

# **ONLINE APPENDIX: Civil Liberties Treatment Script**

## **The Health of Democracies during the Pandemic: Results from a Randomized Survey Experiment**

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“As the entire world is fighting against COVID-19, countries such as South Korea and China stand out as examples that have successfully contained the outbreak.

The figures on the next screen show that the number of new cases of COVID-19 in these countries has decreased to close to 0 during the past few weeks.

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South Korea and China experienced COVID-19 early on.

[Graph showing case rates over time in China and South Korea. This graph shows only the evolution of cases in the pre-peak period.]

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The epidemic reached a peak in both countries.

[Graph showing case rates over time in China and South Korea. This graph shows the evolution of cases in the pre-peak and peak periods.]

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Then the epidemic was quickly controlled.

[Graph showing case rates over time in China and South Korea. This graph shows the evolution of cases in the pre-peak, peak and post-peak periods.]

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To achieve such success in containing COVID-19, these countries have rolled out perhaps the most aggressive disease containment efforts in history.

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Among others, the following policies have been implemented to control COVID-19 in these countries:

[The bullet points below are uncovered one at a time, and each is accompanied by a picture.]

- People need a government-issued permit to leave home;
- Individuals who do not comply with quarantine orders could face one year in jail;

- The government uses artificial intelligence (AI) to tag whether citizens have high risk of contagion, based on smartphone locations, online behavior, and credit card activity;
- The government posts information about the activities and locations of individuals who tested positive for COVID-19 on social media;
- Government officials go door to door for health checks, and force individuals who are suspected to be ill into quarantine.

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Information about the patients is collected and publicly shared by the government in stunning detail.

Such information, obtained by the government to fight the COVID-19 epidemic, can potentially be used in many ways beyond the crisis itself.

For example, in South Korea, people used publicly released information to identify COVID-19 patients, and harassed them and their family members.

[Picture]

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[Picture]

We are currently facing perhaps the biggest crisis of our generation. While we must act quickly and decisively, we should also take into account the long-term consequences of our actions.

Policies that could help successfully fight the COVID-19 epidemic, such as a large increase in government surveillance, may be abused and may remain in place even after the epidemic ends.

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[Picture]

'In many cases, the fear and panic have allowed governments to impose quite drastic measures which can be very difficult to roll back. Once you have a system implemented, they become normalized.' - Human Rights Watch

The decisions we and our government take during the COVID-19 crisis may shape our nation and society for years to come."

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