

The Motives behind the Deception and Propaganda used by the Elite & Political Leaders: A Qur'anic – Mass Communication PerspectiveDr. Abdulhamid Mohamed Ali Zaroum^{1*}, Dr. Mohd Abbas Bin Abdul Razzak²^{1,2}Asst. Prof., Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge & Human Sciences, International Islamic University, Malaysia***Corresponding author**Dr. Abdulhamid Mohamed
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Abstract: Propaganda has been one of the main issues and hot topics in Human Sciences that is of great concern in our contemporary world. The Elite and the Political leaders through the ages used all sorts of deceptions, manipulation and disinformation not only to propagate their agendas but also for easy control of the masses. Undoubtedly, there are many reasons for that. But what are the main motives behind such dirty tricks and tactics? This study is an attempt to answer the above-mentioned question and to shed light on the role the elite and the political leaders play in deceiving the public. It is extremely important for the Muslims of all generations to be familiar with all sorts of deceptions and propaganda adopted by the elite and the overbearing political leaders so as to avoid being trapped and being misled by them. The scope of the study will be the Qur'anic perspective pertaining to the motives behind deception and propaganda used by the elite & the political leaders in deceiving the masses. To address the problem under study, three research methods shall be adopted; namely: descriptive, analytical, historical and, to some extent, comparative methods. This new attempt of its kind is considered to be an integrated Qur'anic-Mass Communication study.

Keywords: Quran, Deception, Propaganda, Elite, Political Leaders.

INTRODUCTION

Propaganda has been used for centuries to brainwash and deceive the masses. The deceptive tactics and propaganda used by arrogant political leadership have many motives and aims.

The researcher shall address here some of these motives from both Quranic and Mass Communication perspectives. The first motive in this regard is the Misleading and the Anesthetization of the Masses, then attempts by the deceptive elites to gain supports and retain positions, ranks and benefits. Last but not least, it is also essential to examine the dishonesty and falsehood of the haughty political leaders in concealing the oppression and torture practiced against the opponents for the purpose of passing the reckless policies, and finding excuses and legitimacy for them.

First Motive: Misleading and the Anesthetization of the Masses

Leaders and politicians have a special status in the hearts of the masses which in some cases might be more superior than the status of prophets themselves. The elites exploit this situation in an ugly way and manipulate the minds of the masses and drive them towards the destination they want. The source of this exaggerated respect is the illusion that what the leadership does is nothing but for the interests of the people, and it doesn't do anything but good and says nothing but the truth. With this absolute confidence given to it by its fans and ordinary citizens, the arrogant leadership constantly keeps playing with the minds of the people. Not only that, they even use brain washing tactics to destroy their thinking abilities giving to them by the Creator, Allah the Almighty. The leaders misuse the concept of "censorship" [¹] "Block information from any person or submit it to him distorted or incomplete or stuffed with propaganda and false, then you have destroyed all his thinking tools and abilities, and you took him to below the human level" [²].

Worst of what appeals to the public folk, is when the deceptive leaders commit the taboo and indecency then attribute them to God's law so that they could easily deceive the masses:

(وَإِذَا فَعَلُوا فَاجِرَةً قَالُوا وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهَا آبَاءَنَا وَاللَّهُ أَمَرَنَا بِهَا قُلْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَأْمُرُ بِالْفَحْشَاءِ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ) [الأعراف:28].

¹ "Censorship" is a term used in mass-communication and it refers to "the practice of suppressing materials that is considered morally, politically, or otherwise objectionable" See: Biagi, Shirley: Media Impact. An Introduction to Mass Media. p. 347 (USE: Wadsworth, 1996)

² Arthur Salzer (New York Times founder) Izzi Abdulrahman (1994) Fadha' Al-I'laam. P 15

(And when they commit an immorality, they say, "We found our fathers doing it, and Allah has ordered us to do it...") but the Quranic decisive response to this phenomenon came in the second part of the Ayah (... " Say, "Indeed, Allah does not order immorality. Do you say about Allah that which you do not know?")

This verse illustrates the impacts of the false leaders on the layman for whom they repeatedly beautify the wrong doings.

