

The Soviet Disinformation Framing of Pope Pius XII

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Abstract

One of the most effective tactics used to bring down one's enemy is the ideological tool exemplified in Soviet and subsequent Russian disinformation. Disinformation has created an alternative way of looking at history that grew out of the Soviet Union's actions in time of war. Soviet Disinformation was an effective war tactic used by Communist leaders to demonize those in a position of power who posed a threat to the Soviet regime. Joseph Stalin, the Communist leader of the Soviet Union in from 1924-1953, used disinformation to discredit such perceived enemies as the United States and the Roman Catholic Church. The Soviet disinformation campaign behind the framing of Pope Pius XII was the epitome of deception and manipulation of public records and the press. As a case study, it provides a model that may be used to expose the past and current implementation of Soviet and Russian Disinformation.

The Soviet Disinformation Framing of Pope Pius XII

Warfare is an attribute of a world made up of multiple powerful countries with different cultures, languages and ideals. As a result, warfare tactics are very important and, in most cases, help determine the outcome of many wars. These tactics include various strategic and military operations that are often attributed to the leaders implementing them. Throughout history, countries during times of war use different tactics to deceive their adversaries and disguise their true intentions. One of the most effective warfare tactics is the application of disinformation. An understanding of disinformation offers an alternative way of looking at history. This tactic often succeeds through the mass manipulation of strategic intelligence gathering, the press, and foreign affairs. Disinformation is a deceptive tactic being used by many countries that is difficult to defeat, because it is often not recognized or understood by those fighting it. Joseph Stalin, the Communist leader of the Soviet Union from 1924-1953, used disinformation to discredit the enemy to his communist regime: the Roman Catholic Church. The Soviet disinformation campaign behind the framing of Pope Pius XII was the epitome of deception and manipulation of public records and the press. As a result, it can be used to expose the past and current implementation of Soviet Disinformation. In the words of Joseph Stalin, "Education is a weapon whose effects depend on who holds it in his hands and at whom it is aimed" (A-Z Quotes, 2017). Only a comprehensive, practical education in Soviet Disinformation can lead to its full exposure.

The Core of Disinformation

According to *The Oxford Dictionary*, disinformation is “false information which is intended to mislead, especially propaganda issued by a government organization to a rival power or the media” (2017). According to the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, disinformation is “false information deliberately and often covertly spread (as by the planting of rumors) in order to influence public opinion or obscure the truth” (2017). It is very important to understand how disinformation is different from misinformation. Misinformation is “false or inaccurate information, especially that which is deliberately intended to deceive” (*Oxford Dictionaries*, 2017). Misinformation is a known government tactic and is easy to recognize. Disinformation is a “secret intelligence tool, intended to bestow a Western, nongovernment cachet on government lies” (Pacepa, 2013, p. 35). Lt. General Ion Mihai Pacepa, most likely the highest-ranking intelligence officer to ever leave the Soviet bloc, witnessed the practice of disinformation firsthand. Disinformation, especially the type practiced by the Kremlin is often a major tactic in the war between communism and religion.

This tactic’s chief transmission belt is the press. Manipulating the press is a key component of a Soviet disinformation campaign and was implemented within the United States in 1996. In March of 1996, two Soviet front organizations that held their headquarters in the United States, the National Council of Churches (NCC), and the Center for Democratic Renewal (CDR), “held a joint press conference to announce a ‘huge increase’ in the number of arson cases committed against black churches in the United States” (Pacepa, 2013, p. 1). President Bill Clinton, upon getting word of the fires, publically shamed the destruction and proceeded to order an investigation into the cause.

Clinton proceeded to antagonize the racial situation by speaking about the racism that was present in his own state of Arkansas (Pacepa, 2013). The FBI and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms and Explosives (BATF) then proceeded to assign agents to look into the alleged racially motivated fires. The press jumped on the situation and referred to the arsons as “a well-organized white-supremacist movement” in the United States (Fumento, 1996, p. 2). This headline led to the rest of the world believing that America was a place of terrible racist crimes. As a result, President Clinton proceeded to sign the Church Fire Prevention Act of 1996 into law, which made burning down churches a federal offense (Pacepa, 2013). The *Wall Street Journal* then reported that the NCC raised \$9 million to help fund black church congregations that were affected by the fires (Swett, 2011) Before an investigation revealed that fraud had been committed, the National Fire Protection Association realized, within the recent years, there was no evidence that any of the church arsons were racially motivated (Pacepa, 2013). The NCC was then accused of manipulation and generating a “great church-fire hoax” (Swett, 2011, p. 2).

