

New HHS spokesman made racist comments about Chinese people in now-deleted tweets

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Updated 6:53 PM ET, Thu April 23, 2020

Michael Caputo on July 14, 2017.

WARNING: This story contains graphic language.

(CNN) — The new spokesman for the Department of Health and Human Services in a series of [now-deleted tweets](#) made racist and derogatory comments about Chinese people, said Democrats wanted the coronavirus to kill millions of people and accused the media of intentionally creating panic around the pandemic to hurt President Donald Trump.

Michael Caputo, a longtime New York Republican political operative who worked on Trump's 2016 presidential campaign, [was appointed last week](#) as Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs at HHS, a prominent communications role at the department which serves a central role in the federal government's response to the coronavirus pandemic.

Caputo, a prolific user who often tweeted insults and profanity, recently erased [nearly his entire Twitter history](#) from [before April 12](#). CNN's KFile used the Internet Archive's "The Wayback Machine" to review more than 1300 deleted tweets and retweets from late February to early April many of which were regarding the rapidly spreading coronavirus.

In a series of tweets on March 12, Caputo responded to a baseless conspiracy theory that the United States brought the coronavirus to Wuhan, China, by tweeting that "millions of Chinese suck the blood out of rabid bats as an appetizer and eat the ass out of anteaters."

He followed up at another user, "Don't you have a bat to eat?" and tweeted at another user, "You're very convincing, Wang."

TIME LINE

- **December 31, 2019:** China [reports](#) mysterious pneumonia cases to the World Health Organization.
- **January 7, 2020:** China [says](#) the cases were caused by a new coronavirus.
- **January 17:** US starts [screening](#) for symptoms at certain airports.
- **January 21:** First US case [confirmed](#) in Washington state.
- **January 31:** US says it will [deny entry](#) to foreign nationals who've traveled in China in the last 14 days.
- **February 6:** [A person in California's Santa Clara County dies of coronavirus; link not confirmed until April 21.](#)
- **February 17:** [A second person in California's Santa Clara County dies of coronavirus; link not confirmed until April 21.](#)
- **February 26:** CDC announces what's then thought to be the first possible US case of [community spread](#), in California.
- **February 29:** A patient [dies](#) of coronavirus in Washington state -- then believed to be the country's first novel coronavirus death.

After publication, Caputo responded to CNN's request for comment by saying that reporting on his past tweets is "fair game, dude. I don't care. It doesn't matter to me at all." He claimed that he deletes his tweets "every month and I do it because it drives people mad."

He added "when you tweet in spirited fashion, KFile is going to have them. I've known that all my days. So I don't mind what you've done." Caputo defended his past Twitter behavior saying he was "a defender of the President" tweeting in a "spirited manner" that included calling out reporters, but he said he's "now a servant of the American people and some might be disappointed, but my tweets will be different."

Spokespeople for HHS did not respond to requests for comment. A spokesperson for the White House declined to comment.

Caputo also used his Twitter account to aggressively attack Democrats and the media.

In March, he referred to one White House reporter as "a dick" after that reporter had a heated exchange with the President. He said many Americans viewed reporters as "the enemy of the people" for "carrying water for the Chinese Communist Party." He implied that MSNBC host Joe Scarborough was guilty of sedition.

On March 8, he said a Democrat may try to inflict hundreds of thousands of American deaths from the coronavirus, creating a hypothetical scenario comparable to James Hodgkinson, the anti-Trump man [who shot House Majority Whip Rep. Steve Scalise and four others](#) during a Republican congressional baseball game practice in 2017.

"Coronavirus is the Democrats' new Russia, their new Ukraine. And nobody will believe them except their zombies. But know this: The Dems' strategy to defeat @realDonaldTrump requires 100s of thousands of American deaths. Will one of their nutjobs make it happen, a la Hodgkinson?"

That same day, Caputo retweeted conservative actor Nick Searcy saying, "Democrats are pulling for the virus to kill a lot of people."