Worth to mention, more often these arrogant leaders believe that what they are having, for instance falsehood, has received acceptance from God, and subsequently claim that if God willed, they wouldn't have become infidels

(سَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا لَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا أَشْرَكْنَا وَلَا آبَاؤُنَا وَلَا حَرَمْنَا مِنْ شَيْءٍ كَذَلِكَ كَذَّبَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ حَتَّى ذَاقُوا بَأْسَنَا قُلْ هَلْ عِنْدَكُمْ مِنْ عِلْمٍ فَتُخْرِجُوهُ لَنَا إِنْ تَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَإِنْ أَنْتُمْ إِلَّا تَخْرُصُونَ [الأنعام:148]³)

(Those who associated with Allah will say, "If Allah had willed, we would not have associated [anything] and neither would our fathers, nor would we have prohibited anything." Likewise did those before deny until they tasted Our punishment...) again the Quranic verses will not let it go that way without demanding evidences for such major claim (... Say, "Do you have any knowledge that you can produce for us? You follow not except assumption, and you are not but falsifying)

The same attitude has been profoundly found in every society now and then and the short cut is to play with the emotion of the ordinary citizens by declaring that the messengers and reformers are trying their utmost endeavor to misguide them and deviate them from the path of their ancestors.

Clinging to the Ancestors' Religion

Perhaps, in propagating their hidden agenda, one of tactics used by the political leaders is seeking sympathy of the people in the struggle to combat the public enemy. Pharaoh said it:

(وَإِذَا تَنَلَّيْتُمْ عَلَيْهُمْ آيَاتِنَا يَنبَغَاتٍ قَالُوا مَا هَذَا إِلَّا رَجُلٌ يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَصُدَّكُمْ عَمَّا كَانَ يَعْبُدُ آبَاؤَكُمْ وَقَالُوا مَا هَذَا إِلَّا إِفْكٌ مُفْتَرَى وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِلْحَقِّ لَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُبِينٌ [سبأ:43]

(And when our verses are recited to them as clear evidences, they say, "This is not but a man who wishes to avert you from that which your fathers were worshipping." And they say, "This is not except a lie invented." And those who disbelieve say of the truth when it has come to them, "This is not but obvious magic) and the people of Noah, 'Aad and Thamud said similar word:

(... إِنْ أَنْتُمْ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِثْلُنَا تُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَصُدُّونَا عَمَّا كَانَ يَعْبُدُ آبَاؤُنَا فَأْتُونَا بِسُلْطَانٍ مُبِينٍ) [إبراهيم:10]⁴

(...You are not but men like us who wish to avert us from what our fathers were worshipping. So bring us a clear authority) and with mockery the people of Madyan uttered:

(قَالُوا يَا شُعَيْبُ أَصْلَاتُكَ تَأْمُرُكَ أَنْ نَتْرُكَ مَا يَعْبُدُ آبَاؤُنَا أَوْ أَنْ نَفْعَلَ فِي أَمْوَالِنَا مَا نَشَاءُ إِنَّكَ لَأَنْتَ الْحَلِيمُ الرَّشِيدُ [هود:87]

(... "O Shu'ayb, does your prayer command you that we should leave what our fathers worship or not do with our wealth what we please? Indeed, you are the forbearing, the discerning!)

Crippling questions

It has been remarkable that the Quran in many verses warns us not to be deceived by the tyrannical leaders posting questions of life concern like the one raised by Pharaoh and his elite group:

(إِنْ هِيَ إِلَّا مَوْتَتُنَا الْأُولَىٰ وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمُنشَرِينَ. قَالُوا يَا بَنَاتِنَا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ [الدخان:35-36].

(There is not but our first death, and we will not be resurrected. Then bring [back] our forefathers, if you should be truthful) similarly, the Pharaoh of this Ummah Abu Jahl, as our prophet has labeled him, posted a challenging inquiry that is to resurrect a famous Arab leader in the pre-Islamic era by the name of "Qusay Ibn Kilab" so that he might report to them about what happens after death [5]. They keep asking and demanding for more precise and tangible signs after which they shall be left with no doubt about the authenticity of the message prophet Mohamed has brought. Moreover, they have even swore:

(وَأَقْسَمُوا بِاللَّهِ جَهْدَ أَيْمَانِهِمْ لَئِنْ جَاءَهُمْ آيَةٌ لَيُؤْمِنُنَّ بِهَا قُلْ إِنَّمَا الْآيَاتُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَمَا يُشْعِرُكُمْ أَنَّهَا إِذَا جَاءَتْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ [الأنعام:109] .

