



International Journal of Recent Development in Engineering and Technology
Website: www.ijrdet.com (ISSN 2347-6435 (Online) Volume 15, Issue 06, June 2026)

Manufactured Casus Belli: False Flag Operations and the Justification of War

Dr. Vishnu Prakash Mangu

Associate Professor, Dept. of Public Administration, Govt. College (Autonomous), Anantapuramu, Andhra Pradesh, India.

Abstract-- False flag operations are actions planned by a government, group, or military force and then blamed on another side. These operations are often used to create fear, influence public opinion, and justify war. This study examines how false flag operations have been used to manufacture a casus belli, or reason for war, in different periods of history. The article focuses on three important examples: the Mukden Incident of 1931, Operation Himmler in 1939, and the disputed Gulf of Tonkin incident in 1964. Unlike the other two cases, historians still debate whether the Gulf of Tonkin incident involved deliberate deception or misunderstanding. Although these cases happened in different countries and different periods, they show a common pattern. Leaders already wanted military action, but they needed public support. Therefore, they used or exaggerated an incident and then claimed that their country was acting in self-defence. The article explains the political and military conditions that make false flag operations successful. These conditions include public fear, strong control over information, existing hatred of the enemy, weak international organisations, and the use of propaganda. The study also shows that media and diplomacy are important because they help governments spread their version of events. Newspapers, radio, television, and now social media can quickly turn a small incident into a national crisis. The article compares the methods, goals, and results of the three historical cases. It finds that some false flag operations involve direct deception, while others involve exaggeration or misleading information. However, the final result is often the same: governments gain support for war. The study also examines how modern tools can help prevent false flag operations. International law, intelligence agencies, satellite images, open-source intelligence, digital forensics, and independent journalism now make it harder for governments to hide the truth. Even so, modern technology can also spread false information more quickly. Therefore, citizens, journalists, and governments must remain careful and question official claims. The article concludes that false flag operations remain an important part of modern conflict and political strategy. Understanding these operations is necessary because they can shape public opinion, weaken trust, and lead to war.

Keywords--False flag operations; casus belli; war; propaganda; diplomacy; strategic deception; Mukden Incident; Operation Himmler; Gulf of Tonkin; international law

I. INTRODUCTION

War is often presented as a necessary response to danger. Governments usually tell their citizens that military action is needed to protect the country, defend national honour, or stop an enemy attack. In many cases, people are willing to support war only when they believe that their country has been threatened. Because of this, leaders have often tried to create or shape events in a way that makes war appear necessary. One of the most important methods used for this purpose is the false flag operation. A false flag operation is an action that is secretly carried out by one side but blamed on another side. The goal is to make the public believe that the enemy is responsible. Once people believe this story, they are more likely to support military action, emergency laws, or stronger government control.

The term "false flag" comes from naval warfare. In earlier centuries, warships sometimes sailed under the flag of another country in order to hide their real identity. A ship could approach an enemy vessel while pretending to belong to a friendly country. Later, the same idea began to appear in politics and war. Governments learned that they could create a false event, blame an enemy, and then use the event as a reason for war.¹ False flag operations are closely linked to the idea of casus belli. Casus belli is a Latin phrase that means "reason for war." Throughout history, governments have tried to present their wars as defensive rather than aggressive. A country that appears to be defending itself usually gains more support at home and abroad. Therefore, leaders often search for a reason that can make military action seem lawful and necessary.² In some cases, the reason for war is real. A country may truly be attacked by another state. However, in other cases, the reason is created, exaggerated, or manipulated. A false flag operation can therefore manufacture a casus belli. It can turn a planned invasion into a supposed act of self-defence.³

History provides many examples of this process. The Mukden Incident of 1931 helped Japan justify its invasion of Manchuria. Operation Himmler in 1939 helped Nazi Germany justify its invasion of Poland. The disputed Gulf of Tonkin incident in 1964 helped the United States increase its military involvement in Vietnam.



International Journal of Recent Development in Engineering and Technology
Website: www.ijrdet.com (ISSN 2347-6435 (Online) Volume 15, Issue 06, June 2026)

Unlike the Mukden Incident and Operation Himmler, historians still disagree about whether the incident involved deliberate deception or confusion and misinterpretation. These incidents happened in different periods and under different political systems, yet they followed a similar pattern. Leaders wanted war, but they needed public support. Therefore, they used a dramatic event to make war seem necessary.⁴ False flag operations are not important only because they help begin wars. They are also important because they influence the way people understand politics. Such operations show how governments can use fear, anger, and patriotism to shape public opinion. Citizens often support war because they believe that their country has been attacked. Newspapers, radio, television, and now social media can spread these ideas very quickly.⁵ Propaganda is therefore closely connected with false flag operations. Propaganda means the deliberate use of information to influence public opinion. After a false flag operation, governments usually present themselves as victims and describe the enemy as violent or dangerous. This emotional message can be more powerful than facts. People may stop asking questions because they are frightened or angry.⁶ Diplomacy also plays an important role. Governments do not only need support from their own citizens. They also want support from other countries. Therefore, they present their version of events in speeches, diplomatic meetings, and international organisations. A government may argue that it is acting in self-defence or protecting peace. If other countries accept this explanation, they may support the war or refuse to oppose it.⁷ In the modern world, false flag operations have become more complex. Earlier operations often involved direct physical attacks, such as explosions, shootings, or sabotage. Today, false flag operations may also take place in cyberspace. A country can launch a cyberattack and then blame another state. Governments can use social media, fake videos, and online disinformation to spread false stories more quickly than ever before.⁸ At the same time, modern technology has also created new ways to discover the truth. Satellite images, mobile phone videos, open-source intelligence, and digital investigations can help expose false claims. Journalists and researchers are now able to compare evidence from many different sources. This makes it harder for governments to hide false flag operations completely.⁹

Even so, the danger remains serious. False flag operations can still influence public opinion, damage trust, and lead to war. They can also weaken confidence in governments, media, and international institutions. In some cases, even the accusation of a false flag operation can create confusion. Governments may claim that a real attack is actually a false flag, even when there is no evidence. This makes it difficult for citizens to know what is true.¹⁰

This article studies how false flag operations have been used to create a *casus belli* and justify war. It examines the conditions that make such operations successful, the role of propaganda and media, and the differences between major historical examples. It also studies how international law, intelligence, and modern investigation can help prevent such operations in the future. The article is organised into five sections. The first section explains how false flag operations have been used throughout history to justify war. The second section studies the political and military conditions that allow such operations to succeed. The third section examines the role of propaganda, media, and diplomacy. The fourth section compares the Mukden Incident, Operation Himmler, and the Gulf of Tonkin incident. The final section explains how modern law and technology can help detect and prevent false flag operations.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The existing literature on false flag operations mainly focuses on historical examples and military deception. Scholars such as Stratagem: Deception and Surprise in War and On War explain how deception has long been used in warfare. Studies on the Mukden Incident, Operation Himmler, and Gulf of Tonkin incident show that governments often create or exaggerate incidents to justify military action. These works explain the sequence of events and the political goals behind them. However, most of these studies examine each case separately and focus mainly on military history rather than the wider political process.

Another group of studies examines the role of propaganda, media, and diplomacy in making false flag operations successful. Writers such as Propaganda and Persuasion and Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes argue that governments use fear, nationalism, and emotional language to influence public opinion. Research on modern media also shows that television, social media, and digital campaigns can spread false information very quickly. More recent studies discuss cyberattacks, open-source intelligence, and online disinformation. They explain that modern false flag operations may not involve bombs or shootings alone. They may also include fake videos, cyberattacks, and manipulated online content. Yet many of these studies examine media, propaganda, or cyberwarfare separately and do not connect them clearly with the idea of manufactured *casus belli*.