Soon after, however, the accusation brought against the NCC was forgotten. Although the United States had helped rid the world of Nazism and the Holocaust years earlier, America was now being portrayed as a racist country. America’s image was being tarnished by the racially motivated, Soviet disinformation campaign. In fact, within two years, over 57% of Greeks answered “neither” when questioned to determine who was more democratic, the United State or Iraq, and over 40% of Canadian young people continued to call America “evil” (Grecian Formula for Anti-Americanism, 2003, p. 1). Years later, in 2008, leaders of the Democratic Party in America referred to their country

as a “racist, capitalist realm,” according to the London Times (Baldwin, 2008, p. 1). The Kremlin corruption of The World Council of Churches (WCC), through the public manipulation of the arson stories, had succeeded. This racial materialization was a public instance of a Russian disinformation campaign against the United States. The ability of a disinformation campaign to destroy the reputation of an adversary is often a successful war tactic. The manipulative ideology present in disinformation cannot be destroyed; it can only be exposed through a practical understanding of its workings.

The “Black Art” of Disinformation

The main component of a disinformation campaign is the idea of *glasnost*. *The Merriam-Webster* definition of *glasnost* is “a soviet policy permitting open discussion of political and social issues and freer dissemination of news and information (2017). *The American Heritage Dictionary* also defines *glasnost* as, “an official policy of the former Soviet government emphasizing candor with regard to discussion of social problems and shortcomings” (2016). However, years earlier in the mid-1930s, *glasnost* was defined as “the quality of being made available for public discussion or manipulation” by *The Explanatory Dictionary of the Russian Language* (1935). Further, “*Glasnost* is one of the most secret secrets of the Kremlin, and certainly one of the main reasons for still keeping the KGB’s foreign intelligence archives hermetically sealed” (Pacepa, 2013, p. 13). *Glasnost* was an action put in place to polish one’s ruler’s image. *Glasnot* works well within disinformation because of the concept of manipulation. Disinformation ruins the reputation of an enemy country or leader, which, in turn, allows for one’s own leader to be admired and protected.

The Kremlin's Disinformation Campaign

As a result of General Pacepa's advanced training and previous experience, he contends, "the science of disinformation was born in Russia, it was deeply rooted in the Russian soil and in that country's history, and there it would remain forever" (Pacepa, 2013, p. 36). Disinformation started as the result of a love affair between Catherine the Great and Prince Gregory Potemkin. In an attempt to impress her, the Prince took her on a tour of villages that had been constructed just for her visit. These villages were the first instance of a deception tactic used to encourage a positive perception of a Russian leader. Disinformation continued to grow in Russia, in fact, French Marquis de Custine said, "everything is deception in Russia, and the gracious hospitality of the Czar, gathering together in his palace his serfs and the serfs of his courtiers, is only one more mockery" (Pacepa, 2013, 37). Custine also said, "Russian despotism not only counts ideas and sentiments for nothing but remakes facts; it wages war on evidence and triumphs in the battle" (Pacepa, 2013, 37). Russian disinformation greatly influenced the past and future of Russia and its leaders. Post World War I was the beginning of a long disinformation campaign in Russia. When World War I ended, communist leaders took over control of the country. They killed the tsar and his family, seized the royal lands and laid waste to the country's banks and industrial enterprises (Pacepa, 2013). The new communist leaders took great precautions to protect "the science of disinformation realizing that this historic Russian tool fit their needs like a glove" (Pacepa, 2013, p. 37). In order for disinformation to do proper damage to one's enemies, it needs to be based on a "kernel of truth" (Pacepa, 2013, p. 38).

Russian Framings

One of the most detrimental effects of Russian disinformation was the ever present need to change the past. For example, instead of being remembered for a brutal murderer who killed over 20 million people, Stalin was remembered as “political god” (Pacepa, 2013, p. 44). Further, “In KGB jargon, changing people’s pasts was called ‘framing’ and it was a highly classified disinformation specialty” (Pacepa, 2013, 44).

Over the years to come, many other innocent Soviet citizens were framed as conspirators and traitors, and as a result, many Russians demanded punishment on the alleged traitors (Rayfield, 2004). The framings done by the Kremlin greatly influenced Russian and world history. Admirable, good people were framed as traitors and the actual traitors were portrayed as revered saints. For example, on August 23, 1944, King Michael of Romania led a coup d’état of the current Nazi rule, which shattered Romania’s affiliation with Germany (Pacepa, 2013). A year later, United States President Harry Truman spoke highly of King Michael by saying he “single-handedly pulled Romania out of the war although he had no control over the country which was allied with the German aggressor” (Truman, 1945, p. 1). In fact, King Michael, as a foreigner, was so highly praised that he was awarded the Soviet Order of Victory, by the Soviet Union, an honor that was only given previously to Dwight Eisenhower (Stalin, 1945). Three years later, however, King Michael was framed as a Nazi traitor and a Western spy, and as a result, was thrown out of the country of Romania (Stanescu & Dumitrescu, 1999).

