



Oh God It's Going To Get SO Much Worse

Description

Rightists have spent the last couple of days freaking out and invoking Orwell's 1984 in response to something their political enemies are doing in America, and for once it's for a pretty good reason. The Department of Homeland Security has secretly set up a "[Disinformation Governance Board](#)", only informing the public about its plans for the institution after it had already [been established](#).

The disinformation board, which critics have understandably been calling a "[Ministry of Truth](#)", purportedly exists to [fight disinformation coming out of Russia](#) as well as misleading messages about the US-Mexico border. We may be certain that the emphasis in the board's establishment has been on the Russia angle, however.

White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki, in her patented "You're such a crazy idiot for questioning me about the White House" manner, [dismissed alarmed questions](#) about what specific functions this strange new DHS entity was going to be performing and what its authority will look like.

"It sounds like the objective of the board is to prevent disinformation and misinformation from traveling around the country in a range of communities," Psaki [said](#). "I'm not sure who opposes that effort."

The answer to the question of "who opposes that effort" is of course "anyone with functioning gray matter between their ears." No government entity has any business appointing itself the authority to sort information from disinformation on behalf of the public, because government entities are not impartial and omniscient deities who can be entrusted to serve the public as objective arbiters of absolute reality. They would with absolute certainty wind up drawing distinctions between information, misinformation and disinformation in whatever way serves their interests, regardless of what's true, exactly as any authoritarian regime would do.

I mean, is anyone honestly more afraid of Russian disinformation than they are of their own government appointing itself the authority to decide what counts as disinformation?

This important point has gotten a bit lost in the shuffle due to the utterly hypnotic ridiculousness of the person who has been appointed to run the Disinformation Governance Board. [Nina Jankowicz](#), a [carefully groomed swamp creature](#) who has worked in Kyiv as a communications advisor to the

Ukrainian government as part of a Fulbright fellowship, is being widely criticized by pundits and social media users for her [virulent Russiagate](#) and [whatever the hell this is](#):

Because of this person's embarrassing cartoonishness, a lot more commentary lately has been going into discussing the fact that the Department of Homeland Security's Ministry of Truth is run by a kooky liberal than the fact that the Department of Homeland Security has a *fucking Ministry of Truth*.

Which is really to miss the forest for the trees, in my opinion. Would it really be any better if the "Disinformation Governance Board" was run by a chill dude you wouldn't mind having a beer with? Especially when we know the ideological leanings of this department are going to bounce back and forth between elections and will always act in service of US empire narrative control regardless of who is in office? I don't think so.

The real issue at hand is the fact that this new institution will almost certainly play a role in bridging the ever-narrowing gap between government censorship and Silicon Valley censorship. The creation of the DHS disinformation board is a far more shocking and frightening development than [last year's scandalous revelation](#) that the White House was advising social media platforms about accounts it determined were circulating censorship-worthy Covid misinformation, which was itself a drastic leap in the direction toward direct government censorship from what had previously been considered normal.

We should probably talk more about how as soon as people accepted that it was fine for government, media and Silicon Valley institutions to work together to censor misinformation and rally public support around an Official Narrative about a virus, the ruling power establishment immediately took that as license to do that with a war and a foreign government as well.

Like, *immediately* immediately. We went from a massive narrative control campaign about a virus, which people accepted because they wanted to contain a deadly pandemic, *straight* into a massive narrative control campaign about Russia and Ukraine. Without skipping a beat. Like openly manipulating everyone's understanding of world events is just what we do now. Now we're seeing [increasingly brazen censorship of political dissent](#) about a fucking war that could easily end up getting us all killed in a nuclear holocaust, and a portion of the Biden administration's whopping \$33 billion Ukraine package is going toward funding ["independent media"](#) (read: war propaganda).

We should probably talk more about this. We should probably talk more about how insane it is that all mainstream western institutions *immediately* accepted it as a given that World War II levels of censorship and propaganda must be implemented over a faraway war that our governments are not even officially a part of.

It started as soon as Russia invaded Ukraine, without any public discussion whatsoever. Like the groundwork had already been laid and everyone had already agreed that that's what would happen. The public had no say in whether we want to be propagandized and censored to help the US win some kind of weird infowar to ensure its continued unipolar domination of the planet. It just happened.

No reason was given to the public as to why this must occur, and there was no public debate as to whether it should. This was by design, because propaganda only works when you don't know it's happening to you.

The choice was made for us that information is too important to be left in the hands of the people. It

became set in stone that we are to be a propaganda-based society rather than a truth-based society. No discussion was offered, and no debate was allowed.

And as bad as it is, it's on track to get much, much worse. They're already setting up "disinformation" regulation in the government which presides over Silicon Valley, the proxy war between the US and Ukraine is [escalating](#) by the [day](#), and aggressions are ramping up against China over both [the Solomon Islands](#) and [Taiwan](#). If you think imperial narrative management is intense now, wait until the US empire's struggle to secure global hegemony [really gets going](#).

Do you consent to this? Do you? It's something you kind of have to take a position on, because its implications have a direct effect on our lives as individuals and on our trajectory as a society. How much are we willing to sacrifice to help the US [win an infowar against Russia](#)?

The question of whether we should abandon all hope of ever becoming a truth-based society and committing instead to winning propaganda wars for a globe-spanning empire is perhaps the most consequential decision we've ever had to make as a species. Which is why we weren't given a choice. It's just been foisted upon us.

Whoever controls the narrative controls the world. By taking our control of information out of our hands without asking our permission and determining for us that we are to be a propaganda-based civilization for the foreseeable future, they have stolen something sacred from us. Something they had no right to take.

Nothing about the state of the world tells us that the people who run things are doing a good job. Nothing about our current situation suggests they should be given *more* control, rather than having control taken away from them and given to the people. We are going in exactly the wrong direction.

by Caitlin Johnstone

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