

SENSITIVE GOVERNMENT AGENCY**Summary:**

Ahead of the 2020 Presidential Elections, China had extensive plans to utilize potential [REDACTED] and cyber operations to sway public opinion against the Trump Administration and international opinion against the U.S. Government. The China plans were designed to exploit U.S. societal fissures and vulnerabilities, to influence U.S. and other audiences, and by extension U.S. government decision-making. The plans addressed several scenarios, including military conflict between the U.S. and China, as well as other potential crises.

The [REDACTED] operations themes covered a broad range of topics, to exploit what China perceived to be U.S. fissures and vulnerabilities (perceived or real), including:

- Economic recession:
 - Encouraging violent demonstrations and looting, to increase the appearance of social unrest;
 - Intensifying Americans' disapproval of the President of the United States, calling into question his ability to govern; and
 - Overall undermining the legitimacy and public support of the President of the United States.
- Ineffective USG COVID-19 response:
 - Increasing public dissatisfaction with the President of the United States by questioning his fitness to govern and undermining public support for his actions.

China had developed capabilities to project themes on these topics into social media (Tiktok, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and others), as well as mainstream media through a variety of overt and hidden influencers and media contributors. One of the options included gathering information on senior U.S. government officials to influence public opinion of those officials.