(And they swear by Allah their strongest oaths that if a sign came to them, they would surely believe in it. Say, "The signs are only with Allah." And what will make you perceive that even if a sign came, they would not believe).

³ See also : [الزخرف:20-21] [النحل:35]

⁴ See also [يونس:78]

⁵ Al-Qusgayri (1983) Lataef Al-Isharat. 3/335. Markaz Tahqiq Al-Turath

Nevertheless, it is proven to be an endless series of questions that are provocative in nature. The Holy Quran assured that nothing is going to happen in return even though the demand has been fulfilled:

(وَإِذَا جَاءَهُمْ آيَةٌ قَالُوا لَنْ نُؤْمِنَ حَتَّى نُؤْتَى مِثْلَ مَا أُوتِيَ رُسُلُ اللَّهِ اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ حَيْثُ يَجْعَلُ رِسَالَتَهُ سَيُصِيبُ الَّذِينَ أَجْرَمُوا صَغَارٌ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَعَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ بِمَا كَانُوا يَمْكُرُونَ) [الأنعام:124].

(And when a sign comes to them, they say, "Never will we believe until we are given like that which was given to the messengers of Allah) which obviously means it was only a mere question by those psychiatric patients.

Carrying the Sins of the People!!

Additionally, the tyrannical leadership, as it has been described in the Quran, in order to keep the masses away from the reformers, wouldn't hesitate to offer skillfully their generosity. Thus, this time is neither about carrier and employment nor about housing loan and health insurance. It is a glad tiding that the tyrannical leadership shall carry the sins of the people provided that the people follow their leaders!!!

(وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّبِعُوا سَبِيلَنَا وَلْنَحْمِلْ خَطَايَاكُمْ وَمَا هُمْ بِحَامِلِينَ مِنْ خَطَايَاهُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِنَّهُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ) [العنكبوت:12].

(And those who disbelieve say to those who believe, "Follow our way, and we will carry your sins." But they will not carry anything of their sins. Indeed, they are liars)

Second Motive: Lobbying and Retaining Ranks and Positions

When the public opinion has been successfully diverged from real issues which concern the citizen and when the masses have been shrewdly deceived, then the overbearing leaders would have smartly managed to anesthetize the public. However, this has never been sufficient and the leaders have to work tirelessly for the next step.

Another motivate behind the propaganda and disinformation policy adopted by the arrogant political leaders is the fear of losing power that they have seized despite the people's wish as well as fearing any rebellious movement in the society. Since they insist to rule by hook or by crook, and in order to remain in power and to ensure the continuity of the public support, the ruling elite devote their lives to convince the ordinary citizens that the rulers are indeed loyal, sincere, committed and dedicated. The case of Pharaoh is a live example that will remain intact and relevant:

(قَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ مَا أُرِيكُمْ إِلَّا مَا أَرَى وَمَا أَهْدِيكُمْ إِلَّا سَبِيلَ الرَّشَادِ) [غافر:29]

(... Pharaoh said, "I do not show you except what I see, and I do not guide you except to the way of right conduct).

Among the most important policies of lobbying the overbearing political leaders use are the following:

The Adaptation of the Masses

Adaptation may take many forms and ways including the following:

Accusation of Intellectual and Ideological Distortion:

This occurs when the ruling elites accuse the messengers and reformers of corrupting the people's minds and distorting their beliefs. In this way, the media plays a tremendous role in tarnishing the image of reformers:

(وَقَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ ذَرُونِي أَقْتُلْ مُوسَى وَلْيَدْعُ رَبَّهُ إِنِّي أَخَافُ أَنْ يُبَدِّلَ دِينَكُمْ أَوْ أَنْ يُظْهِرَ فِي الْأَرْضِ الْفُسَادَ) [غافر:26]

(...Indeed, I fear that he will change your religion or that he will cause corruption in the land) Pharaoh has declared so just to maintain the status quo and to retain his superiority

(وَقَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَلَأُ مَا عَلِمْتُ لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرِي ...) [القصص:38]

(... And Pharaoh said, "O eminent ones, I have not known you to have a god other than me...)