This occurrence, however, was not the first time Russia had framed a political or religious figurehead. For example, Imre Nagy, a Hungarian prime minister, was taken from Hungary by the Soviets, framed as conspirator and was hanged (Pacepa, 1988).

A New Enemy of Stalin

While Stalin was successful at framing leaders who were viewed as a threat, there was one area of life Stalin still needed to defeat: religion, or more specifically, the Pope of the Roman Catholic Church. Stalin had successfully framed many well-known archbishops such as Jown Layesvki, Nicholas Carnecki, and Gregory Chomysyn (Pacepa, 2013, 53). Stalin had sent many catholic leader to prison camps which were officially known as “destination unknown for political reasons” (Smit, 1950, p. 174). Pope Pius XII released a statement about the Catholic leaders disappearance saying, “God will do justice, and in His loving kindness He will himself calm this terrible storm and finally bring it to an end” (Pius XII, 1945, p. 1). Stalin believed the Pope’s Statement was direct threat and, as a result, six Ukrainian Catholic leaders were portrayed as Nazi conspirators and were killed (Pacepa, 2013). Stalin’s most well-known and useful way of framing alleged threats was to claim a correlation between them and the Nazi movement. An intelligence unit was created known as SMERSH, a Russian word meaning “Death to Spies” (*Smert Shiponam*) (Pacepa, 2013, p. 54). This operation forced alleged Nazi conspirators to confess their crimes and be punished by death.

The beginning of SMERSH, as an operation, was first demonstrated through the persecution and imprisonment of Soviet people who were living in regions where the German Nazis had once occupied. At the time, Averell Harriman, the U.S. ambassador in Moscow had told the State Department, “The Embassy knows of only a single instance in which a repatriated prisoner has returned to his home and family in Moscow” (Andrew & Gordievsky, 1991, p. 343). Upon receiving this message, the State Department learned that strategic operation SMERSH had indeed framed innocent civilians as Nazi

Collaborators and had sent them to their deaths (Thomas, 1988). Instances such as these helped Stalin prepare for the war that SMERSH was meant for: the war on the Vatican itself. Stalin, as the leader of Communist Russia could not afford to lose the power struggle present with Pope Pius' existence. Stalin knew "atheistic communism's very existence and expansion required that it discredit and demonize its chief competitor—the Christian faith" (Pacepa, 2013, p. 55).

Stalin's weapon of disinformation, implemented through the framing of civilians as Nazi Collaborators, needed to be taken to another level in order to accomplish his goal. The Pope was a revered and honest man, who not only opposed communism and Nazism, but even had helped Jews escape their death sentence issued by Hitler himself (Pacepa, 2013). Stalin's disinformation campaign against his alleged greatest rival had begun. Although the Pope was revered and respected, as a result of Stalin's disinformation efforts, his legacy was tarnished and he became known as "Hitler's Pope" (Pacepa, 2013, p. 55).

Creating and Framing "Hitler's Pope"

It is no secret that there has always been a feud between communism and the Catholic Church. A few years after *The Communist Manifesto* was published in 1848, Pope Pius IX referenced it saying, "that infamous doctrine of so-called Communism which is absolutely contrary to the Natural Law and would utterly destroy the rights, property, and possessions of men" (Pacepa, 2013, p. 59). Post-World War II, it was not long before Pope Pius was labeled as "Hitler's Pope" in an effort to make the appearance that he was a Nazi traitor (Kasper, 2014, p. 1). The accusation was proven to be false because of the current Pope's support of his predecessor who had called Nazism "the cult

of violence, the idolatry of race and blood, and the overthrow of human liberty and dignity” (Pacepa, 2013, p. 59). When Radio Moscow first attempted to frame the Pope, the Western World did not listen. Currently, Pius XII had been helping the Allies and Jews during World War II, so no weight was given to accusations of possible Nazi conspirator. In 1944, Winston Churchill, after speaking to Pius XII, had said, “I have spoken today to the greatest man of our time” (Hinton, 1944). Stalin had lost the disinformation campaign he had launched against Pius XII. Operation SMERSH was better suited to pursue other, lesser framings such as the Hungarian Cardinals. Stalin strongly contended that framing the Cardinal family would prove useful and would provide ample time for Stalin to find other ways of convincing the Western World of Pope Pius XII’s Nazi affiliations. Stalin recognized that other framings were necessary before the western world was ready to believe that the Pope was a Nazi collaborator (Pacepa, 2013).