Recent scholarship has expanded the study of false flag operations beyond traditional military incidents and now links them with cyberwarfare, disinformation, and hybrid warfare.

Recent studies argue that modern false flag operations may involve cyberattacks, fake videos, deepfakes, and online propaganda rather than only physical attacks. One study explains that cyber false flag operations are becoming more difficult to identify because governments can hide the real source of an attack and blame another country instead. It also notes that digital attribution remains a major challenge in international security. Another recent article argues that hybrid warfare combines cyberattacks, disinformation, propaganda, and false flag narratives in order to confuse public opinion and blur the line between war and peace. According to this view, modern states increasingly use false flag claims as part of wider information campaigns.

Current research trends also shows that social media and artificial intelligence have made false flag operations more effective. Studies on deepfake technology warn that fake videos and manipulated audio can now be used to create a false reason for military action or to spread fear during an international crisis. Researchers argue that deepfakes may become an important tool in future false flag operations because they appear more realistic than older forms of propaganda. Other recent work on Russian disinformation campaigns shows how false flag narratives are now spread through fake news websites, social media accounts, and online influence operations. These campaigns often aim to create confusion, weaken trust, and justify political or military action.

The main research gap is that there are very few studies that bring together history, propaganda, diplomacy, and modern technology in one framework. Most existing works either discuss old cases of false flag operations or focus only on recent digital forms of deception. Very few studies compare historical and modern examples in order to understand how false flag operations continue to shape war and international politics. There is also limited research on how governments use false flag operations not only to begin war, but also to gain international support and legal justification. This study fills that gap by comparing major historical cases, examining the role of media and diplomacy, and explaining how modern investigative tools can help detect and prevent false flag operations.

III. METHODOLOGY

The article uses a qualitative and comparative research method. It studies false flag operations through close examination of three major cases: the Mukden Incident, Operation Himmler, and the Gulf of Tonkin incident. These cases were selected because they represent different periods, regions, and political systems.

The Mukden Incident represents imperial Japan in East Asia during the interwar period. Operation Himmler represents Nazi Germany in Europe before the Second World War. The Gulf of Tonkin incident represents a democratic state during the Cold War. Together, these cases show different forms of false flag activity, from clearly staged attacks to disputed and exaggerated incidents. The article compares these cases in terms of their causes, methods, propaganda, diplomatic arguments, and consequences. The study also examines how each case was used to create a *casus belli* and justify military action. These three cases were chosen instead of other examples, such as the Reichstag fire or the Mainila shelling, because they provide greater variety. They include both authoritarian and democratic systems, different types of military conflict, and both direct and indirect forms of deception. This allows the article to make a broader comparison and to show that false flag operations are not limited to one country, period, or political system.

The study is based mainly on secondary sources. These include books, journal articles, official reports, government documents, and historical investigations. The article also uses works on propaganda, international law, intelligence, media studies, cyberwarfare, and open-source intelligence in order to connect historical examples with modern developments. A thematic approach is used to organise the material. The article examines five main themes: the historical use of false flag operations, the conditions that make them successful, the role of propaganda and diplomacy, the comparison of major cases, and the use of modern investigative tools.

The article has several limitations. First, it depends mainly on published and publicly available sources because many government records about false flag operations remain secret or incomplete. Second, some cases, especially the Gulf of Tonkin incident, remain debated among historians. Unlike the Mukden Incident and Operation Himmler, there is no complete agreement about whether the second Gulf of Tonkin attack was a deliberate deception or a misunderstanding. Therefore, the article treats it as a disputed case rather than a confirmed false flag operation. A further limitation is that the article studies only three cases. These cases are useful for comparison, but they cannot represent every example from different regions and time periods. Other important cases, such as the Reichstag fire or the Mainila shelling, are not discussed in detail. Finally, modern cyber-based false flag operations are still developing, and there is limited academic research and reliable evidence available. Because of these limitations, the article does not claim to provide final answers.



International Journal of Recent Development in Engineering and Technology
Website: www.ijrdet.com (ISSN 2347-6435 (Online) Volume 15, Issue 06, June 2026)

Instead, it offers a broad and comparative understanding of how false flag operations are used and why they remain important in international politics.

IV. OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this article is to explain the meaning and nature of false flag operations and to show how they are connected with the idea of *casus belli*, or reason for war. The study aims to explain that false flag operations are not random events. They are often carefully planned actions used by governments to make war appear necessary and justified. Another objective is to examine how false flag operations have been used in history to support military action. The article studies major cases such as the Mukden Incident, Operation Himmler, and Gulf of Tonkin incident. By comparing these examples, the study seeks to understand how governments create or use incidents in order to gain public support for war.

The article also aims to identify the political, military, and social conditions that make false flag operations successful. It studies the role of fear, propaganda, media control, diplomacy, and existing hatred of the enemy. Another important objective is to explain how governments use newspapers, radio, television, and social media to spread their version of events and shape public opinion. Finally, the study aims to examine how modern tools can help detect and prevent false flag operations. It discusses the importance of international law, intelligence agencies, open-source intelligence, satellite images, digital forensics, and independent journalism. Through this, the article hopes to show how citizens, governments, and international organisations can respond more effectively to false claims and prevent wars based on deception.

V. FALSE FLAG OPERATIONS AS TRIGGERS FOR WAR

Throughout history, governments have often looked for reasons to begin wars. In many cases, leaders wanted military action, but they knew that the public would not support it without a strong cause. A false flag operation gives leaders such a cause. In this kind of operation, a government secretly carries out an attack and then blames another country or group. The aim is to make people believe that their country is under attack and must respond.¹¹ The idea behind false flag operations is very old. In naval warfare, ships sometimes flew the flag of another country before attacking. Over time, this idea moved from the battlefield into politics and diplomacy. Governments learned that it was often easier to justify war if they appeared to be the victim instead of the aggressor.¹² One of the earliest modern examples is the Mukden Incident of 1931.

At that time, Japan wanted to expand its control over Manchuria, a region in northeastern China. Manchuria was important because it had rich natural resources and an important location. Japanese leaders believed that controlling the region would strengthen their economy and military position.¹³

On 18 September 1931, Japanese soldiers damaged a small section of railway near the city of Mukden. The railway was owned by Japan, but the Japanese army quickly blamed Chinese troops for the damage. The explosion caused little destruction, and trains could still move on the line. However, the Japanese government used the incident as proof that China had attacked Japanese interests.¹⁴ Soon after the incident, Japanese troops invaded Manchuria. Within a few months, Japan controlled the region. It then created a new state called Manchukuo, which was actually controlled by Japan.¹⁵ The Mukden Incident became the official reason for the invasion, even though later investigations showed that Japanese soldiers themselves had planned the attack.¹⁶ Another important case is Operation Himmler in 1939. Adolf Hitler wanted to invade Poland, but he knew that Germany would appear aggressive if it attacked without reason. Therefore, German officials planned a series of fake attacks along the German-Polish border.¹⁷

The most famous of these incidents happened at Gleiwitz, a German radio station near the border. German agents dressed in Polish uniforms entered the station and pretended to attack it. The German government then announced that Polish soldiers had attacked German territory.¹⁸ Hitler used this story in a speech to the German people. He claimed that Germany had no choice but to defend itself against Polish aggression.¹⁹ The next day, Germany invaded Poland. This invasion began the Second World War in Europe. Later evidence showed that the attack at Gleiwitz had been carefully planned by German officials. It was not a real Polish attack. It was a false flag operation designed to make Germany appear innocent.²⁰ The Gulf of Tonkin incident in 1964 is different from the Mukden Incident and Operation Himmler because it remains a disputed case. Historians do not agree on whether the second reported attack was a deliberate deception or a misunderstanding caused by confusion and poor information. Even so, the incident shows how unclear events can be used to justify war. During the early 1960s, the United States was already involved in Vietnam. American leaders feared the spread of communism and wanted to support South Vietnam against North Vietnam.²¹

In August 1964, the United States announced that North Vietnamese boats had attacked two American ships in the Gulf of Tonkin. The first incident appears to have happened.