Demolition of a Positive Image of the Advocators and Reformers

To the overbearing leaders, the advocators and reformers are nothing but deceitful power crazy individuals who are known for their manic behaviors. Here we have what Dr. Quwaisy [6] called as تزييف الوعي الجماعي "Falsification of the collective consciousness" in which the professed and stated opinion has no real and objective basis rather a long run objective that is to remain in power via creating false satisfaction:

(وَيَقُولُونَ إِنَّا لَنَأْرَئِكُمْ لِبَشَرٍ لَشَاعِرٍ مُجْتَوِينَ) [الصافات:36]

(And were saying, "Are we to leave our gods for a mad poet?) thus, prophet Mohamed (صلى الله عليه وسلم) was named by the elite of Quraish "a mad poet" !!!

⁶ Al-Mujtama' Magazine, Kuwait. V.1467. Year 32, 8th September 2001

Prevention of Knowledge and Stultification of others:

This was represented by Qarun and Samiri. The former claimed that the accumulation of his wealth was the direct result of his intelligence:

[قال إِنَّمَا أُوتِيْتُهُ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ عِنْدِي... (القصص:78)].

(*He said, "I was only given it because of knowledge I have)* whereas the crime of the later is recorded in the Quran in details:

[قال فَمَا حُطِّبَكَ يَا سَامِرِيُّ. قَالَ بَصُرْتُ بِمَا لَمْ يَبْصُرُوا بِهِ (طه:94-95)]

([Moses] said, "And what is your case, O Samiri?"He said, "I saw what they did not see ...)

Underestimating and Discrediting Preachers and Reformers:

This is when they belittle the followers of the apostles:

[إِنَّ هَؤُلَاءِ لَشِرْذِمَةٌ قَلِيلُونَ] (الشعراء:54)].

(*[And said], "Indeed, those are but a small band)* not only that but also rating and labeling them based on their ethnic backgrounds, living conditions and social status:

[وَكَذَلِكَ فَتَنَّا بَعْضَهُم بِبَعْضٍ لِيَقُولُوا أَهَؤُلَاءِ مَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ بَيْنِنَا... (الأنعام:53)].

(*...Is it these whom Allah has favored among us...*). The elite among the people of prophet Nuh arrogantly announced it: [فَقَالَ الْمَلَأُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ قَوْمِهِ مَا نَرَاكَ إِلَّا بَشَرًا مِثْلَنَا وَمَا نَرَاكَ اتَّبَعَكَ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ هُمْ أَرَادُوا بِآدَائِهِ الرَّأْيِ وَمَا نَرَىٰ لَكُمْ عَلَيْنَا مِنْ فَضْلٍ بَلْ نَظُنُّكُمْ كَاذِبِينَ] (هود:27)].

(*So the eminent among those who disbelieved from his people said, " We do not see you but as a man like ourselves, and we do not see you followed except by those who are the lowest of us [and] at first suggestion. And we do not see in you over us any merit; rather, we think you are liars)* the same goes to the autocratic leaders during the time of prophet Salih, Musa and Mohamed:

[قَالُوا أَنْتُمْ مِنْ لَكَ وَاتَّبَعَكَ الْأَرْذَلُونَ] (الشعراء:111)].

(*They said, "Should we believe you while you are followed by the lowest [class of people]?"*) your followers consist of slaves, servants, low-class, low-profile figures and marginalized people !!!

On top of that, those leaders might disrespect the reformers and refer to them as neglected people. In journalism, when the source of the information or news is unreliable or of no value, then they refer to it as "it has been said" "it has been reported". This could be noticed in the case of prophet Ibrahim:

[قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا قَتَىٰ يَذُكُرُ هُمْ يُقَالُ لَهُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ] (الأنبياء:60)].

(*They said, "We heard a young man mention them who is called Abraham)*

Argumentation and Quarreling

The Quran recorded the arguments of 'Aad with their apostle:

[قَالُوا يَا هُودُ مَا جِئْتَنَا بِبَيِّنَةٍ وَمَا نَحْنُ بِتَارِكِي آلِهَتِنَا عَنْ قَوْلِكَ وَمَا نَحْنُ لَكَ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ] (هود:53)].

(*They said, "O Hud, you have not brought us clear evidence, and we are not ones to leave our gods on your say-so. Nor are we believers in you.*) Have they stopped there?! Instead, they have continued with their polemic:

[إِنْ نَقُولُ إِلَّا اعْتَرَاكَ بَعْضُ آلِهَتِنَا بِسُوءٍ قَالَ إِنِّي أُشْهِدُ اللَّهَ وَاشْهَدُوا أَنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِمَّا تُشْرِكُونَ] (هود:54)].