The Framing of Cardinal Stepinac

In 1946, Cardinal Stepinac was portrayed as a Nazi sympathizer by Stalin’s disinformation machine. Within the same year, a man named Louis Breier, a Jewish leader, defended Stepinac against the charges by saying: “He has always been a sincere friend of the Jews, and was not hiding this even in times of cruel persecutions.... Archbishop Stepinac was the greatest protector of persecuted Jews in Europe” (Zubrinic, 1997, p. 1). As a result of Cardinal Stepinac being falsely accused, the public realized the relationship between Nazism and communism. Pope Pius XII was routinely compared to Stepinac himself. Both were strong denouncers of Nazism and communism alike. Also, both men had been enemies of Stalin, who had attempted to frame them both. The

difference between the attempted framings, however, was the location of where they lived. Pius XII's home was the Vatican, unlike Stepinac who lived in a Soviet country, which not only allowed him to be framed but also to stand trial. Stepinac's framers were the UDBA, a group of Stalin's police who were run by Aleksander Rankovic, an intelligence veteran (Pacepa, 2013). Years later, Pacepa learned that Stepinac's trial had been a framing done by Andrey Vyshinsky, a Soviet prosecutor (Pacepa, 2013). A few years after the trial, Vyshinsky was named the foreign minister of the Soviet Union (Pacepa, 2013).

The story of Stepinac's framing begins in the beginning stages of World War II. Early on in the war, the country of Croatia was a part of Yugoslavia. In 1941, Yugoslavia was a part of the Axis Powers. However, Serbian nationals seized the Capital of Serbia, Belgrade, and officially took the side of the Allies (Pacepa, 2013). Hitler retaliated by invading Yugoslavia and helped the Croatian locals declare their independence (Pacepa, 2013). At the time, in Croatia, the leader of the Catholic Church was Stepinac. Stepinac used his authority to publically denounce the Nazi actions. He was able to help protect hundreds of innocent civilians "through his sermons in which he vigorously condemned the implementation of Racial Laws" (Pacepa, 2013, p. 72). In fact, Stepinac's sermons were very critical of Nazism, and, as a result, were not published publically. The Catholic Church passed them around secretly (Pacepa, 2013). When a synagogue in Zagreb was destroyed, Stepinac countered, "An attack on a House of God of any religion constitutes an attack on all religious communities" (Rychlak, 2009, p. 2). Over the next few years, churches were destroyed. Stepinac continued to speak out saying, "We condemn all injustice; all murder of innocent people; all burning of peaceful villages; all killings, all

exploitation of the poor...” (Grzymala-Busse, 2015, p. 189). Upon hearing Stepinac’s words, a German General commented saying, “If any bishop in Germany were speaking this way, he would not descend alive from his pulpit!” (Pacepa, 2013, p. 72).

Before the communists came to power, Stepinac’s anti-Nazism speeches were used as propaganda against the Nazis. However, the communists were uncomfortable with the power shown by the Roman Catholic Church (Pacepa, 2013, p. 73). The power was intimidating and did not fit well with the communist agenda. On May 17, 1945, Cardinal Stepinac was arrested by the UDBA. He was held for seventeen days and then was asked to help the Croatian Church, as a whole, cut ties with Roman Catholicism. Cardinal Stepinac firmly refused, saying this move was against the Constitution and the people’s freedom (Pacepa, 2013). He was released, but then arrested again on September 18th; and charged with multiple criminal counts regarding the organization of crimes associated with the Nazis. The legal system, specifically criminal trials, had turned into a “tool for solving political problems” (Courtois, Murphy, Kramer, Werth, & Panne, 1999, p. 26). The United States, however, had discerned that the entire trial against Cardinal Stepinac was a fraudulent activity (*The Silent Voice*, 1960). The fraudulent activity was suspected because of the way the trial was executed. Stepinac was afforded attorneys but they were only given a week in order to build a case to defend him (Pacepa, 2013). Stepinac was also not allowed to consult with his attorneys during the legal proceedings (Pacepa, 2013). Also, many witnesses were not allowed to testify on his behalf, and much of the evidence for his defense was thrown out (Pacepa, 2013): “The trial was a farce; the testimony of witnesses was falsified in court reports...the courtroom was packed with Communist agitators, whose vocal demonstrations were heavily covered by the