International Journal of Recent Development in Engineering and Technology
Website: www.ijrdet.com (ISSN 2347-6435 (Online) Volume 15, Issue 06, June 2026)

However, the second attack, reported two days later, is much more doubtful. Later documents and reports suggested that the second attack may never have taken place.²² Even so, President Lyndon Johnson used the incident to ask Congress for greater military powers. Congress passed the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, which allowed the President to expand the war in Vietnam without a formal declaration of war.²³ Over the next few years, American involvement in Vietnam increased greatly. Hundreds of thousands of American troops were sent to the country.²⁴ These examples show that false flag operations do not always follow the same method. In the Mukden Incident and Operation Himmler, governments staged attacks directly. In the Gulf of Tonkin case, the government may have exaggerated or misrepresented what happened. Yet the result was similar. In each case, leaders used the incident to persuade the public that war was necessary.²⁵

False flag operations work because they change the way people understand events. If a government simply says that it wants to invade another country, many people may oppose the decision. However, if the government says that the country has been attacked, public opinion often changes quickly. Fear and anger make people more willing to support military action.²⁶ Governments often use strong emotional language after such incidents. They speak about honour, security, and national survival. They may say that the enemy is cruel or dangerous. This makes people believe that war is the only answer.²⁷

False flag operations can also influence other countries. Foreign governments may support the country that appears to be the victim. International organisations may fail to act because they do not know the truth. By the time the facts become clear, the war may already have begun.²⁸ History shows that false flag operations are not accidents. They are political tools. Governments use them when they want war but need public support. They create an event, shape the story, and then use that story to justify military action. For this reason, false flag operations remain an important subject in the study of war and international politics.^{29,30}

VI. POLITICAL AND MILITARY CONDITIONS BEHIND SUCCESSFUL DECEPTION

False flag operations do not succeed in every country or in every period. They work only when certain political, military, and social conditions are present. Governments cannot simply create a false event and expect people to believe it. They need an environment in which fear, confusion, and distrust already exist.³¹ One of the most important conditions is public fear. When people already believe that another country is dangerous, they are more likely to accept blame without strong proof.³²

If there has been tension, border conflict, or political rivalry for many years, a false flag operation becomes easier. Citizens already expect aggression from the enemy. As a result, they are less likely to question the official explanation. For example, before Germany invaded Poland in 1939, the Nazi government had spent months describing Poland as a threat to Germany.³³ Newspapers, radio broadcasts, and speeches claimed that Germans living near the Polish border were being mistreated. By the time Operation Himmler took place, many Germans were already prepared to believe that Poland had attacked first.³⁴

Another important condition is government control over information. False flag operations work best when leaders can control newspapers, radio, television, or online communication.³⁵ If people hear only one version of an event, they are more likely to believe it. In Nazi Germany, the government tightly controlled the media. Journalists could not publish information that disagreed with official policy.³⁶ After the Gleiwitz attack, German newspapers repeated the government's claim that Poland had attacked German territory.³⁷ Since there were no independent sources of information, many Germans accepted the story. Japan used a similar method during the Mukden Incident. The Japanese government told newspapers to present China as the aggressor.³⁸ Reports described the railway attack as proof that Chinese forces threatened Japanese lives and property. Because the media repeated this message, public support for the invasion of Manchuria increased quickly.³⁹

However, false flag operations are not limited to authoritarian countries. Democratic governments can also shape public opinion. They may use intelligence reports, press conferences, and claims about national security to influence what people believe.⁴⁰ During the Gulf of Tonkin incident, the American government told the public that North Vietnam had attacked United States ships. Many newspapers accepted this explanation because they trusted the government's military evidence.⁴¹ Another condition is the existence of a clear military goal. False flag operations do not usually create new ambitions. Instead, they help leaders carry out plans that already exist.⁴² Governments stage such operations when they want territory, power, or influence, but need a public reason for war.

Japan already wanted control over Manchuria before 1931.⁴³ The region had coal, iron, and farmland. It was also important for Japan's future military expansion. Similarly, Hitler had already decided to invade Poland before Operation Himmler.⁴⁴ The false attack at Gleiwitz did not create the plan. It simply provided a justification. Weak international oversight also helps false flag operations succeed.



International Journal of Recent Development in Engineering and Technology
Website: www.ijrdet.com (ISSN 2347-6435 (Online) Volume 15, Issue 06, June 2026)

If international organisations cannot investigate quickly, governments have more freedom to spread false stories.⁴⁵ In the 1930s, the League of Nations was weak and divided. It could not stop Japan after the Mukden Incident. It also failed to prevent Germany's aggressive actions before the Second World War.⁴⁶

False flag operations are more likely to work during times of crisis. War, economic problems, political unrest, or social division can make people more emotional and less careful.⁴⁷ During such periods, citizens often want quick answers. They may support strong action because they fear uncertainty. Governments may also use false flag operations to unite the country. If a nation is divided, an outside enemy can help bring people together. Leaders often believe that a crisis will increase support for the government.⁴⁸ After a false flag operation, citizens may forget their differences and support military action. Military secrecy is another important factor. False flag operations often involve intelligence agencies, special forces, or covert units.⁴⁹ These organisations can act secretly and hide their activities from the public. Governments with strong intelligence services are therefore more capable of carrying out false flag operations.

In modern times, cyber technology has created new possibilities. A country can launch a cyberattack and make it appear that another country is responsible.⁵⁰ This is called cyber attribution. Because cyberattacks are difficult to trace, false flag operations in cyberspace are becoming more common.⁵¹ For example, a government may attack its own computer systems and then claim that a foreign enemy was responsible. It can then use the attack as a reason for sanctions, military action, or tighter control over society. Since most people do not understand technical details, they may accept the government's explanation.⁵²

Speed is also very important. Governments usually release their version of events immediately after an incident.⁵³ The first explanation often becomes the strongest one. Later evidence may come too late to change public opinion. The Gulf of Tonkin incident shows this clearly. The American government announced that North Vietnam had attacked American ships. Newspapers and television repeated the story almost immediately.⁵⁴ By the time questions appeared about the second attack, Congress had already passed the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution.

False flag operations also work when the enemy is already unpopular. If the public already sees another country as violent or dangerous, they are more willing to believe accusations.⁵⁵ Governments often prepare the public in advance through propaganda. They create an image of the enemy long before the false flag operation takes place.

Finally, false flag operations succeed because many people want simple explanations. In times of fear, citizens often prefer clear stories with clear enemies. Governments can use this desire to their advantage.⁵⁶ Instead of asking difficult questions, people may accept the official version because it seems easy and emotional.

