GOOD MORNING PRESIDENT

GAME SPECS

- **Game type:** Table Top Role Playing Game
- **Game topic:** Fake News
- **Number of players:** 3 - 5 (excluding Dungeon Master)
- **Age:** 14+
- **Game session duration:** 2h - 3h

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LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Understanding fake news circle
- Exploring systems to reveal fake news
- Understanding the power of critical thinking

GAME SETUP

1. Decide who is going to be the Dungeon Master (The President)
2. Take a normal card deck
3. Start playing

DISCLAIMER

What is a tabletop roleplaying game? Hard to tell, each roleplaying game (RPG) is different. They're mostly story driven games played in groups of 3 to 6 people. During your games you will create a story following the rules of the game book that usually regulate the unexpected consequences of your actions. In this specific case, this game addresses the topic of fake news from the point of view of who designs them. Put aside your usual moral compass: you'll be asked to make uncomfortable and questionable decisions, sometimes even against your own personal principles. One of you will take on the role of President, and will guide the actions of his subordinates to push his political agenda. The others will be the équipe tasked with twisting facts into narratives to steer public opinion, allowing the President to reach his goals. Dice rolling will determine the success of your actions, making this game either a glorious political season... or every social media manager's worst nightmare. Good Morning President does not endorse misinformation, but it wants to show its system: how fake news are built, spread and made credible. The goal is to give you the tools to discern them and fight them with more awareness.

INTRO STORY

Welcome to the Blue Palace. I'm the President's secretary. What you're seeing here will be your workplace for the next few years. Your duty won't be spreading the truth, but design news tailored for His requests, to protect His image in His country and overseas. At any cost. Scandals, crises, unpopular rulings: it all can be handled. The truth is never the problem, its perception is. Follow me. The President is already in office.

GAME RULES

1 - The President
The President, which is the Game Master, is the game engine: every single decision you make will revolve around this individual. But what kind of person are they? A ruthless economist, willing to grow the GDP at any cost? A vicious warmonger, ready to drag the world into chaos? An hardcore racist, obsessed with so-called national purity? Or, why not, a person with a high moral ground, earnestly convinced of acting for the Country and the world's greater good? To help you define them, answer these short questions together:- Which political beliefs do they support?- What is their biggest flaw, that sooner or later will come to the surface?- Who are their opponents, internal or external?- What are their practical political goals? (3 for each president, reaching them is the goal of the game. To learn more, read the dedicated paragraph).- What is their slogan?

2 - And the Game Master
This game requires that you, the Game Master, play an active and conscientious role. Don't stop at only presenting the news or describing the players' actions: you are an active part of the narrative and its mechanics'. Your main duty is to draw the news and determine the tests'. challenge rating, giving a price (with dice) to the players' ideas: a simple hoax, quick and painless, can only cost one die; a more complex story, that requires planning, resources, compliant experts and investments, can cost even 3 or 4 dice, making the Credibility Tower higher and more unstable. During the game, you will take notes about the news spread and the measures adopted by the players: you will need them in the final phase of the Press Conference when, while taking on the role of the press, you will present to the équipe the consequences of their choices. Because no news ever really goes away. Sooner or later, someone will start to ask questions.

3 - The Day's Agenda
The game is divided into a series of workdays, during which the équipe creates and spreads their own fake news. Each follows the official Day's Agenda, approved by the President and optimized for the Nation's™ stability. Each day consists of two phases: Press Release: the President draws the news you need to tamper. Risk Assessment: the équipe fabricates an explanation to reassure the public opinion. The news is not a problem and never has been. Once the problem is solved, the équipe clocks out, waiting for the next disaster.