government-controlled media” (Stilinovic, 1998, p. 78). On the fourth day of the trial, Stepinac gave a speech in which he said: “Not only does the Church in Yugoslavia have no freedom, but in a short while, the church will be annihilated” (Pacepa, 2013, p. 75). Any kind of sharing of Stepinac’s statement was illegal and those who had distributed parts of the speech faced prosecution. During the trial, the prosecution falsified a report allegedly sent by the Cardinal to the Pope; a report that Stepinac vehemently denied (Pacepa, 2013). In 1950, America intervened saying they would only give aid to Yugoslavia if Stepinac was released (Pacepa, 2013). Marshal Tito realized he needed a better relationship with the United States because of the previous Soviet split, so he “expressed a willingness to release Stepinac from prison if he would leave Yugoslavia” (Pacepa, 2013, p. 76). A year later, Stepinac was released from jail and sentenced to house arrest in home village of Krasic (“Dust in the Eyes,” 1951). Upon this news, “the Pope and the Vatican wanted the Yugoslavian government to publically announce Stepinac’s innocence and to exonerate him on all counts before the world” (Pacepa, 2013, p. 76). Shortly after Stepinac was moved back home, Pope Pius XII announced the promotion of Cardinal to Stepinac (Pacepa, 2013). Tito responded by cutting the diplomatic relationship with the Vatican itself (Pacepa, 2013). Forty years later, Tito’s regime announced its true intentions in the Stepinac trial, saying, “The indictments were designed rather more for publicity than for legality” (Pacepa, 2013, p. 77).

Overall, through the framing of Cardinal Stepinac, a pathway was created of the tactics of Soviet disinformation. This pathway allowed for further reflection of the exact process of evidence fabrication (Pacepa, 2013). This same pathway was used to understand how Pope Pius XII’s reputation was tarnished. An Italian writer, Carlo

Falconi, wrote a book called *The Silence of Pius XII*, which was almost completely based on the documents that were used to frame Cardinal Stepinac (Pacepa, 2013). The book demonstrated early fabrications from the Soviets pronouncing Pius XII as “Hitler’s Pope” (Pacepa, 2013, p. 78). Recently, in 2008, on the tenth anniversary of the framing, many people gathered to pay their respects to the great leader, Cardinal Stepinac (Rychlak, 2009). In the Western world, Cardinal Stepinac was a hero and a saint who had fought communism and Nazism singlehandedly (Pacepa, 2013). Pacepa contends that Stepinac will go down in history as a great warrior against the disinformation campaign.

Disinformation, in its purest form, is a war against anything that threatens it; in this case, The Vatican, and the entire Christian, Western World. The Framing of Cardinal Stepinac was the beginning of that war, and was a crucial component to understanding the weapons and tactics used by the disinformation machine since 1945 (Pacepa, 2013).

The Framing of Cardinal Jozef Mindszenty

In Russia, the KGB views disinformation as an art and “an honorable task” (Pacepa, 2013, p. 80). In December of 1948, Cardinal Mindszenty was arrested by the Hungarian sector of the Russian police. He was tortured and put on an unfair trial, much like Stepanic had been. Mindszenty ended up being sentenced to life in prison because of made up documents.

Two circumstances present in the Cardinal’s situation allowed an exposé on how Stalin and his police would discredit Pope Pius XII (Pacepa, 2013). The first circumstance was the fact that Mindszenty was a good writer. The Cardinal was able to carefully document every situation he encountered throughout the continuance of his framing. He published a book called *Memoirs*, which detailed exactly how the Russian

police had accused him of conspiracy against his government (Pacepa, 2013). The second circumstance that was able to be understood is the fact that a Hungarian couple, who had worked with the Russian police to frame Mindszenty, had ran away to the Western world shortly after the Cardinal's trial (Pacepa, 2013). The couple was able to publish reports of their specific wrongdoing against Mindszenty. These reports allowed for Mindszenty's own testimony in his book to be verified by this Hungarian couple. This verification allowed the Western world a better understanding of what exactly they were up against.

Cardinal Mindszenty was born in the Austro-Hungarian Empire on March 29, 1892 (Mindszenty, 1970). Mindszenty grew up to be a political activist and a strong supporter of human rights (Pacepa, 2013). Throughout World War II, Hungary was a place of refuge for Jews, but was also a place of desolation. In Hungary, anything that threatened the existence of a communist government was attacked (Pacepa, 2013). Schools and churches continued to be shut down and destroyed. Mindszenty strongly protested these outcomes and was arrested a few times as a result. In fact, children and blue-collar workers were forced to go into the Hungarian streets and say, "We will annihilate Mindszentyism! The well-being of the Hungarian people and the church depend on it" (Perry, Berg, & Krukones, 2011, p. 84). The Cardinal's movement was a threat to Stalin and to Communism as a whole. Stalin's major weapon of disinformation could not necessarily work on the Cardinal. Stalin's framings consisted of demonstrating that his victims were Nazi sympathizers. This thinking, however, would not work with Mindszenty because his reputation of protecting the church and Jews was very well known throughout Hungary and the World. Stalin resorted to other measures to get through to Mindszenty. Dr. Gyula Matrai, the Chief of the Secretariat, soon reported to

the Cardinal regarding the whereabouts of his secretary, Dr. Zakar, and his condition.

