

# Chinese Agents Helped Spread Messages That Sowed Virus Panic in U.S., Officials Say | The New York Times

By Edward Wong, Matthew Rosenberg and Julian E. Barnes

April 23, 2020

WASHINGTON — The [alarming messages](#) came fast and furious in mid-March, popping up on the cellphone screens and social media feeds of millions of Americans [grappling](#) with the onset of the [coronavirus pandemic](#).

Spread the word, the messages said: The [Trump administration](#) was about to lock down the entire country.

“They will announce this as soon as they have troops in place to help prevent looters and rioters,” warned one of the messages, which cited a source in the Department of Homeland Security. “He said he got the call last night and was told to pack and be prepared for the call today with his dispatch orders.”

[...]

Source: [Chinese Agents Helped Spread Messages That Sowed Virus Panic in U.S., Officials Say | The New York Times](#)