Soviet Union’s intervention in the internal affairs of countries.

Within the UN’s General Assembly, the major international venue for potential agreements, voting tended to divide along either Cold War lines or North-South/colonial history lines (Kim & Russett, 1996). Within the UN, both superpowers leveraged their respective influence to keep the UN’s participating countries voting in at least one of their interests, largely muting international criticism of USSR’s or U.S.’s tactics. Outside the UN, the U.S. proliferated other, small regional treaties such as the 1947 Rio Pact and the 1948 creation of the Organization of American States (OAS), which consolidated support within the UN. These smaller agreements guaranteed a voting block within the UN for the U.S. and its Cold War actions (Grandin, 2007, p. 28). This United States monopoly is suspected to have dissuaded Soviet active participation in the United Nations in the early years of the Cold War (Gǎiduk, 2012, p.68). Later however, as smaller countries joined the international body and the USSR saw opportunity for greater influence, the Soviets became more active. In doing so, within certain issue areas such as nuclear weapons, a unique understanding arose between the U.S., USSR, and to a smaller extent the UK (Gǎiduk, 2012). For instance, the USSR and the U.S. often voted in agreement to keep countries without nuclear weapons from developing the capability, assuring the Cold War was a two-superpower conflict (O’Driscoll, 2009).

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Attempting to break the superpowers’ dominance of international affairs, the Non-Aligned Movement had an impact on international relations during the Cold War, representing a major voting bloc in the UN until 1985 (Kim & Russett, 1996, p.631). The Non-Aligned Movement sought agreements that confirmed the sovereignty and territorial integrity of countries despite their orientation to capitalism or communism, and respected countries abilities to manage their internal affairs (e.g, Final Communiqué of the Asian-African conference of Bandung,