VII. TURNING A STAGED INCIDENT INTO PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR WAR

A false flag operation does not become useful unless people believe the story behind it. The attack itself may be small, but the explanation that follows can have great power. Propaganda, media, and diplomatic language are therefore central to the success of false flag operations. They turn a small event into a national emergency and convince people that war is necessary. Propaganda means the deliberate use of information to influence what people think and feel.⁵⁷ Governments use propaganda to shape emotions, create fear, and encourage loyalty. After a false flag operation, propaganda usually presents the country as an innocent victim and the enemy as cruel or dangerous.⁵⁸ The purpose of propaganda is not simply to provide facts. Instead, it creates a story. This story explains who is good, who is bad, and why action is necessary. Leaders often speak about honour, safety, and national survival. They tell citizens that the country must fight in order to defend itself.⁵⁹

Nazi Germany provides a clear example. After Operation Himmler in 1939, the German government claimed that Poland had attacked German territory.⁶⁰ Newspapers, radio stations, and public speeches repeated this claim again and again.⁶¹ Adolf Hitler told the German people that Germany had no choice but to defend itself. He argued that Poland had started the conflict.⁶² Because the Nazi government controlled the media, there were very few alternative explanations. Most Germans heard only one version of events. As a result, many people accepted the story and supported the invasion of Poland.⁶³

The Mukden Incident also shows the importance of propaganda. After Japanese soldiers damaged the railway in Manchuria, the Japanese government blamed Chinese forces.⁶⁴ Newspapers described China as violent and dangerous. Japan claimed that it had to protect its citizens and its economic interests.⁶⁵ The Japanese government did not simply report the event. It used the event to create a larger story. This story said that Japan was bringing order and stability to Manchuria. In this way, propaganda helped justify the invasion.⁶⁶ The media is important because it spreads information quickly. In the past, governments used newspapers, radio, and public speeches. Today, they also use television, websites, and social media.⁶⁷



International Journal of Recent Development in Engineering and Technology
Website: www.ijrdet.com (ISSN 2347-6435 (Online) Volume 15, Issue 06, June 2026)

The first version of an event is often the most powerful. When a government speaks immediately after an incident, many people accept its explanation before evidence appears.⁶⁸ Later corrections usually receive less attention. The Gulf of Tonkin incident is a good example. In August 1964, the United States government announced that North Vietnam had attacked American ships.⁶⁹ Newspapers and television repeated this story almost immediately.⁷⁰ Most Americans believed that the United States had been attacked. Only later did doubts appear about the second attack. Historians and released documents suggested that the second attack may not have happened.⁷¹ However, by that time, Congress had already passed the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution. The public had already accepted the government's explanation.

Diplomacy also plays a major role. Governments do not only want support at home. They also want support from other countries. Therefore, they explain their actions through diplomatic statements, speeches, and international organisations.⁷² A country may claim that it is acting in self-defence under international law. It may say that military action is necessary to protect peace, security, or human rights.⁷³ If other countries believe this explanation, they may provide political or military support. After the Mukden Incident, Japan argued before the League of Nations that it was protecting Japanese citizens and property in Manchuria.⁷⁴ Japan claimed that Chinese actions had created disorder and danger. Although some countries doubted this explanation, the League acted slowly and failed to stop Japan. Germany used diplomacy in a similar way. German officials told foreign governments that Poland had attacked first. They hoped that Britain and France would not interfere. Although this attempt failed, the diplomatic story still helped Germany present itself as the victim.⁷⁵ Modern technology has changed propaganda. Social media can spread images, videos, and messages within minutes.⁷⁶ Governments and political groups can use fake accounts and online campaigns to influence public opinion.⁷⁷

False information spreads quickly because emotional stories attract attention. Images of injured people, damaged buildings, or military attacks can create strong reactions. Even if the information is false, many people believe it because it matches their fears.⁷⁸ However, modern technology also creates new ways to expose false flag operations. Journalists, researchers, and ordinary citizens can compare videos, photographs, and satellite images. Open-source intelligence has become an important method for testing government claims.⁷⁹ For example, if a government says that another country attacked a city, investigators can study satellite images, videos, and witness statements. They may discover that the official story is false.

This makes it harder for governments to control the narrative.⁸⁰ Despite these new tools, propaganda remains powerful. Many people continue to trust governments during times of crisis. Fear, anger, and patriotism often make citizens less likely to ask difficult questions.⁸¹

VIII. COMPARING METHODS, GOALS, AND RESULTS

The Mukden Incident, Operation Himmler, and the Gulf of Tonkin incident are three of the most important cases in the history of false flag operations and disputed military incidents. These events happened in different countries and different time periods. However, they all had one important similarity. In each case, a government used an incident to justify military action.⁸² The Mukden Incident happened in September 1931 in Manchuria, a region in northeastern China. At that time, Japan wanted greater control over Manchuria because the region had rich natural resources and an important location.⁸³ Japanese leaders believed that control of Manchuria would strengthen Japan's economy and military power.⁸⁴

On 18 September 1931, Japanese soldiers damaged a railway line near Mukden. The railway belonged to Japan, but the Japanese army blamed Chinese troops for the attack.⁸⁵ The damage was actually very small. Trains were still able to use the railway. Even so, Japan claimed that China had attacked Japanese property and that military action was necessary.⁸⁶ The Japanese army quickly invaded Manchuria. Within a few months, Japan controlled the region. It then created a new state called Manchukuo. Although Manchukuo appeared independent, it was actually controlled by Japan.⁸⁷ The method used in the Mukden Incident was simple and direct. Japanese soldiers themselves carried out the attack and then blamed China. The main objective was to create an excuse for an invasion that Japan had already planned.⁸⁸

Operation Himmler happened eight years later, in August 1939. Adolf Hitler had already decided to invade Poland. However, he wanted Germany to appear as the victim rather than the aggressor.⁸⁹ Therefore, German officials organised a series of fake attacks near the German-Polish border. The most famous of these attacks happened at a radio station in Gleiwitz. German agents dressed in Polish uniforms entered the station and pretended to attack it.⁹⁰ The German government then announced that Polish forces had attacked German territory.⁹¹ Hitler used this story in a speech to the German people. He claimed that Germany had been attacked and that military action was necessary for self-defence.⁹² On 1 September 1939, Germany invaded Poland. Two days later, Britain and France declared war on Germany. This marked the beginning of the Second World War in Europe.⁹³



International Journal of Recent Development in Engineering and Technology
Website: www.ijrdet.com (ISSN 2347-6435 (Online) Volume 15, Issue 06, June 2026)

The method used in Operation Himmler was more complex than the Mukden Incident. German officials organised several fake attacks in different places. They used disguises, false evidence, and even the bodies of prisoners to make the attacks appear real.⁹⁴ The objective was also larger. Japan wanted to control one region of China, but Germany wanted to begin a major European war. Operation Himmler was therefore one of the most important false flag operations in modern history.⁹⁵

The Gulf of Tonkin incident happened in August 1964 during the Cold War. The United States was already supporting South Vietnam in its struggle against North Vietnam. American leaders feared that communism would spread across Asia if North Vietnam became stronger.⁹⁶ In August 1964, the United States announced that North Vietnamese boats had attacked two American ships in the Gulf of Tonkin.⁹⁷ The first attack appears to have happened. However, the second reported attack, which supposedly happened two days later, is much more doubtful.⁹⁸ Later investigations showed that there was confusion, poor weather, and mistakes in military reports. Some historians believe that the second attack never happened at all.⁹⁹ Others believe that American leaders exaggerated the evidence because they wanted stronger public support for the war.¹⁰⁰