(*We only say that some of our gods have possessed you with evil.*)

Diluting the Issues

Throughout the ages, the elite not only have been struggling to deviate the public from the religious teachings and principles but also diverged their attention so as not to engage in any thinking activity. The skill of thinking is only granted to the arrogant leaders who think on behave of the public. Therefore, the citizens are deprived from their right to think for themselves and speak their minds regarding the issues of their concern. As Pharaoh declared it (*Pharaoh said, "I do not show you except what I see, and I do not guide you except to the way of right conduct."*) [غافر:29].

The following are among the tactics of diluting the issues concerning the public:

Denial of the Prophet hood

The denial and rejection of the prophets by “the eminent ones who were arrogant” is baseless as it is established only on the ground of envy and jealousy. They claimed that if God is to send prophets, they have to be angels not mere human being:

(فَقَالَ الْمَلَأُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ قَوْمِهِ مَا هَذَا إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِثْلُكُمْ يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَتَفَضَّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَأَنْزَلَ مَلَائِكَةً مَا سَمِعْنَا بِهَذَا فِي آبَائِنَا الْأَوَّلِينَ) [المؤمنون: 24]

(But the eminent among those who disbelieved from his people said, "This is not but a man like yourselves who wishes to take precedence over you; and if Allah had willed [to send a messenger], He would have sent down angels. We have not heard of this among our forefathers)

Accusation of Lying

The best ever walked human being on earth are, in the eyes of the arrogant leaders, **LIARS**. All the messengers and reformers, with no exception, have been accused of being liars:

(فَقَالُوا أَبَشَرًا مِثَّا وَاحِدًا نَتَّبِعُهُ إِنَّا إِذَا لَفِيَ ضَلَالٍ وَسُعُرٍ أَهْلَقِيَ الذِّكْرَ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ بَيْنِنَا بَلْ هُوَ كَذَّابٌ أَثِيرٌ) [القمر: 24-25]

(And said, "Is it one human being among us that we should follow? Indeed, we would then be in error and madness.)

Fear of the Unknown

Leaders always oppose new opinions and reformist ideas and they find many excuses as why they can't:

(وَقَالُوا إِنْ تَتَّبِعِ الْهُدَىٰ مَعَكَ نَتَّخِطُفُ مِنْ أَرْضِنَا أَوْ لَمْ نُمَكِّنْ لَهُمْ حَرَمًا آمِنًا يُجْبَىٰ إِلَيْهِ ثَمَرَاتُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ رِزْقًا مِنْ لَدُنَّا وَلَكِنْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ) [القصص: 57].

(And they say, "If we were to follow the guidance with you, we would be swept from our land." Have we not established for them a safe sanctuary to which are brought the fruits of all things as provision from Us? But most of them do not know)

Third motive: Passing Reckless Policies

The last motive why the arrogant leaders adopt deception and propaganda is to pass reckless policies that suite the offences and crimes committed. For the propose of deceive the public, the leaders must convince their victims that the enemies of the people deserved the harsh punishments they have received as these are proportional to the crime committed. Thus, in the name of God, in the name of the people, these elusive leaders commit horrific human right violation.

In the after math of September 11th incident, The New York Times has revealed the latest plans hatched by Washington to mislead the world public opinion by distorting facts where American military officials said that the US Department of Defense, "Pentagon" is working at this time to publish a number of press materials counterfeit to mislead foreign media organizations as part of the extended campaign to gain international sympathy for the United States, and to influence the decision-makers in the world⁷. Indeed, the whole issue of September 11th is a great deception [⁸].

Studying the Quranic verses, the researcher had found that among the most important repressive measures the overbearing political leaders use are the following:

Expulsion and to be Forced into Exile

It is worth mentioning that almost all Prophets were threatened by the elusive leaders to be expelled from their loved homeland

(وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِرُسُلِهِمْ لَنُخْرِجَنَّكُمْ مِنْ أَرْضِنَا أَوْ لَتَعُوذُنَّ فِي مِلَّتِنَا فَأَوْحَىٰ إِلَيْهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ لَنُهْلِكَنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ) [إبراهيم: 13-14].

