



## ***THE PRC'S ROLE IN SPREADING ANTISEMITIC DISINFORMATION***

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Fears among the Jewish community in the United States are [on the rise](#), and for good reason. In early October a non-profit security organization [warned](#) that extremist groups are stepping up the use of antisemitic propaganda, including through artificial intelligence, to accelerate radicalization and, potentially, hate crimes against Jewish communities in North America.

2024 was the worst year in terms of anti-Jewish hate crimes in America since the FBI began collecting data in 1991, and following the horrific events of Oct. 7, 2025 and Israel's subsequent campaigns against Hamas in the Gaza Strip, the Anti-Defamation League said antisemitic hate crimes in the US [spiked](#) nearly 400%.

It is not just Islamic extremists, white nationalists, and fringe religious movements spreading such content, however. Others include adversarial nations seeking to undermine the US' global position, given Washington's support for Israel. It may surprise few people that Iran's state media [levies such attacks](#) on Jewish institutions and "Zionists," or that Russia [attempts](#) to delegitimize Ukraine's Jewish president and accused "rootless" Jews of attacking the Orthodox Church in Russia.

What may be less known is China's role in spreading such pernicious narratives: In October 2024 a [joint](#)

[report](#) by VOA and the Taiwanese NGO DoubleThink Lab noted that China-linked spamouflage networks, consisting of up to 140 accounts, spread such content painting the US government as under Jewish control. Such accounts, the report notes, suggested that entire branches of the US government are controlled by Jewish elites and/or the Israeli government, made insinuations about the high proportion of US officials of Jewish descent in Washington, and claimed that both candidates in that year's US presidential race were beholden to Israel.

These networks appear to be just a small sample of the antisemitism frequently spread on the [Chinese internet ecosystem](#) but the presence of [spamouflage](#) networks means the PRC cannot dismiss such activity as the product of random internet trolls. Doublethink Lab's [post-election analysis](#) published at the end of 2024 suggested that spamouflage account primarily sought to amplify existing content rather than create their own, and that such content used the ongoing conflict in Gaza to degrade the United States and its relationship with Israel, amplifying not only Chinese state media outlets but also anti-Israel and pro-Palestine accounts. Such themes inter-mingled with other content typical of PRC information operations online, such as support for Beijing, criticism of US foreign policy, or highlighting of US domestic problems such as homelessness or gun violence.

Worse still, commentary that shows up in Chinese, Russian, or Iranian channels frequently makes its way to the other, either through [direct coordination](#) or [copycatting](#).

Discussions of online disinformation or the more broadly defined [malinformation](#) frequently flag Chinese-made apps, including Weibo, WeChat, and RedNote, as vectors of false and misleading information. TikTok, with its [short-form](#), immersive content based on users' prior views, has frequently been highlighted for having pulled many users, especially young users, down a "rabbit hole" of mis- and disinformation. This includes on COVID vaccinations, on the supposedly beneficent role of [China in world affairs](#) (as opposed to allegedly negative role of Japan and the US), and [against politicians](#) in the midst of competitive races. These

concerns – as well as worries that China might be purposefully distorting TikTok’s algorithm to suppress unfavorable content – have helped motivate efforts to force the sale of ByteDance in the US.

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TikTok now appears to have entered a new phase with President Trump’s recent executive order allowing TikTok to continue operations under a joint venture led by Oracle – a database software company owned by entrepreneur and [Trump confidant](#) Larry Ellison. Pending approval by China, this would restrict ByteDance’s ownership to a minority stake.

If the deal proceeds then Ellison, a [strong supporter](#) of Israel, should step up efforts to counter the spread of antisemitic disinformation. TikTok’s guidelines and rules on “[misinformation](#)” – which, unlike “disinformation,” implies a lack of malicious intent – are a start but should go further, and should be accompanied by public education campaigns on common antisemitic tropes, how online antisemitic content leads to violence, and how to report antisemitic activities, especially if there is reason to believe that Jewish individuals, organizations, or businesses will be targeted. If TikTok confronts this issue proactively, other social media entities, seeking the administration’s favor, may follow.

“Disinformation” has [not been a popular topic](#) for the Trump administration in its second term, given the partisan implications it has had for his supporters domestically and for like-minded politicians abroad. However, the role China has played in spreading [harmful messages](#)—both in partner countries for the purpose of degrading the US’ reputation and [domestically](#) to create confusion and undermine social trust—cannot be ignored, especially when such information threaten minority groups who have frequently been targeted with false narratives about their [motives and influence](#).

To its credit, this administration has emphasized [countering Jew-hatred](#) and its resulting violence, and addressing antisemitism will require confronting the role that social media – TikTok included – have played in disseminating it, as well as the range of actors using it against the US and its Jewish communities.