Matrai reported that he had seen Zakar acting very strangely; assuming the character of someone who had been drugged and beaten (Pacepa, 2013). Shortly after this report on December 26, 1948, Mindszenty was arrested from his apartment without a warrant. For the next few weeks, the Cardinal was tortured and deprived of food and water until he signed framed interrogations done by the Soviets. Stalin had attempted to connect the Cardinal with the large theft of Hungary's important jewels and an alleged connection regarding a possible overthrow of the communist regime (Pacepa, 2013). Stalin did not stop there however, he also concocted the story that Mindszenty was attempting to bring the "Crown of Saint Stephen to Budapest in order to crown Otto von Hapsburg as king" (Pacepa, 2013, p. 85). The main reason this story was plausible was because it was known that Mindszenty had previously met with Otto von Hapsburg back in the summer of 1947 (Perry, Berg, & Krukones, 2011). The Russian disinformation campaign was always the most successful when its deception included parts of truth. The truth present in the Cardinal's framing was his meeting with Otto von Hapsburg. While Mindszenty was imprisoned, he was told that he admitted to accusations regarding his framing, but he was in no physical state to remember or understand what was being said to him (Perry, Berg, & Krukones, 2011). Mindszenty had stated that any confession present was coerced and was "a lie or the result of human weaknesses" (Perry, Berg, & Krukones, 2011, p. 331). His trial was concluded and he was found guilty; sentenced to a life in jail.

Upon hearing the news, Pope Pius XII strongly denounced the ruling and excommunicated all who were tangled up in the trial and its judgment (Pacepa, 2013). Even days before the trial had concluded, two handwriting experts, Lazlo and Hanna

Sulner, had escaped to Austria and started to elaborate on their story to the Austrian press. They had announced that the Cardinal's trial was a fraud and the Hungarian police had attempted to frame him (R.M. Thomas, 1999). They also testified they were given documents by the Hungarian police to "edit" for the prosecution's case (R.M. Thomas, 1999). Hanna Sulner's father had been an expert regarding analyzing handwriting and had invented a handwriting device (Pacepa, 2013). This device had the capability to "take words and phrases from manuscripts and put them together to form a new document" (Pacepa, 2013, p. 86). Lazlo had proceeded to become an expert when using the machine, resulting in perfect forged statements for the Soviets and their case against Mindszenty (Pacepa, 2013).

Years later, Mindszenty was eventually permitted to leave Hungary. He moved to Vienna and continued for the rest of his life to aid and support the Hungarian Catholic Church (Pacepa, 2013). Later on, he died on May 6, 1975.

The War Against Religion

Just three years after Mindszenty was framed, Stalin had dramatically increased the control and reach of his empire. He now had control over twenty-one countries, including fifteen union republics (Pacepa, 2013). Stalin's next move was to add Germany to his list of conquests. After all, Germany was the birthplace of Marxism, so Stalin took it upon himself to force communism upon it. So in June of 1948, he cut off West Berlin, attempting to force the Allied forces to surrender the entire city. Stalin did not predict that the United States would construct the Berlin Airlift just to keep West Berlin thriving (Pacepa, 2013). He also did not predict that the cutting off of West Berlin would lead to the start of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Eventually in May of 1949,

Stalin admitted defeat and ended the Berlin cut off. This loss fueled Stalin's rage against the Western world (Pacepa, 2013). He was forced to return the old weapon of disinformation in the form of anti-Semitism (Pacepa, 2013). Stalin thought that a dark hatred for the Jewish race was present in Europe. So he then set out on a campaign to portray the United States as a Jewish sympathizer; hoping to fuel a hatred for the United States from Europe.