Unlike the Mukden Incident and Operation Himmler, the Gulf of Tonkin incident was not a clearly planned false flag operation. There is no strong evidence that the United States secretly attacked its own ships. Instead, the problem was that the government may have misrepresented or exaggerated what happened.¹⁰¹ Even so, the political result was similar. President Lyndon Johnson used the incident to ask Congress for more military powers. Congress quickly passed the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution. This gave the President the authority to expand American involvement in Vietnam without a formal declaration of war.¹⁰² There are several important similarities between these three cases. First, in each case, the government already wanted military action before the incident happened.¹⁰³ Japan wanted Manchuria, Germany wanted Poland, and the United States wanted greater involvement in Vietnam. Second, all three governments claimed that they were acting in self-defence.¹⁰⁴ They did not present themselves as aggressors. Instead, they said that another country had attacked first. Third, propaganda and media played an important role in all three cases. The governments quickly spread their own version of events.¹⁰⁵ Newspapers, radio, and television repeated the official story. In Germany and Japan, the media was tightly controlled. In the United States, many journalists accepted the government's explanation because they trusted official reports.¹⁰⁶

However, there are also important differences. The Mukden Incident and Operation Himmler were clearly planned false flag operations. Later evidence proved that Japan and Germany had organised the attacks themselves.¹⁰⁷ The Gulf of Tonkin incident is different because the truth is more uncertain. Historians agree that the second attack was doubtful, but they disagree about whether the government deliberately lied or simply misunderstood the situation.¹⁰⁸ The scale of the consequences was also different. The Mukden Incident led to the occupation of Manchuria.¹⁰⁹ Operation Himmler helped start the Second World War, the largest conflict in human history.¹¹⁰ The Gulf of Tonkin incident did not begin the Vietnam War, but it greatly increased American involvement and caused years of fighting.¹¹¹ Another difference concerns international reaction. After the Mukden Incident, the League of Nations criticised Japan, but it was too weak to stop the invasion. In 1939, Britain and France quickly reacted to Germany's invasion of Poland by declaring war. In the Gulf of Tonkin case, most countries accepted the American explanation at first. Only later did doubts begin to appear. These three cases show that governments can use different methods to justify war. Some stage attacks directly. Others exaggerate or misrepresent unclear events. Yet the result is often the same. A government creates or uses an incident in order to gain support for military action.

**IX. INTERNATIONAL LAW, INTELLIGENCE, AND
MODERN INVESTIGATION:**

False flag operations continue to exist in the modern world. However, governments today face greater difficulty in hiding them. New technologies, international law, intelligence agencies, and independent investigations make it easier to discover the truth. Although false stories can still spread quickly, modern tools also give people better ways to challenge official claims.¹¹² International law is one of the most important protections against false flag operations. According to the Charter of the United Nations, countries may use military force only in self-defence or with approval from the United Nations Security Council.¹¹³ This means that a government cannot legally start a war simply because it wants more land, power, or influence. If a government claims that another country attacked first, other countries can ask for evidence. International law requires proof before military action can be accepted as lawful.¹¹⁴ A government that begins a war on the basis of false information may be accused of aggression. Aggression is considered one of the most serious crimes in international law.¹¹⁵



International Journal of Recent Development in Engineering and Technology
Website: www.ijrdet.com (ISSN 2347-6435 (Online) Volume 15, Issue 06, June 2026)

The United Nations often plays an important role in such situations. The Security Council can organise investigations into suspicious incidents.¹¹⁶ The United Nations may send fact-finding teams, observers, or special commissions to collect evidence. These teams examine photographs, videos, witness statements, and military records.¹¹⁷ For example, after the Mukden Incident in 1931, the League of Nations created an investigation called the Lytton Commission. The commission studied the railway attack and later concluded that Japan had used the incident as an excuse for its invasion of Manchuria.¹¹⁸ Although the League could not stop Japan, the investigation revealed the truth. Modern international investigations are much stronger than those of the 1930s. Today, investigators can use satellite images, mobile phone videos, internet records, and digital maps.¹¹⁹ These tools make it harder for governments to hide their actions.

Intelligence agencies are also important. Intelligence agencies collect information about military plans, troop movements, communications, and secret operations.¹²⁰ They may discover signs that a country is preparing a false flag operation. Before Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022, the United States and some European countries publicly warned that Russia might stage a false flag attack and blame Ukraine.¹²¹ The purpose of this warning was to reduce the effectiveness of such a plan. If people already expect a false flag operation, they are less likely to believe it when it happens. Public warnings can therefore act as a form of prevention. Intelligence agencies do not always stop false flag operations directly, but they can make deception more difficult.¹²²

Modern technology has created many new ways to investigate events. Satellite images are especially useful. Satellites can show where soldiers are moving, where explosions happened, and which side controlled an area.¹²³ If a government claims that another country attacked first, satellite images may reveal a different story. For example, if a country claims that a foreign army attacked a village, investigators can study satellite photographs from before and after the incident. They may discover that the village was actually controlled by the same government that made the accusation.¹²⁴ Mobile phones and social media have also changed the way investigations take place. In earlier times, governments could control most information. Today, ordinary people can record videos and photographs during a conflict.¹²⁵ These images often appear online within minutes. Investigators can compare these videos with maps, weather reports, and local landmarks. This process helps them discover where and when an event happened.¹²⁶ Even if a government spreads false information, independent investigators may be able to prove that the story is wrong.

Open-source intelligence, usually called OSINT, has become one of the most important methods for detecting false flag operations.¹²⁷ OSINT uses publicly available information such as videos, photographs, websites, and social media posts. Groups such as Bellingcat have used OSINT to investigate conflicts in many countries.¹²⁸ These investigators compare online images with satellite maps. They study buildings, roads, shadows, and weather conditions. In this way, they can often prove whether a government is telling the truth. For example, if a government says that an attack happened in one place, but videos show different buildings or roads, investigators may discover that the event happened somewhere else. This can expose a false claim.¹²⁹

Cyber technology has created new dangers as well as new solutions. A cyberattack can be made to look as though it came from another country.¹³⁰ This is called false attribution. Governments may use such attacks to justify political pressure, economic sanctions, or military action. For example, a country might attack its own computer systems and then claim that a rival state was responsible. Since cyberattacks are difficult to trace, many people may believe the accusation.¹³¹ To prevent such deception, experts use digital forensics. Digital forensics studies computer code, internet addresses, and technical details in order to identify the real source of a cyberattack.¹³² Cybersecurity experts compare the style of the attack with earlier attacks. They may discover that the same group has used similar methods before.

Journalists also have an important responsibility. In the past, many newspapers accepted government claims without asking questions. Today, journalists are more careful because they know that governments sometimes provide false information.¹³³ Good journalism requires evidence. Reporters should examine official claims, speak to witnesses, and compare different sources. If journalists repeat government statements without investigation, false flag operations become easier.¹³⁴

Education is another important defence. People who understand propaganda and misinformation are less likely to be manipulated.¹³⁵ Schools and universities can teach media literacy. Media literacy means the ability to examine information carefully and ask whether it is true. Citizens should learn to ask simple questions. Who is providing this information? Is there any evidence? Are there other explanations? Has the government already wanted war before this event happened? These questions can help people avoid false stories.¹³⁶

International cooperation is also necessary. Countries should share intelligence and support independent investigations.¹³⁷



International Journal of Recent Development in Engineering and Technology
Website: www.ijrdet.com (ISSN 2347-6435 (Online) Volume 15, Issue 06, June 2026)

If several countries compare information, it becomes harder for one government to hide the truth. For example, if one country claims that it has been attacked, other countries can use their own satellites and intelligence agencies to check the claim. If the evidence does not match, they may refuse to support military action.¹³⁸ However, modern tools are not perfect. Governments can still spread false stories quickly through television and social media. Deepfake videos and artificial intelligence may create even greater problems in the future.¹³⁹ False images and fake voices may become more difficult to identify. Because of this, societies must remain careful. International law, intelligence, journalism, and technology are useful, but they work only when people are willing to question official claims.¹⁴⁰

X. FINDINGS

The study finds that false flag operations are usually used after governments have already decided on military action. The incident itself does not create the decision for war. Instead, it provides a public reason that makes war appear defensive and necessary. In the Mukden Incident and Operation Himmler, the attacks were clearly planned in advance. In the disputed Gulf of Tonkin incident, the government used a doubtful and unclear event in order to gain support for greater military involvement. This shows that false flag operations can take different forms, from direct deception to exaggeration or selective use of evidence.