In other tweets from March, Caputo claimed the media created "intentional" panic created around the outbreak, saying it was "orchestrated by soulless Trump critics who seize every crisis as an opportunity to stop him."

after Special Counsel Robert Mueller's investigation brought charges against him. He was sentenced to 40 months in prison in February.

Caputo was also interviewed by Mueller prosecutors and testified before Congress, and adamantly denied there was collusion between the Trump campaign and Russia.

Caputo [resigned](#) from the 2016 Trump campaign after he tweeted "Ding Dong the witch is dead" following the news that its campaign manager Corey Lewandowski had been fired.

Here are some of Caputo's deleted tweets pertaining to the unfolding health crisis in the United States:

February 28: [Caputo tweets](#), "Bottom line, a lot of Americans have to get sick and die for coronavirus to tank the Trump economy. The Democrats' only hope for 2020 victory is a sunk economy. They're talking it down right now. But their strategy only works if a lot of Americans get sick and die."

March 8: [Caputo tweets](#), "Coronavirus is the Democrats' new Russia, their new Ukraine. And nobody will believe them except their zombies. But know this: The Dems' strategy to defeat @realDonaldTrump requires 100s of thousands of American deaths. Will one of their nutjobs make it happen, a la Hodgkinson?"

March 8: [Caputo retweets](#) a tweet from the conservative actor Nick Searcy that read, "Democrats are pulling for the virus to kill a lot of people."

March 8: [Caputo tweets](#) a screenshot of a [Washington Post story](#), "How the Trump administration lost control of the coronavirus crisis." "The Get Trump Media has shifted gears again: from the Russia Hoax to the Ukraine hoax to this. REMEMBER: Coronavirus is serious. The media is not."

March 11: [Caputo tweets](#) in a chain on testing shortages, "A lot of the panic is orchestrated by soulless Trump critics who seize every crisis as an opportunity to stop him. And fail." Still, Caputo acknowledged that the lack of testing was an issue.

March 11: [Caputo tweets](#), "For the Democrat 2020 victory strategy to work, 100,000+ Americans have to die. For the Democrat 2020 victory strategy to work, you have to believe the media. Media literacy is more vital now than ever. Question everything - smell the BS - start by doubting anonymous sources."

He follows up in a [tweet](#) saying, "There must be a national pandemic tragedy for the Democrats to win. They're counting on it now."

March 12: [Caputo tweets](#) in response to the baseless conspiracy that the US brought coronavirus to Wuhan that, "Sure, millions of Chinese suck the blood out of rabid bats as an appetizer and eat the ass out of anteaters but some foreigner snuck in a bottle of the good stuff. That's it." [He follows up](#), "Don't you have a bat to eat?" He [tweets at another user](#), "You're very convincing, Wang."

March 13: [Caputo tweets](#) that New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo is an "asshat."

March 14: [Caputo tweets](#), "100s of thousands must die and the US economy must collapse for the Democrat 2020 victory strategy to succeed. They're getting so excited for the carnage. Sick people."

He follows up, "Of course he has" -- in response to Trump being proactive. "This Democrat strategy, echoed by their conjugal media, will fail. Hoping your country fails and hundreds of thousands die so you can gain power is a sick and twisted strategy. America will punish them."

March 14: [Caputo tweets](#), "Taking down names of progs who pick out of context phrases from Administration statements so they can 'LOL' for resistance cred while Washington deals with a pandemic. These are the biggest assholes. Hugest shitbags. Gargantuan sphincters."

March 15: [Caputo tweets](#) a reference to a conspiracy about George Soros, the prominent philanthropist and Democratic donor. "Are you kidding? Soros's political agenda REQUIRES a pandemic." Soros is the subject of

March 15: [Caputo tweets](#) at Daniel Goldman, a lawyer for House Democrats during impeachment, "Wow. I started out feeling badly for you. At least now we know the Wuhan Virus doesn't have any lingering effects on douchebags."