Stalin started his campaign by appointing Andrey Vyshinsky as Russia's Minister of Foreign Affairs. Vyshinsky was the intelligence officer who previously assisted in bringing down the archbishops of the Catholic Church. Stalin then sent a Russian ambassador to the United States; someone who was specialized in manipulation of the religious sector: Aleksandr Panyushkin (Pacepa, 2013). His priority was to entice Americans to demonstrate for peace throughout The United States (Pacepa, 2013). This was an effective tactic because advocating for peace throughout America would help ensure America would not go to war. This was effective throughout World War II when Nazi sympathizers organized movements advocating for peace throughout the United States to ensure that Hitler would remain unchallenged (Pacepa, 2013). Shortly after the Panyushkin's appointment, the Cold War had begun. Stalin referred to this war as World War III; a war without weapons; a war of ideas (Pacepa, 2013). Based on prior framings done, Stalin had learned that in order for disinformation to gain credibility throughout this war two criteria needed to be met: the source of the stories had to be from legitimate Western sources and there had to be a base of truth present. Publicity was crucial to the stories being believed (Perry, Berg, & Krukones, 2011).

World War III, as Stalin called the Cold War, began when *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* circulated throughout Western Europe (Pacepa, 2013). *The Protocols* were written by a disinformation spy known as Petr Ivanovich Rachovsky. They were based on the idea Jews were taking over the world and needed to be stopped. Another disinformation campaign that had begun was known as “operation Zarathustra” (Pacepa, 2013, p. 97). This endeavor attempted to reflect Germany as the birthplace of a new anti-Jew movement. This operation was deemed successful because it had been used before in the Soviet Union (Pacepa, 2013). Earlier, KGB police had destroyed a Jewish cemetery and victoriously made another party responsible for the damage (Pacepa, 2013). This campaign was then deemed suitable to be carried out in Germany and later on in France, which at the time has Western Europe’s majority of Jews (Andrew & Gordievsky, 1991). The “Zarathustra” campaign survived all throughout Europe and other countries as well. Israel and Ukraine were affected as well.

The idea of totalitarianism always needs an enemy that can be seen (Pacepa, 2013). Because the Jews were not associated with a specific state, they were an easy target for the propaganda machines of communism and Nazism (Pacepa, 2013). The world knew that Jews were being discriminated against, so the humanitarian effort was to cease the division. A disinformation campaign’s most effective tactic was to convince the world that a well-known target was a Nazi sympathizer. This methodology is what Stalin used to convince the world of Pope Pius XII alleged wrongdoing.

Pope Pius XII’s Framing

Stalin’s main weapon against Pope Pius XII was clothed in the form of a play on Broadway. This play was known as *The Deputy: A Christian Tragedy*, and was authored

by Rolf Hochbuth. The main point of the play was the alleged accusation that Pope Pius XII had not opposed, in any way, Hitler's holocaust (Andrew & Gordievsky, 1991). The play centered around two characters: Kurt Gerstein and Father Riccardo Fontana. The story is about a good Nazi soldier, Gerstein, telling a priest, Fontana, all about the horrors that the Nazis were inflicting on the Jews (Pacepa, 2013). Fontana then proceeds to attempt to warn the Pope himself of the many Jewish victims (Pacepa, 2013). Throughout the play, Pope Pius XII does not help the alleged victims of the holocaust. (Pacepa, 2013). The conclusion of the play involves Fontana sacrificing himself for the Jews by wearing a yellow star and entering a concentration camp (Pacepa, 2013).

Throughout the play, many of the characters talk about the Pope failing to help the Jews in the Holocaust. The play quickly circulated throughout Europe and continued to tarnish the Pope's real reputation without any evidence. Hochhuth is quoted in "The Sidelights" of the play continuing to emphasize how many Jews were killed throughout as a result of the Pope's failure to act. Throughout "The Sidelights" a relationship between the play itself and the Soviets is very evident. Pope Pius XII's good reputation over two decades had been destroyed because of a fictional production based on lies. A Jesuit magazine commented on the absurdity by saying, "By what dialectic, or through what human fickleness, has a great benefactor of humanity and of Jews particularly, now become a criminal?" (Pacepa, 2013, p. 129). Another author contributed by saying, "the contemptible motives he attributes to Pope Pius XII for his silence---he quotes no documentary evidence at all" (Pacepa, 2013, p. 130). In 1963, the Vatican made a statement saying that the "play exhibited many traits of the campaign that had previously been brought against the church and the Pope by the Soviet Union" (Feldkamp, 2017, p.

38). Even the government in West Germany knew the play was full of false propaganda against Pope Pius XII because of the number of Jews he had singlehandedly rescued from the Nazi regime (Pacepa, 2013). However, the play could not even be proven inaccurate because of its fictional nature. Any accusations brought against Hochhuth, or the play itself, were easily avoidable (Pacepa, 2013). Shortly after *The Deputy* was successfully on Broadway, a journalist named I. F. Stone wrote a strong article referencing how the Roman Catholic Church had given power to Fascist governments; more specifically, in the form of Pope Pius XII: “Pius XII, in being friendly to Hitler, was only following in the footsteps of Pius XI” (Stone, 1964, p. 17). The occupation of changing minds is what makes up the entirety of a successful disinformation campaign (Pacepa, 2013). Stone was an expert at making people think, which is what made him an excellent Russian spy (Pacepa, 2013).

