

# Propaganda spreads following the wildfire in Maui

Carilyn Pointer

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Nasa satellite image of the fire in Maui, August 8th 2023

Carilyn Pointer - The recent wildfire that spread across [Maui](#) caused at least 100 casualties, marking it as one of the deadliest natural disasters in the U.S. The fire was caused by downed power lines and spread rapidly due to fierce winds. Chinese propaganda, however, reports that the fire was started by a secret “weather weapon” the U.S is testing. The use of A.I to falsify images is a unique method in propaganda and highlights the importance of ideological power.

**Ideological power** focuses on getting others to do what you want willingly. Propaganda and the spread of false information has been an important part of this process for decades. By spreading inaccurate truths that align with a nation’s political agenda, citizens will base opinions and decisions off that information. The carefully crafted messages spread via, posters, news stories, and images are designed to lead people to a conclusion that will support the agenda of the more powerful. Historically, China’s propaganda has focused on justifying and garnering support for their own policies. Spreading propaganda regarding the fire in Maui shows a shift in this pattern as China makes “direct attempts to sow discord in the United States.” By attempting to rewrite the narrative in Maui and potentially future events, China hopes to have their people readily accept their future agenda without considering other options. As the relationship between the U.S. and China becomes tense, many worry that growing

Chinese public animosity toward the U.S. might indicate future confli

Using artificial intelligence to create a false image of the fires is another factor that complicates this issue. China is one of the first to use A.I. to add more authenticity to their propaganda. This is one example of how new technology improves many aspects of the world, but new national security issues may arise complicating world politics even more.

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