The article also finds that false flag operations become successful only when certain conditions already exist. Public fear, hostility toward another country, and existing political tension make people more willing to accept the official explanation. Government control over information is also important. In Japan and Germany, newspapers and radio repeated the official story because the state controlled the media. In the United States, many journalists accepted the government's explanation because they trusted official reports and military sources. In all three cases, the first explanation spread quickly and became more powerful than later evidence.

Another finding is that propaganda, media, and diplomacy are as important as the incident itself. Governments use emotional language about honour, security, and national survival in order to create support for war. They also present themselves as victims before other countries and international organisations. Japan claimed that it was protecting its citizens in Manchuria. Germany claimed that Poland had attacked first. The United States claimed that North Vietnam had attacked American ships. These diplomatic and media campaigns helped governments justify military action even when the evidence was weak or disputed.

Finally, the study finds that modern technology has changed both the methods of false flag operations and the methods used to expose them. Today, governments and political groups can use cyberattacks, fake videos, social media, and online disinformation to spread false claims more quickly than before. At the same time, satellite images, open-source intelligence, digital forensics, and independent journalism now make it harder to hide deception. Therefore, false flag operations remain a serious danger, but they are now more difficult to conceal than in earlier periods.

XI. DISCUSSION

The findings suggest that false flag operations are not simply military events. They are part of a wider political strategy. Governments use them to shape public opinion and to make military action appear legal and moral. The study shows that people are more likely to support war when they believe that their country has been attacked. Because of this, governments often try to control the story surrounding an incident rather than rely only on the incident itself. The success of a false flag operation therefore depends mainly on the ability to create a convincing narrative.

The study also suggests that there is an important difference between clearly staged attacks and disputed incidents. The Mukden Incident and Operation Himmler were deliberate false flag operations supported by later evidence. The disputed Gulf of Tonkin incident shows a different pattern. In this case, the problem was not necessarily a secret attack planned by the government. Instead, it involved confusion, exaggeration, and selective interpretation. This means that modern governments may not always need to create a completely false event. They can sometimes achieve the same result by presenting uncertain information in a misleading way.

Another important point is that false flag operations are not limited to authoritarian governments. Japan and Nazi Germany used strict censorship and state-controlled propaganda. However, the United States case shows that democratic governments can also influence public opinion during periods of crisis. Citizens often trust their leaders during emergencies and may accept official explanations without enough evidence. Therefore, all political systems can be vulnerable to false flag operations, although the methods may differ.

The discussion also highlights the importance of modern technology. Social media, cyberwarfare, and artificial intelligence can make false information spread more quickly and more widely than in the past. At the same time, new forms of investigation make it easier to challenge official claims.



International Journal of Recent Development in Engineering and Technology
Website: www.ijrdet.com (ISSN 2347-6435 (Online) Volume 15, Issue 06, June 2026)

Open-source intelligence, digital forensics, and independent journalism have become important tools for protecting truth and accountability. The study therefore suggests that the best defence against false flag operations is not only better technology, but also a public that is willing to question official narratives before supporting war.

Recent events show that false flag operations remain highly important in modern international politics. Before the 2022 invasion of Ukraine, several Western governments warned that Russia might stage an attack and blame Ukraine in order to justify military action. Similar accusations have appeared in conflicts in Syria and the Gaza Strip, where different sides have claimed that attacks were staged, exaggerated, or falsely blamed on others. These examples show that the issue is not limited to the past. Modern governments and political groups still use false flag claims to influence public opinion, gain international support, and justify military action. The difference is that today these operations may involve cyberattacks, fake videos, social media campaigns, and online disinformation instead of only physical attacks. Therefore, the study of false flag operations is more relevant than ever in an age of digital warfare and instant communication.

XII. SIGNIFICANCE

This study is important because it explains how governments can use false flag operations to justify war and influence public opinion. By examining the Mukden Incident, Operation Himmler, and Gulf of Tonkin incident, the article shows that wars are not always started only because of real attacks. In some cases, leaders create, exaggerate, or misuse incidents in order to gain support for military action. Understanding this process is important because it helps people recognise how fear, propaganda, and political storytelling can be used to influence society. The study is also significant because it connects historical examples with present-day challenges. Modern false flag operations may involve cyberattacks, social media, and online disinformation instead of only physical attacks. The article therefore helps explain why false information spreads so quickly in the digital age and why it can still be used to justify conflict. At the same time, the study highlights the importance of international law, independent journalism, open-source intelligence, and public awareness.

These tools can help governments, journalists, students, and citizens identify false claims before they lead to war. For students of political science and international relations, the article provides a better understanding of how deception shapes war, diplomacy, and global politics.

XIII. CONCLUSION

False flag operations have played an important role in the history of war and international politics. Governments often use them when they want military action but need a reason that can make war appear necessary and lawful. By creating, exaggerating, or misrepresenting an incident, leaders can present themselves as victims and claim that they are acting in self-defence. The cases of the Mukden Incident, Operation Himmler, and the disputed Gulf of Tonkin incident show that false flag operations can take different forms. Some involve carefully staged attacks, while others involve exaggeration, selective evidence, or misleading interpretation. Yet the result is often the same: governments gain support for war by shaping how people understand an event. The study shows that false flag operations become successful only under certain conditions. Fear, hostility toward an enemy, media control, propaganda, and weak international oversight make deception easier. Governments use newspapers, radio, television, diplomacy, and now social media to spread their version of events quickly. In many cases, the first explanation becomes more powerful than later evidence. As a result, the public may support military action before the truth becomes clear. The article also demonstrates that false flag operations are not limited to the past or to authoritarian states. Modern governments and political groups can use cyberattacks, fake videos, social media campaigns, and online disinformation to create new forms of deception. At the same time, modern investigative tools such as satellite images, open-source intelligence, digital forensics, and independent journalism make it easier to expose false claims. Ultimately, false flag operations are dangerous not only because they can lead to war, but also because they weaken trust in governments, media, and international institutions. In an age of instant communication, cyber conflict, and digital manipulation, the ability to question official narratives has become essential for protecting both peace and democracy.

REFERENCES

¹ Whaley B. *Stratagem: Deception and Surprise in War*. Cambridge: MIT Press; 2007.
² Clausewitz C. *On War*. Princeton: Princeton University Press; 1989.

³ Handel MJ. *Intelligence and Military Operations*. London: Frank Cass; 1990.
⁴ Lebow RN. *Between Peace and War: The Nature of International Crisis*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press; 1981.