Overall, *The Deputy* was a form of entertainment with an underlying goal: Introduce the idea to the public that Pope Pius XII is an anti-Semite (Pacepa, 2013). The fiction aspect of the play was the only armor it needed to survive. The play was the ultimate combination of fiction and history; the past and the future.

Disinformation in The United States

Glasnost—the idea of uplifting a leaders image—and disinformation, as a whole, is very much alive today, especially in the United States of America. The 2008 election campaign is a prime example of this ideology at play again. Throughout the election, the media portrayed America as a racist, capitalist disaster that had “crumbling schools” and “shuttered mills that once provided a decent life for men and women of every race” (Baldwin, 2008). The media continued to portray Barack Obama as the savior of America

(Pacepa, 2013). Obama agreed by saying the start of his alleged presidency will be “the moment when the rise of the oceans began to slow and our planet began to heal” (Pacepa, 2013, p. 314). Speeches uplifting one’s self are a crucial aspect of the idea of glasnost. During Obama’s State of the Union Speech in 2010 he used the word “I” 76 times. In his State of the Union Address in 2012, he used the word “I” forty-five times and the word “me” thirteen times (Pacepa, 2013, p. 314). When Obama officially announced his candidacy for President in 2008, he was shown to be “the hardest-left candidate ever nominated for President of the United States” (RedState, 2008). Politics aside, it is a known fact that people want their current leaders to be better than their previous ones (Pacepa, 2013). Change is a crucial aspect of the political process. Marxism, as well, holds the idea of change in high regard. It is built on the idea that “quantitative changes generate qualitative transformations” (Pacepa, 2013, p. 316). The change present in Marxism is shown through the allocation of wealth to different parts of society (Pacepa, 2013). This same idea of change was present in the Democratic Party in the United States in 2008. The Democratic Party proceeded to win the presidency and both chambers of congress in 2008. On February 7, 2009, the title on the cover of *Newsweek* was “We are all Socialists Now” (Pacepa, 2013, p. 317). In the 2012 election, the idea of change in pursuit of “the greater good” was still a focus of the Democratic Party (Pacepa, 2013, p. 317). Capitalism was viewed as the enemy. Lawrence Summers, the former leader of Obama’s Economic Council published an essay emphasizing this fact: “50% of people had a positive opinion of capitalism, while 40% did not” (Pacepa, 2013, p. 319). Summers goes on to say that “capitalism was a profit-driven economic system that cared more about enriching its owners than about modernizing the country’s economy”

(Pacepa, 2013, p. 319). The Republican candidate for President in 2012 was Mitt Romney, the capitalist (Pacepa, 2013). The media's previous attempts over the recent years to dismantle capitalist ideas employed a strong campaign against Mitt Romney. His equity firm, Bain Capital, was demeaned at every turn. In reality, his firm was one of the most well known, respected companies in the field (Pacepa, 2013). The disinformation continued upon the publication of a piece published in May of 2012. The article highlighted President Obama's open arms for gay marriage, and The Washington Post portrayed Romney as a anti-gay bigot (Pacepa, 2013). The 2012 election had done what no other election had been able to do, demonize the idea that made America the great nation that it was; capitalism (Pacepa, 2013). The Democratic Party had successfully shamed Romney enough so that the American people permanently viewed him as a "greedy capitalist predator" (Pacepa, 2013, p. 320). The reality of the situation was very different then what was actually portrayed. Romney had a history of generosity and vast humanitarianism; two legacies that were completely destroyed by deceptive propaganda (Pacepa, 2013).

Overall, disinformation and the ideas associated with the ideology, has shaped our world in its entirety. Warfare will always be a large aspect of this world, as will the weapons that contribute to it. Disinformation introduced the idea of a new weapon; one with no physical attributes; a weapon that only manifests itself through people's words and ideas. Disinformation has officially provided us with another way of looking at our history and our future. The Soviet Union's use of disinformation has allowed us to have valuable insights into its implementation. Soviet and Russian disinformation successfully destroyed the reputation of many good people simply because they were a threat to the

communist regime. Understanding how disinformation works is the only weapon that is capable of exposing it. Manipulation is a powerful tool, and deserves to be recognized for what it is. Disinformation is truly an art form; each campaign highly complicated and intricately designed. Stalin's use of Disinformation against Pope Pius XII shaped the world, and as a result, should be studied and expounded upon in order to prevent the monstrosity of deception from becoming a part of everyday life once again.

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