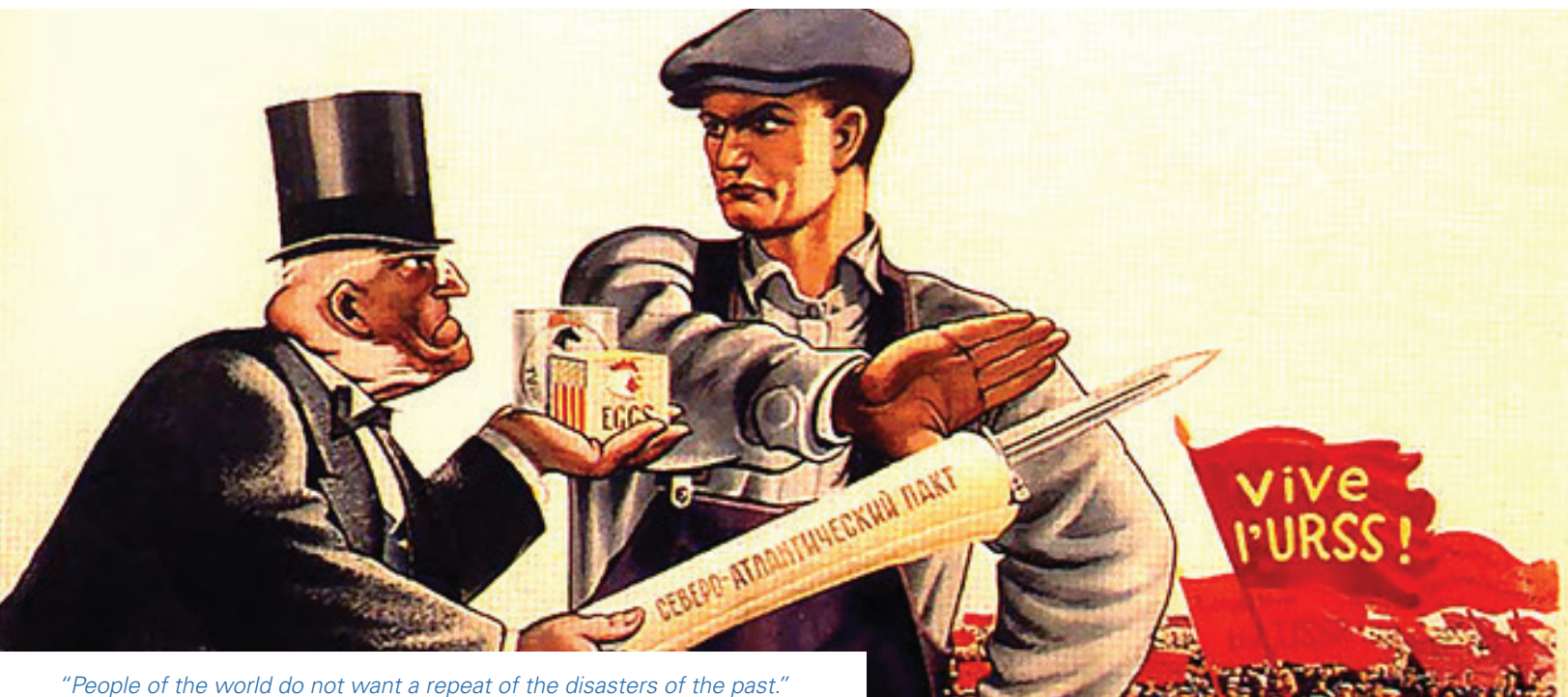


1955).¹ However, it never succeeded in stopping the U.S. and Soviet Union from interfering in the domestic affairs of other countries (Dinkel, 2019). While the Non-Aligned Movement was, at least initially, very focused on the continued process of decolonization, at the time of its birth at the Bandung Conference, the U.S. had already used covert force to disrupt democratic processes in Iran in 1953 and Guatemala in 1954 (Forsythe, 1992). By 1957, the host of the Bandung meeting, Indonesia, was also subject to CIA interference (Forsythe, 1992). Understandably, the Non-Aligned Movement's focus on visible and traditional forms of coercion and intervention often overshadowed any response to the U.S. or USSR's soft intervention tactics, such as propaganda, covert election interference, and disinformation campaigns.

Outside of the Non-Aligned Movement's overall challenge to the bipolar world, the most significant international response to Cold War disinformation tactics was the United Nations' (UN) adoption of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) in 1966. In response to the growing presence of divisive propaganda and disinformation campaigns, the ICCPR included Article (20) of the United Nations General Assembly (1966), which set forth the following:

1. Any propaganda for war shall be prohibited by law.
2. Any advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence shall be prohibited by law.

¹ While the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77 are often spoken about together as major Third World solidarity movements, and both discussed the range of issues facing the Third World - the Non-Aligned Movement focused on political issues while the G77 focused on economic issues. Alden C., et. al., 2010, provides an overview of their histories.



"People of the world do not want a repeat of the disasters of the past."
https://www.flickr.com/photos/x-ray_delta_one/4318705125



Although the Article was eventually approved after considerable back and forth, it faced opposition by Western powers such as the United States and United Kingdom—both expressing fears that the prohibition would stifle freedom of expression (Kearney, 2007). Soviet-aligned states generally favored the prohibition. Despite its presence within a core document and its effective “in force” date in March 1976, the article was largely ignored in practice (Kearney, 2005; United Nations General Assembly, 1966). And, although the prohibition had limited effect, other smaller bilateral agreements between countries provided a similar function throughout the Cold War era, such as treaties between India and Pakistan in 1948, Israel and Lebanon in 1983, and South Africa and Mozambique in 1984 (Kearney, 2005, p.78).

ASPIRATIONAL LESSONS FROM THE COLD WAR

While disinformation was a Cold War tactic, the birth of social media and the internet have significantly changed the landscape for disinformation actors and those who contend with and combat them. Considering the current scope of the disinformation problem, the infrastructure of United States defense and intelligence communities, private company responsibility, and the climate of international internet governance, lessons from the Cold War may at best be aspirational, and at worst distracting and misguided.

It is undeniable that the scope of the disinformation problem today is different than the one faced in Cold War era. The pervasive presence of social media allows actors the means to spread rumors, propaganda, and false news without having to engage with gatekeepers such as the traditional media. Social media also allows the purveyors of disinformation to insert narratives directly into the personal and trusted networks that many use to understand political events (Messing & Westwood, 2014). The internet itself and new capacity for massive data storage creates hypothetical sites of insecurity and breach—raising the possibility that state forces may access, weaponize, and disseminate private information (Sanger & Shane, 2016). The threat of this alone can cause distrust in government institutions and digital storage protocols. These looming considerations make it difficult to differentiate between good and bad information, creating a climate where any news or material is concurrently both circumspect and potentially vital.

For a brief period during the Cold War, the Active Measures Working Group acted as a fact-checking organization that successfully debunked misinformation and accurately and unbiasedly attributed its sources to governments and the public with well-established authority. Now the arena for misinformation is online and reliable attribution is far less addressable, as Russian and other state actors—both human and non-human—can easily disguise themselves and more effectively employ social engineering to shape public opinion (Bradshaw & Howard, 2017). In addition, the Active Measures Working Group’s analyze and debunk strategy would run into the same issues today that any other fact checking initiative faces. For instance, research has found that bad information is difficult to counter because corrections often do not change beliefs (Nyhan and Reifler, 2010; Lazer et. al., 2017). Other research has found that public attempts to report on bad information can amplify the

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information rather than refute it (Phillips, 2018). The strategies used by the Active Measures Working Group are currently being employed, but the scope of the problem far outpaces these once successful tactics.