International Journal of Recent Development in Engineering and Technology
Website: www.ijrdet.com (ISSN 2347-6435 (Online) Volume 15, Issue 06, June 2026)

- ⁵ Jowett GS, O'Donnell V. Propaganda and Persuasion. 6th ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage; 2015.
- ⁶ Ellul J. Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes. New York: Vintage; 1973.
- ⁷ Morgenthau HJ. Politics Among Nations. 7th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill; 2006.
- ⁸ Rid T. Active Measures: The Secret History of Disinformation and Political Warfare. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux; 2020.
- ⁹ Higgins E. We Are Bellingcat. London: Bloomsbury; 2021.
- ¹⁰ Wardle C, Derakhshan H. Information Disorder: Toward an Interdisciplinary Framework. Strasbourg: Council of Europe; 2017.
- ¹¹ Ibid., 01
- ¹² Handel MJ. Intelligence and Military Operations. London: Frank Cass; 1990.
- ¹³ Mitter R. The Manchurian Myth: Nationalism, Resistance and Collaboration in Modern China. Berkeley: University of California Press; 2000.
- ¹⁴ Young LC. Japan's Total Empire: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism. Berkeley: University of California Press; 1998.
- ¹⁵ Paine SCM. The Wars for Asia, 1911-1949. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; 2012.
- ¹⁶ League of Nations. Report of the Commission of Enquiry. Geneva: League of Nations; 1932.
- ¹⁷ Shirer WL. The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich. New York: Simon and Schuster; 1960.
- ¹⁸ Bullock A. Hitler: A Study in Tyranny. London: Penguin; 1991.
- ¹⁹ Kershaw I. Hitler, 1936-1945: Nemesis. London: Penguin; 2001.
- ²⁰ Rees L. The Nazis: A Warning from History. London: BBC Books; 1997.
- ²¹ Logevall F. Embers of War. New York: Random House; 2012.
- ²² Moise EE. Tonkin Gulf and the Escalation of the Vietnam War. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press; 1996.
- ²³ McNamara RS. In Retrospect: The Tragedy and Lessons of Vietnam. New York: Vintage Books; 1996.
- ²⁴ Karnow S. Vietnam: A History. New York: Penguin; 1997.
- ²⁵ Hanyok R. Skunks, Bogies, Silent Hounds, and the Flying Fish. Cryptologic Quarterly. 2001;20(1):1-58.
- ²⁶ Jowett GS, O'Donnell V. Propaganda and Persuasion. 6th ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage; 2015.
- ²⁷ Taylor PM. Munitons of the Mind: A History of Propaganda. Manchester: Manchester University Press; 2003.
- ²⁸ Carr EH. The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919-1939. London: Macmillan; 1939.
- ²⁹ Lebow RN. Between Peace and War: The Nature of International Crisis. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press; 1981.
- ³⁰ Clausewitz C. On War. Princeton: Princeton University Press; 1989.
- ³¹ Jowett GS, O'Donnell V. Propaganda and Persuasion. 6th ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage; 2015.
- ³² Lasswell HD. Propaganda Technique in the World War. New York: Knopf; 1927.
- ³³ Welch D. Nazi Propaganda: The Power and the Limitations. London: Croom Helm; 1983.
- ³⁴ Evans RJ. The Third Reich at War. London: Penguin; 2009.
- ³⁵ Taylor PM. Munitons of the Mind: A History of Propaganda. Manchester: Manchester University Press; 2003.
- ³⁶ Herf J. The Jewish Enemy: Nazi Propaganda During World War II and the Holocaust. Cambridge: Harvard University Press; 2006.
- ³⁷ Kallis AA. Nazi Propaganda and the Second World War. London: Palgrave Macmillan; 2005.
- ³⁸ Duus P. The Abacus and the Sword: The Japanese Penetration of Korea. Berkeley: University of California Press; 1995.
- ³⁹ Beasley WG. Japanese Imperialism 1894-1945. Oxford: Oxford University Press; 1987.
- ⁴⁰ Bennett WL. News: The Politics of Illusion. Chicago: University of Chicago Press; 2016.
- ⁴¹ Hallin DC. The Uncensored War: The Media and Vietnam. Berkeley: University of California Press; 1986.
- ⁴² Lebow RN. Between Peace and War: The Nature of International Crisis. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press; 1981.
- ⁴³ Young LC. Japan's Total Empire: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism. Berkeley: University of California Press; 1998.
- ⁴⁴ Bullock A. Hitler: A Study in Tyranny. London: Penguin; 1991.
- ⁴⁵ Carr EH. The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919-1939. London: Macmillan; 1939.
- ⁴⁶ Northedge FS. The League of Nations: Its Life and Times. Leicester: Leicester University Press; 1986.
- ⁴⁷ Kahneman D. Thinking, Fast and Slow. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux; 2011.
- ⁴⁸ Mueller J. War, Presidents and Public Opinion. New York: Wiley; 1973.
- ⁴⁹ Johnson LK. Handbook of Intelligence Studies. London: Routledge; 2007.
- ⁵⁰ Rid T. Cyber War Will Not Take Place. London: Hurst; 2013.
- ⁵¹ Lindsay JR. Tipping the Scales: The Attribution Problem and the Feasibility of Deterrence Against Cyberattack. Journal of Cybersecurity. 2015;1(1):53-67.
- ⁵² Singer PW, Friedman A. Cybersecurity and Cyberwar. Oxford: Oxford University Press; 2014.
- ⁵³ Zaller J. The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; 1992.
- ⁵⁴ Moise EE. Tonkin Gulf and the Escalation of the Vietnam War. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press; 1996.
- ⁵⁵ Ibid. 07
- ⁵⁶ Ibid., 06
- ⁵⁷ Ibid., 06
- ⁵⁸ Lasswell HD. Propaganda Technique in the World War. New York: Knopf; 1927.
- ⁵⁹ Jowett GS, O'Donnell V. Propaganda and Persuasion. 6th ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage; 2015.
- ⁶⁰ Shirer WL. The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich. New York: Simon and Schuster; 1960.
- ⁶¹ Kallis AA. Nazi Propaganda and the Second World War. London: Palgrave Macmillan; 2005.
- ⁶² Bullock A. Hitler: A Study in Tyranny. London: Penguin; 1991.
- ⁶³ Herf J. The Jewish Enemy: Nazi Propaganda During World War II and the Holocaust. Cambridge: Harvard University Press; 2006.
- ⁶⁴ Young LC. Japan's Total Empire: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism. Berkeley: University of California Press; 1998.
- ⁶⁵ Iriye A. The Origins of the Second World War in Asia and the Pacific. London: Longman; 1987.



International Journal of Recent Development in Engineering and Technology
Website: www.ijrdet.com (ISSN 2347-6435 (Online) Volume 15, Issue 06, June 2026)