Goldman had tested positive for coronavirus and had tweeted, "One final note: I may be the first you know who tested positive, but I won't be the last. Let's take care of each other, listen to the experts and the cities, states and corporations who are taking the lead in the absence of the fed government, and get through this together. END."

March 16: [Caputo tweets](#) in response to a tweet noting the Dow Jones Industrial Average had lost all its gains since Trump took office, "The Democrat celebration of the death and destruction will be held soon."

March 17: [Caputo tweets](#), "#ChineseVirus" 20 times in a row. [President Trump](#) in March began calling the coronavirus the "Chinese virus."

[Trump claimed](#) he did so to counter conspiracy theories from Chinese media and an official that the US brought the coronavirus to Wuhan. Trump claimed he also did so because it was "accurate... it comes from China, that's why." Trump denied that it is a racist term. Critics alleged the President did so to deflect blame from his own administration's preparation failures. [Trump subsequently decided](#) to pull back from associating the coronavirus' name with China.

March 17: [Caputo tweets](#), "The Chinese Communist Party has always been adept at lying to cover their murders. What's remarkable here is the US Democrats and their conjugal media repeating CCP propaganda because they hate Trump more than they love America. The Wuhan virus has exposed them."

March 17: [Caputo tweets](#) claiming there is "intentional media panic."

"Saying the intentional media panic doesn't exist is dishonest. Saying everything in this crisis transpires because of intentional media panic is also dishonest," writes Caputo.

March 17: [Caputo tweets](#) a conspiracy that implies economist David Rothschild is a member of the European Rothschild family calling him, "an inbred elitist sphincter whose family craves control. That's one reason why he constantly lies about President Trump."

Rothschild told CNN he is not related to the banking family, which is frequently the target of anti-Semitic conspiracies.

March 18: [Caputo tweets](#), "Double down on #ChineseVirus. Leftists lost the true meaning of 'racism' long ago. And polls show they've beaten this dead horse so badly that GOP, independent, and soft Dem voters ignore them." He adds, "Nobody should let Democrats and their conjugal media popularize Chinese Communist Party talking points. Democrats + Media = CCP."

March 18: [Caputo tweets](#) after a reporter asks Trump why he calls it the "Chinese Virus," "And they wonder why many consider them now the enemy of the people. Carrying water for the Chinese Communist Party is reason enough."

March 20: [Caputo tweets](#) at Democratic Sen. Chris Murphy of Connecticut to, "Try to support America until this is over. Even you can do it." Murphy had tweeted complaints about how long it would take to receive the order of facemasks, blaming the Trump administration. Murphy cited a February 5 tweet he sent after a Congressional briefing saying the Trump administration was not taking coronavirus "seriously enough."

March 20: [Caputo tweets](#) at another Twitter user, "I know you want millions to die so your addled candidate can stumble into the White House but it looks like you might be disappointed. How sad for you." Caputo had sent a tweet that cited a report from Fox News to claim Washington was flattening the pandemic curve and the Twitter user [had asked](#) for a link to the information.

showing their asses to the world again, wringing their hands over a hack reporter's treatment.

When one of Caputo's followers pushed back and said that his question was legitimate, [Caputo responded](#) by saying, "Listen to his entire interaction including his first comment/question. Also: this guy has been a dick for awhile."

[Alexander began](#) his exchange with Trump by asking whether he was giving Americans "false hope" by promoting unproven coronavirus drugs.

March 20: [Caputo tweets](#) in an exchange [on Hollywood elite](#), "They understand the Chinese authorities caused this global crisis, but they hate Pres Trump more than they love America. Anyone who once doubted that now knows its true."

March 21: [Caputo sends a tweet](#) that implies MSNBC host Scarborough is committing treason, "300M? That's just foolish. As our nation is in crisis you're working hard to make the situation worse. There's a word for that. Do you know it? It rhymes with sedition." [Scarborough tweeted](#) about a lack of testing for 300 million Americans.

