



Central European
Digital Media
Observatory



Paid Russian narratives of the past and present

Coffee Beans

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During the Russian Revolution, the Bolsheviks used disinformation to manipulate in order to gain political power. Then in 1923, the Soviet Politburo approved the establishment of the Disinformation Bureau. Its purpose was to create and disseminate false documentation to mislead Western governments into believing that the Red Army was more combat capable than it actually was. This deliberate dissemination of disinformation was part of a broader strategy to influence perceptions and achieve political goals. Disinformation was not limited to external propaganda, but also included internal manipulation of information. Overall, it played a critical role in shaping narratives, influencing opinions, and advancing political agendas at the time, highlighting the strategic importance of information manipulation in times of social and political upheaval (1,2).

A recent Washington Post report based on Kremlin documents obtained by a European intelligence agency, according to the newspaper, shows - assuming the documents are authentic - how Russia is now acquiring the status of a disinformation power. Internally, Russian disinformation agencies use the Orwellian shorthand of "additional reality" to describe the false claims they create and disseminate. The documents in question contain screenshots of a sophisticated digital dashboard that measures how well agents spread lies and propaganda on platforms such as X, Facebook, Telegram and Instagram.

The leaked information revealed that workers at Russian troll farms earn \$660 a month for writing 100 comments a day on social media. That's 26 cents per lie, assuming 25 working days per month. The documents also include a price list to pay social media influencers who are willing to work with Russian clients. The Washington Post also reports that it is not clear from the documents whether some such articles have even been placed in Western media (3).

References:

1. [Soviet and Russian Disinformation - reading references - Consilium \(europa.eu\)](#).
2. [Cristina M. Arribas](#), [Rubén Arcos](#), [Manuel Gértrudix](#), et al. Information manipulation and historical revisionism: Russian disinformation and foreign interference through manipulated history-based narratives Version 1. [Open Res Eur](#). 2023; 3: 121. Published online 2023 Jul 27. doi: [10.12688/openreseurope.16087.1](https://doi.org/10.12688/openreseurope.16087.1)
3. [Gordon Crovitz](#), NewsGuard Co-CEO Reality Check Commentary: Kremlin's World-Class Dashboard Maximizes Disinformation, at 26 Cents Per Lie



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