

Chinese Propaganda Outlet Pays Millions to US Newspapers

One of China's main [propaganda](#) outlets has paid American newspapers nearly \$19 million for advertising and printing expenses over the past four years, according to documents filed with the Justice Department.

China Daily, an English-language newspaper controlled by the Chinese Communist Party, has paid more than \$4.6 million to *The Washington Post* and nearly \$6 million to *The Wall Street Journal* since November 2016, the [records](#) show.

Both newspapers have published [paid supplements](#) that *China Daily* produces called "China Watch." The inserts are designed to look like real news articles, though they often contain a pro-Beijing spin on contemporary news events.

[One insert](#) from September 2018 touted an initiative pushed by Chinese President Xi Jinping with the headline: "Belt and Road aligns with African nations." The same insert ran a story titled "Tariffs to take toll on U.S. homebuyers" that asserted that U.S. tariffs on Chinese lumber would raise the cost of building homes in the United States.

China Daily also paid for advertising in several other newspapers: *The New York Times* (\$50,000), *Foreign Policy* (\$240,000), *The Des Moines Register* (\$34,600), and *CQ-Roll Call* (\$76,000).

It spent a total of \$11,002,628 on advertising in U.S. newspapers, and another \$265,822 on advertising with Twitter.

China Daily has also paid out more than \$7.6 million to newspapers and printing companies for its newspaper for U.S.-

based readers, the Justice Department's filings show.

The Los Angeles Times, *The Seattle Times*, *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, the *Chicago Tribune*, the *Houston Chronicle*, and *The Boston Globe* are all listed as clients of *China Daily*. The Chinese outlet paid the *Los Angeles Times* \$657,523 for printing services, according to the Foreign Agents Registration Act filings.

The Justice Department has for years required *China Daily* to disclose its activities semi-annually under the Foreign Agents Registration Act. The most recent filing, which *China Daily* submitted on June 1, is the first to include detailed breakdowns of payments to American news outlets. The outlet disclosed those expenditures for the period between November 2016 and April 2020.

It is unclear if *China Daily* submitted the more detailed filings under pressure from the Justice Department or on its own.

Pro-democracy groups [have long warned](#) about the Chinese government's attempts to push propaganda through American news outlets. [Freedom House](#) and the [Hoover Institution](#) have both drawn attention to *China Daily*'s paid inserts in reports on the Chinese government's efforts to influence the [media](#).

China Daily and other Beijing-controlled propaganda mills have come under intense scrutiny amid the [coronavirus pandemic](#). Chinese government officials have tried to [divert blame](#) for the [spread](#) of the virus to the United States and other Western nations. Many of the regime-controlled outlets, including *China Daily*, have echoed the communist leaders' talking points.

China Daily has slowed its advertising expenditures in recent months, the filings show. *China Daily* last paid *The Washington Post* for advertising in December 2019. Its payments to *The Wall Street Journal* have been less than half their average

amount since February 2020, the documents show.

China Daily did not respond to a request for comment.

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