Scarborough told CNN in an email, "I'm more interested in what the assistant Secretary does in the future than what he may have tweeted about me in the past. We're facing difficult times ahead and I am hopeful that the president's entire team will simply follow the lead of Dr. Fauci and Dr. Birx and keep America's seniors safe."

March 21: [Caputo tweets](#) at Gen. Michael Hayden, former CIA and NSA director for George W. Bush, "You are corrupt garbage, Hayden. Spying on Americans is insidious and illegal, but you normalized it. Now you defend China after they unleashed a global pandemic. You can fuck right off. Step aside and let normal Americans do the right thing. Your time is gone."

Hayden had called Richard Grenell, the acting DNI director, an "idiot" after [Grenell tweeted](#), "The one who started the fire should never be praised for acting like a firefighter later" in reference to China's role in the coronavirus pandemic.

Hayden told CNN in an email, "Michael Caputo fits right in to this administration. He is a typical Trump thug. By the way, I never replied to his tweet but this now seems like the appropriate time to point out that he will not be a 'normal American' doing the right thing in any position in this administration."

March 22: [Caputo tweets](#) that Democrats are intentionally destroying the economy during the debate over the economic stimulus package after House Speaker Nancy Pelosi [announced the House would introduce](#) its own coronavirus bill. "Power. It's the Democrats' oxygen, and they'll destroy Americans for it."

[Caputo had said](#) that Democrats have a goal of "massive deaths" and "economic meltdown" to win the November elections, "Now you see: Democrats need massive deaths and economic meltdown to win in November. With this House action, they get closer to their goal and they think they can cover their flank with 'argle barge corporations get rich!' Normal Americans see this and will punish them."

[Caputo follows up](#), "I'm serious: The Dem strategy for 2020 victory requires that @realDonaldTrump fail in his fight against the Chinese virus. Failure is measured in deaths and economic collapse. The only questions to ask a Dem are how many Americans must die, how many families must be destroyed?"

March 22: [Caputo quote tweets](#) a [user](#), adding he is "right you know" to say Democrats hope no treatment for coronavirus works. "They are literally cheering on the deaths of Americans and the destruction of our economy. They would rather see people die than see Trump successfully navigate this disaster," the tweet said.

"How many Americans must die to feed Democrat powerlust? 100K? 1M? More??" Caputo added. "How much economic destruction is the Democrat goal? 100% unemployment?"

March 23: [Caputo tweets](#) with a picture of Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi during the debate over the economic stimulus package, "The Democrats have one motivation for holding Americans hostage in a global crisis: HATE."

March 28: [Caputo tweets](#). "This is how mentally ill many Trump haters are in this crisis" in reply to a tweet that says Trump supporters will "ignore scientific and medical experts" and "urge millions to die for the glory of capitalism."

March 28: Caputo [quote tweets](#) MSNBC's Chris Hayes, who noted no other country on Earth was doing a worse job handling the crisis, with "Who knew @chrishayes is Chinese?"

March 29: [Caputo tweets](#) that Vice President Joe Biden is an "empty puppet" and Ron Klain, the former Ebola czar in the Obama administration, is a "puppeteer" for the "CCP [Chinese Communist Party] virus", writing, "You don't see it? Let me help you. Biden has degraded into empty puppet. On the CCP virus, Ron Klain is the puppeteer. You knock out Gepetto, Pinocchio can't dance. How does a 'turd' know so much more than you?"

March 31: [Caputo retweets a tweet](#) that says "the Left hate normal Americans and they want us dead and replaced. Act as if they mean it, because they do."

April 1: Caputo [called](#) Joe Scarborough, MSNBC, and the rest of the media "completely full of sh*t."

He was appointed to his position at HHS just two weeks later.

This story has been updated with a comment from Caputo.

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