(And those who disbelieved said to their messengers, "We will surely drive you out of our land, or you must return to our religion." So their Lord inspired to them, "We will surely destroy the wrongdoers)

The political leaders of Macca had a satanic plan to bring an end to Prophet Muhamed صلى الله عليه وسلم and his call before it is too late. Thus, they agreed on three possibilities, namely: to imprison him (or what is known today in politics and mass-communication as house arrest) or to kill him or to force him to leave the city:

(وَإِذْ يَمْكُرُ بِكَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِيُثْبِتُوكَ أَوْ يَقْتُلُوكَ أَوْ يُخْرِجُوكَ وَيَمْكُرُونَ وَيَمْكُرُ اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الْمَاكِرِينَ) [الأنفال: 30]

⁷ Amrikka Takthib Wa-Tatajammal. Muheet website. <http://moheet.com>

⁸ See: Ahmed Mosaddeq Hafeez: September 11, 2001: The Great Deceptin. How and Why America Was Attacked. (Selangor: Thinker's Library SDN . BHD, 2002)

(And [remember, O Muhammad], when those who disbelieved plotted against you to restrain you or kill you or evict you [from Makkah]. But they plan, and Allah plans. And Allah is the best of planners). In fact, the judgment was set and the verdict was announced in absentia. A decision has been made to assassinate him.

Imprisonment and Detention

After the threat of deportation and attempts to expulsion, comes the threat of imprisonment to silence the voice of the majority. Thousands of political prisoners would suffer behind bars just for one fault, namely the fight against falsehood and corruption:

[يوسف:25] (...قَالَتْ مَا جَزَاءُ مَنْ أَرَادَ بِأَهْلِكَ سُوءًا إِلَّا أَنْ يُسْجَنَ أَوْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ)

(...She said, "What is the recompense of one who intended evil for your wife but that he be imprisoned or a painful punishment?"). Today, in the name of public order, many scholars and public figures have been living behind bars with no fair judgement.

Torture and Chopping Limbs

All Pharaoh's attempts to attract the magicians have failed. In fact, it ended up with unwanted consequences when the magicians themselves, who were haired and highly paid to deceive the public, converted to prophet Musa's religion. There, Pharaoh threatened them with the most severe punishment:

[الأعراف:124] (لَأَقْطَعَنَّ أَيْدِيَكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ مِنْ خِلَافٍ ثُمَّ لَأُصَلِّبَنَّكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ)

(I will surely cut off your hands and your feet on opposite sides; then I will surely crucify you all)

Crucifying

Of course it is more painful when the victim is crucified. The situation is even worse if he or she has been crucified in the trunks of palm trees and left behind to be eaten by angry wolves and frenzied dogs:

[الشعراء:49] (... وَلَأُصَلِّبَنَّكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ)

(... and I will surely crucify you all)

Enslavement of Women Killing of Children

This is done because of the instigation of the advisors and consultants (And the eminent among the people of Pharaoh said, "Will you leave Moses and his people to cause corruption in the land and abandon you and your gods?" [Pharaoh] said, "We will kill their sons and keep their women alive; and indeed, we are subjugators over them) [الأعراف:127]

Murder

When certain repressive measures don't work or they are less effective, then a harder one will be introduced. Those who have escaped the torture or enslavement shall be executed:

[غافر:26]. (وَقَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ ذَرُونِي أَقْتُلْ مُوسَى وَلْيَدْعُ رَبَّهُ إِنِّي أَخَافُ أَنْ يُبَدِّلَ دِينَكُمْ أَوْ أَنْ يُظْهِرَ فِي الْأَرْضِ الْفَسَادَ)

(And Pharaoh said, "Let me kill Moses and let him call upon his Lord. Indeed, I fear that he will change your religion or that he will cause corruption in the land). But the question remained; was Pharaoh in need of the advisors' opinions in the first place? It was only a dirty tactic to delude the public that the people prevented him from killing Musa [9] otherwise he could have long ago get rid of him!!

In the sad side of the Islamic history, through propaganda, fraudulent messages, and fabrication of false news and accusations, a Jewish-hypocrite by the name of Abdullah Ibn Saba successfully deceived the masses and incited them to assassinate caliph Uthman Inb Affan (رضي الله عنه) for the reasons of favoritism, cronyism and financial injustice. The third righteous caliph was brutally killed by a group of hypocrites.