- ⁶⁶ Dvus P. *The Abacus and the Sword: The Japanese Penetration of Korea*. Berkeley: University of California Press; 1995.
- ⁶⁷ Taylor PM. *Munitions of the Mind: A History of Propaganda*. Manchester: Manchester University Press; 2003.
- ⁶⁸ Zaller J. *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; 1992.
- ⁶⁹ Moise EE. *Tonkin Gulf and the Escalation of the Vietnam War*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press; 1996.
- ⁷⁰ Hallin DC. *The Uncensored War: The Media and Vietnam*. Berkeley: University of California Press; 1986.
- ⁷¹ Hanyok R. Skunks, Bogies, Silent Hounds, and the Flying Fish. *Cryptologic Quarterly*. 2001;20(1):1-58.
- ⁷² *Ibid.*, 07
- ⁷³ Gray C. *International Law and the Use of Force*. 4th ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press; 2018.
- ⁷⁴ League of Nations. *Report of the Commission of Enquiry*. Geneva: League of Nations; 1932.
- ⁷⁵ Carr EH. *The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919-1939*. London: Macmillan; 1939.
- ⁷⁶ Bradshaw S, Howard PN. The Global Organization of Social Media Disinformation Campaigns. *Journal of International Affairs*. 2019;71(1):23-32.
- ⁷⁷ Wardle C, Derakhshan H. *Information Disorder: Toward an Interdisciplinary Framework*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe; 2017.
- ⁷⁸ Bennett WL. *News: The Politics of Illusion*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press; 2016.
- ⁷⁹ Higgins E. *We Are Bellingcat*. London: Bloomsbury; 2021.
- ⁸⁰ Steele RO. *Open Source Intelligence*. Fairfax: AFCEA International Press; 2007.
- ⁸¹ Kahneman D. *Thinking, Fast and Slow*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux; 2011.
- ⁸² *Ibid.*, 01
- ⁸³ Mitter R. *The Manchurian Myth: Nationalism, Resistance and Collaboration in Modern China*. Berkeley: University of California Press; 2000.
- ⁸⁴ Young LC. *Japan's Total Empire: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism*. Berkeley: University of California Press; 1998.
- ⁸⁵ Peattie MR. *Ishiwara Kanji and Japan's Confrontation with the West*. Princeton: Princeton University Press; 1975.
- ⁸⁶ Beasley WG. *Japanese Imperialism 1894-1945*. Oxford: Oxford University Press; 1987.
- ⁸⁷ Paine SCM. *The Wars for Asia, 1911-1949*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; 2012.
- ⁸⁸ League of Nations. *Report of the Commission of Enquiry*. Geneva: League of Nations; 1932.
- ⁸⁹ Shirer WL. *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*. New York: Simon and Schuster; 1960.
- ⁹⁰ Bullock A. *Hitler: A Study in Tyranny*. London: Penguin; 1991.
- ⁹¹ Kershaw I. *Hitler, 1936-1945: Nemesis*. London: Penguin; 2001.
- ⁹² Fest J. *Hitler*. New York: Harcourt; 1974.
- ⁹³ Overy R. *The Origins of the Second World War*. London: Routledge; 2014.
- ⁹⁴ Trevor-Roper H. *The Last Days of Hitler*. London: Pan Books; 1972.
- ⁹⁵ Rees L. *The Nazis: A Warning from History*. London: BBC Books; 1997.
- ⁹⁶ Logevall F. *Embers of War*. New York: Random House; 2012.
- ⁹⁷ Moise EE. *Tonkin Gulf and the Escalation of the Vietnam War*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press; 1996.
- ⁹⁸ Karnow S. *Vietnam: A History*. New York: Penguin; 1997.
- ⁹⁹ Hanyok R. Skunks, Bogies, Silent Hounds, and the Flying Fish. *Cryptologic Quarterly*. 2001;20(1):1-58.
- ¹⁰⁰ McNamara RS. In *Retrospect: The Tragedy and Lessons of Vietnam*. New York: Vintage Books; 1996.
- ¹⁰¹ Schulzinger RD. *A Time for War: The United States and Vietnam, 1941-1975*. New York: Oxford University Press; 1997.
- ¹⁰² Hallin DC. *The Uncensored War: The Media and Vietnam*. Berkeley: University of California Press; 1986.
- ¹⁰³ Lebow RN. *Between Peace and War: The Nature of International Crisis*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press; 1981.
- ¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.* 07
- ¹⁰⁵ Taylor PM. *Munitions of the Mind: A History of Propaganda*. Manchester: Manchester University Press; 2003.
- ¹⁰⁶ Bennett WL. *News: The Politics of Illusion*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press; 2016.
- ¹⁰⁷ Carr EH. *The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919-1939*. London: Macmillan; 1939.
- ¹⁰⁸ Gray CS. *Modern Strategy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press; 1999.
- ¹⁰⁹ Wilson D. *When Tigers Fight: The Story of the Sino-Japanese War, 1937-1945*. New York: Viking; 1982.
- ¹¹⁰ Clausewitz C. *On War*. Princeton: Princeton University Press; 1989.
- ¹¹¹ Freedman L. *Strategy: A History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press; 2013.
- ¹¹² Gray C. *International Law and the Use of Force*. 4th ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press; 2018.
- ¹¹³ United Nations. *Charter of the United Nations*. New York: United Nations; 1945.
- ¹¹⁴ Dinstein Y. *War, Aggression and Self-Defence*. 7th ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; 2021.
- ¹¹⁵ Cryer R, Robinson D, Vasiliev S. *An Introduction to International Criminal Law and Procedure*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; 2019.
- ¹¹⁶ Schachter O. *International Law in Theory and Practice*. Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff; 1991.
- ¹¹⁷ Roberts A. *The United Nations and International Security*. Oxford: Oxford University Press; 2006.
- ¹¹⁸ League of Nations. *Report of the Commission of Enquiry*. Geneva: League of Nations; 1932.
- ¹¹⁹ Higgins E. *We Are Bellingcat*. London: Bloomsbury; 2021.
- ¹²⁰ Johnson LK. *Handbook of Intelligence Studies*. London: Routledge; 2007.
- ¹²¹ Freedman L. *Ukraine and the Art of Strategy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press; 2019.
- ¹²² Betts RK. *Enemies of Intelligence*. New York: Columbia University Press; 2007.
- ¹²³ Steele RO. *Open Source Intelligence*. Fairfax: AFCEA International Press; 2007.
- ¹²⁴ Rid T. *Active Measures: The Secret History of Disinformation and Political Warfare*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux; 2020.



International Journal of Recent Development in Engineering and Technology
Website: www.ijrdet.com (ISSN 2347-6435 (Online) Volume 15, Issue 06, June 2026)

¹²⁵ Wardle C, Derakhshan H. Information Disorder: Toward an Interdisciplinary Framework. Strasbourg: Council of Europe; 2017.

¹²⁶ Bradshaw S, Howard PN. The Global Organization of Social Media Disinformation Campaigns. *Journal of International Affairs*. 2019;71(1):23-32.

¹²⁷ West B. Open Source Intelligence in the Twenty-First Century. London: Routledge; 2022.

¹²⁸ Higgins E. We Are Bellingcat. London: Bloomsbury; 2021.

¹²⁹ Heft L. Digital Witnessing and War Crimes Investigations. *International Journal of Human Rights*. 2020;24(5):615-630.

¹³⁰ Rid T. Cyber War Will Not Take Place. London: Hurst; 2013.

¹³¹ Singer PW, Friedman A. Cybersecurity and Cyberwar. Oxford: Oxford University Press; 2014.

¹³² Lindsay JR. Tipping the Scales: The Attribution Problem and the Feasibility of Deterrence Against Cyberattack. *Journal of Cybersecurity*. 2015;1(1):53-67.

¹³³ Bennett WL. News: The Politics of Illusion. Chicago: University of Chicago Press; 2016.

¹³⁴ Hallin DC. The Uncensored War: The Media and Vietnam. Berkeley: University of California Press; 1986.

¹³⁵ Kahneman D. Thinking, Fast and Slow. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux; 2011.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 06

¹³⁷ Nye JS. The Future of Power. New York: PublicAffairs; 2011.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 07

¹³⁹ Chesney R, Citron D. Deep Fakes: A Looming Challenge for Privacy, Democracy, and National Security. *California Law Review*. 2019;107(6):1753-1820.

¹⁴⁰ Mueller J. War, Presidents and Public Opinion. New York: Wiley; 1973.