The U.S. defense and intelligence communities have the same, if not greater, vested interest in addressing disinformation threats than they did in the Cold War. However, the concrete implementation of an anti-disinformation task forces faces considerable management and structural challenges. In 2016, the FY17 budget appropriated money for the establishment of a Department of Defense (DoD) based Global Engagement Center to “lead, synchronize, and coordinate efforts of the federal government to recognize, understand, expose, and counter foreign state and non-state propaganda and disinformation efforts” (National Defense Authorization Act, 2016). However, as of March 2018, the Global Engagement Center administered by the State Department had yet to spend any of its \$120 Million allocation (Harris, 2018).

In November 2017, the FBI formed a group like the Active Measures Working Group: The Foreign Influence Task Force (FITF) (Bodine-Baron, 2018). The task force currently works to defend against foreign interference in American democratic institutions, specifically focusing on electoral interference and clear violations of U.S. law (Hickey, 2018). Under the Department of Justice, the FITF collaborates with other departments and agencies of the Intelligence Community, as well as draws upon the FBI’s relationships with social media companies to share information about foreign interference operations. There are other newly-formed and similar task forces within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), such as the DHS’s Countering Foreign Influence Task Force formed in 2018, that advise DHS leadership on the scope of online threats. The relatively recent formation and operation of these efforts invites further research into the effectiveness of these varied task forces (Bodine-Baron, 2018).

Considering assessments of current interagency cooperation and trust, replicating the Active Measures Working Group’s success is unlikely without significant restructuring of the United States intelligence apparatus within departments like DHS (Sedgwick & Hawdon, 2019; Dahl, 2007; Lamb & Marks, 2010). Since the establishment of DHS, intelligence, police, and defense agencies consistently agree that cooperation is beneficial to defense operations and all engage in various joint interagency activities. However, the limited studies available suggest that collaboration is most effective between small local law enforcement entities and that the larger U.S. agencies suffer from diffuse leadership and unclear lines of command (Sedgwick & Hawdon, 2019, p. 183). Where the Active Measures Working Group was able to create a team unified by clear mission parameters and an overarching loyalty to combatting disinformation, current endemic interagency distrust remains a significant problem for all multidisciplinary efforts within the United States defense field, not just those that combat disinformation and its impacts (Lamb & Marks, 2010).

A further challenge is that unlike in the past where the government could take the lead in fighting disinformation, the primary responsibility now falls upon social media companies to moderate and flag misleading and/or false content circulated on their platforms. These companies grapple with non-stop human interaction on their platforms producing massive amounts of data. Those spreading disinformation move between platforms, often owned by different companies, adapting their tactics as they do. Additionally, these largely U.S. based companies must contend with questions about freedom of expression, which makes policing the creation and spread of misinformation and disinformation a deeply complicated issue that may impact human rights and freedoms of expression. The sheer volume of disinformation material produced today is not comparable to the limited, if



refined campaigns of the Cold War era. The increased numbers of actors, disinformation content, and media platforms make lessons from the Cold War era difficult to apply.

Finally, as the Non-Aligned Movement and the UN both made unsuccessful efforts to limit intervention in the internal affairs of countries, present day attempts to limit interference in elections suffer from the same challenge of hegemon disinterest and global divisions. The recent Paris Call for Trust and Security in Cyberspace from the 2018 Internet Governance Forum meeting includes the commitment to “strengthen our capacity to prevent malign interference by foreign actors aimed at undermining electoral processes through malicious cyber activities.” Currently, 67 governments, 358 private sector entities, and 139 organizations have signed this non-binding agreement. However, many major internet powers—notably, the U.S. and Russia—have not signed, along with other major actors such as China, Brazil, and India. Just as in the Cold War era, countries will continue to preserve their best interest, and many hegemonic powers continue to see disinformation as a valuable tool.

CONCLUSION

Taking into account the current scope of the disinformation and its consequences, the Cold War’s pervasive covert intervention and ideological warfare pale in comparison to the problem at hand. The rampant intervention and sophisticated disinformation campaigns of the past definitively set the stage for current issues, and disinformation tactics and ideological warfare continue to threaten democratic institutions and public trust. However, in light of the current disinformation problem, and with the rise of privatized technology and social media, Cold War solutions may in fact be more distracting than helpful.

It is not the lack of interagency teams like the Active Measures Working Group that prevents the U.S. from responding in meaningful ways to the current disinformation problem. As seen above, groups like the AMWG have been established and funded within and outside governments. It might be fruitful instead to analyze the effectiveness and cooperation capability of these collaborative efforts within the current infrastructure. In addition, these domestic efforts may benefit from international cooperation, but as in the case of the Cold War, global divisions mute proper response and engagement within the international community regarding this international problem.

Thus, historical case studies such as the Cold War can still provide context to the disinformation and intervention at hand in the modern world, but it best to take Cold War solutions in their context as well, and create new solutions based on today’s landscape.



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