Putting People on Fire ... Arson

As things go out of their control, the arrogant political leaders might use or threatening to use violence to the extent that they burn their rivals and opponents:

[الأنبياء:68]. (قَالُوا حَرِّقُوهُ وَانصُرُوا آلِهَتَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ فَاعِلِينَ)

(They said, "Burn him and support your gods - if you are to act)

⁹ Al-Sabuni, Mohamed Ali: Safwat Al-Tafaseer, 3/100, Jakarta: Dar Al-Kutub Al-Islamiyyah (No date, no edition NO.)

The story of the people of the Trench is recorded in the Quran:
(قَاتِلِ أَصْحَابَ الْأُخْدُودِ. النَّارِ ذَاتِ الْوُقُودِ. إِذْ هُمْ عَلَيْهَا قُعُودٌ. وَهُمْ عَلَىٰ مَا يَفْعَلُونَ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ شُهُودٌ. وَمَا نَقَمُوا مِنْهُمْ إِلَّا أَنْ يُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَمِيدِ) [البروج:4-8].

(Cursed were the companions of the trench. [Containing] the fire full of fuel. When they were sitting near it. And they, to what they were doing against the believers, were witnesses. And they resented them not except because they believed in Allah, the Exalted in Might, the Praiseworthy.) The traditions of the prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also recorded it. It was narrated that Ibn 'Abbaas (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "On the night on which I was taken on the Night Journey (Isra'), a beautiful fragrance came to me. I said: O Jibreel, what is this beautiful fragrance? He said: This is the fragrance of the hairdresser of Pharaoh's daughter and her children. I said: What is their story? He said: Whilst she was combing the hair of Pharaoh's daughter one day, the iron comb fell from her hand and she said, 'Bismillaah (in the name of Allaah).' The daughter of Pharaoh said: 'My father?' She said: 'No. My Lord and the Lord of your father is Allaah.' She said: 'I will tell him about that.' She said: 'Yes.' So she told him and he summoned her and said: 'O So and so, do you have a Lord other than me?' She said: 'Yes, my Lord and your Lord is Allaah.' He ordered that a *baqarah* (lit. "cow") made of copper be heated up, then he ordered that she and her children be thrown into it. She said: 'I have a request to make of you.' He said: 'What is your request?' She said: 'I would like my bones and my children's bones to be gathered together in one cloth and buried.' He said: 'This will be done for you.' He ordered that her children be thrown into it in front of her, one by one, until they came to the last one who was an infant boy who was still being breastfed. It was as if she wavered because of him, but he said: 'O mother, go ahead, for the punishment of this world is easier to bear than the punishment of the hereafter.' So she went ahead." Ibn 'Abbaas (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: Four infants spoke: 'Eesa ibn Maryam (peace be upon him), the companion of Jurayj, the witness of Yoosuf and the son of the hairdresser of Pharaoh's daughter [10].

Stoning

The last repressive measure the arrogant political leaders use or heartening to use is stoning. Prophets Nuh, Ibrahim and Shuwaib were intimidated to be stoned to death:

[الشعراء:116].

(They said, "If you do not desist, O Noah, you will surely be of those who are stoned) with regard to Nabi Shuwaib, it was the nobility of his tribe and the social status of his family that was behind not being stoned:

[هود:91].

(They said, "O Shu'ayb, we do not understand much of what you say, and indeed, we consider you among us as weak. And if not for your family, we would have stoned you [to death]; and you are not to us one respected.)

CONCLUSION

There are many motives behind the deception and propaganda used by the elite and political leaders to mislead the public and diverge their attention from the real issues. The research concluded that: from a Quranic perspective, to counter attack propaganda or psychological warfare, the public should refrain from accepting or spreading any lies and hearsay. To gain public support, to deviate the masses and to diverge the public attention from the real issues and concerns, the overbearing political leaders make use of all means of propaganda and adapt psychological warfare. Freedom is the basic element that allows the public to express their minds and to take sides with whatever party they like. Any attempt to deny this very fundamental fact or to impose ideas upon the public should be regarded as a sort of dictatorship which is totally rejected by the Quran.

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¹⁰ Al-Suyuti, Jalal Al-Din: *Al-Khasaies Al-Kubraa*. 1/265. Dar Al-Kutub Al-Ilmiyyah, Beirut.