4 - Press Release
After a heartfelt "Good morning President!" the day can start. The President draws a card from a 52 cards standard deck to establish the news to tamper. The suit of the card defines the theme of the news:

- Hearts: Sports & Entertainment (international competitions, exhibitions, movies and lifestyle)
- Clubs: Science & Environment (scientific discoveries, Space run, climate crises or natural disasters)
- Diamonds: Foreign (major news from the world: wars, political scandals and international affairs)
- Spades: Reportage (crime news, congress or other national relevant events)

The number of the card defines the gravity of the situation, therefore the challenge of the test required to tamper with it. To bend it to your favor, you need to make up an alternative version of the events, explaining how you intend to make it plausible and from which channels it will be spread: social media, press, television, compliant experts, celebrities from your political party, or controlled outrage. Once the plan is set, make a roll to determine if your version will be the actual news… or if it will be included in the next training course about "things not to say in public".

However, some cards do not refer to generic news reports, but directly involve the President:

- Face Cards (Jack, Queen, King):

They represent Their public fails: poor choice of words, international gaffe, paparazzi, sentences said "as a joke". In this case Their credibility is double at stake, and the challenge rating is 13.

- Aces:

The President makes an already dire situation worse: they made an uncomfortable witness disappear after a party, tried to corrupt a judge, had a reception with a controversial figure. Draw another card to add the complication to and increase the challenge rating by 1.

Of course, if the President is too busy building a new ballroom, playing golf or being outraged on social media, do not fret: they can still make their own personal list of events with the help of the following table, presenting them as Their own ideas without citing the source. And if they're feeling a little nostalgic, determined to bring The Nation™ back in time by re-enacting specific historical events, they can even create a custom table inspired by relevant historical figures from the past. Every reference to existing dictators, past or present, is purely coincidental and facetious, and will only be used to build games based on themes of fascism, URSS or other historical eras without risking misunderstandings.

5 - Risk Assessment

Once the event is set, it's time to get to work. Each player can take the floor and state how they intend to tamper the news and which means they will use to do so. The President determines how many D6 will be necessary to outline the story and make it believable. Once the brainstorming is over, the équipe rolls the dice to see if the submitted proposal stands… or if it falls apart miserably. If the overall value you get is equal or higher than the card's, you succeed. Otherwise, you fail and your fake news has been debunked.

Success: The fake news works. You earn the card and add its value to the President's Influence Points.
Fail: Congratulations, you failed! You don't get any points and people will remember. Either way, the Credibility Tower becomes more unstable.

6 - The Credibility Tower
Every time you try to alter reality, your house of cards wobbles a little more. The dice you use are physically stacked on the Credibility Tower, regardless of the test's outcome. The tower grows day by day… until it falls apart, just like the President's credibility. The first time the tower falls, not everything is lost yet, you can still save Their term. After all, everyone makes mistakes. You discard all dice and build the tower from scratch. From now on, every failed test adds an extra dice: the public opinion has a long memory, and the trust of Their voters grows weaker. Please note: be mindful of how you place the die, because once it's set it cannot be moved.

7 - Political Goals
Before playing, you need to define the three Political Goals the President is trying to achieve: reaching them means the presidential term is successful and it's the winning condition of the game. To do so, you must use the Influence Points obtained by the tests: when they reach or surpass one of the thresholds, the respective Political Goal is immediately achieved, and the équipe can move forward to the next (after a brief speech in which the President will brag about how well they've worked). The Influence Points thresholds needed to reach the three Political Goals are: 15 IP for the first goal; 25 IP for the second goal; 35 IP for the third and last goal. Once the three Political Goals are reached, the game is ended with a win for the players and the President: now it's time for the Press Conference that ends the presidential mandate.

GAME END

The Press Conference
At the end of the game, the équipe organizes an official Press Conference. The Game Master gives up the role of the President and takes on the journalists': uncomfortable questions, out of context quotes, old promises and news that "never happened" resurface. Now there are no dice, only memory, a straight face… and the lies you told: it's time to draw the conclusions of this glorious political season. This is the phase where the Game Master retraces the news tampered by the players, focusing both on the way they got from the event to the fake news, and the consequences of what they said had on the Nation™. No fake news goes unnoticed.

DEBRIEFING

- How was the experience?
- How did youn felt?
- What did you feel in the role of the councilor?
- What can be said about the process of building fake news?
- Do you think this happens or is the game too much for reality?

GAME MATERIALS

Items

- *1x deck card*
- *some d6*

Printables

- *1x Rulements*

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