Government Lying: War and Hysteria
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Introduction
- When the security of a nation is in danger, it compromises the national stability and the well being of its citizens.
- The government has a duty to protect its citizens according to Social Contract Theory. This theory states that the government, as well as its citizens, has the responsibility of telling the truth.
- The dilemma is whether or not to consistently follow the Social Contract in effort to diminish an imminent threat and protect the people.
- On the other hand, Deontology states that the government should act morally and tell the citizens the truth.

Research Question
- The dilemma to tell the truth or not begs the question: "Is it justifiable for the government to lie to its citizens during times of panic?"
- During times of hysteria, the government has two options:
  1. They can choose to break the Social Contract to preserve the nation's security.
  2. They can follow Deontology and do the moral thing by telling the truth and informing the citizens.

Methods and Materials
- The graph [1] shown below accounts for the confidential e-mails of the last three presidents of the US. Technically, no lies were admitted but the truth was kept from the public.
- By using Thomas Hobbes' Social Contract Theory, we learned about the role the government has in lying.
- WikiLeaks acts as a guide to determine to what extent a lie is justifiable.

SECRET DOCUMENTS

Findings
The government lies unnecessarily to us.
1. WikiLeaks released thousands of documents that never endangered the national security of this country covering the topics:
   - China's growing frustration over North Korea.
   - Saudi Arabia's mistrust of Iran's nuclear plan.
   - Afghanistan's corruption (Ahmed Wali Karzai, brother of the president, Hamid Karzai, accused of being a drug trafficker and wanted by the CIA).

Conclusion
Deontology demands that our government always tells the truth. If this had been the case:
- Osama would have been alive today.
- The allies would have lost WWII.
If the government lies, it does not follow Social Contract Theory, and, in so doing, it keeps us from the "state of nature". However, those lies could allow for an action that brings greater happiness (regardless of ethics). Consequently, we agree that, in times of war, the government has the authority to determine what is best for us.

References