

WEEK 6, 2020

THE EPOCH TIMES

CHINA INSIDER

China Freeloads Off

US-Built Security System in Middle East **6**

A Chinese girl wears a protective mask as she is held by a relative while they wait to board a train at Beijing Railway Station before the annual Spring Festival on Jan. 21, 2020.

COMMUNIST COVER-UP

OF CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK

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OPINION

Did China's Plan to Destroy the United States Backfire?

J.R. NYQUIST



In a secret speech given to high-level Communist Party cadres nearly two decades ago, Chinese Defense Minister Gen. Chi Haotian explained a long-range plan for ensuring a Chinese national renaissance.

He said there were three vital issues that must be grasped. The first was the issue of living space—because China is severely overpopulated and China's environment is deteriorating. The second issue, therefore, was that the Communist Party must teach the Chinese people to "go out." By this, Chi meant the conquest of new lands, in which a "second China" could be built by "colonization." From this, arose the third vital issue: the "issue of America."

Chi warned his listeners: "This appears to be shocking, but the logic is actually very simple. ... [China is] in fundamental conflict with the Western strategic interest." Therefore, the United States would never allow China to seize other countries to build a second China. The United States stands in China's way.

Chi explained the problem as follows: "Would the United States allow us to go out to gain new living space? First, if the United States is firm in blocking us, it is hard for us to do anything significant to Taiwan, Vietnam, India, or even Japan, [so] how much more living space can we get? Very trivial! Only countries like the United States, Canada, and Australia have the vast land to serve our need for mass colonization."

"We are not as foolish as to want to perish together with America by using nuclear weapons," the general said. "Only by using non-destructive weapons that can kill many people will we be able to reserve America for ourselves." The answer is found in biological weapons.

"Of course," he added, "we have not been idle. In the past years, we have seized the opportunity to master weapons of this kind."

The ruling Chinese Communist Party considers biological weapons to be the most important weapons for accomplishing their goal of "cleaning up America." Chi credits former Party leader Deng Xiaoping with putting biological weapons ahead of all other weapon systems in the Chinese arsenal: "When Comrade Xiaoping was still with us, the Party Central Committee had the perspicacity to make the right decision not to develop aircraft

carrier groups and focus instead on developing lethal weapons that can eliminate mass populations of the enemy country."

It may seem difficult to believe, but Chi considered himself to be a "humanitarian" communist, and therefore admitted to mixed personal feelings on this matter: "I sometimes think how cruel it is for China and the United States to be enemies." After all, he noted, the United States helped China in World War II. Chinese people remember that the United States opposed Japanese imperialism. But none of that matters now.

"In the long run," said Chi, "the relationship of China and the United States is one of a life-and-death struggle." This tragic situation must be accepted.

According to Chi, "We must not forget that the history of our civilization repeatedly has taught us that one mountain does not allow two tigers to live together."

China's overpopulation problem and environmental degradation will eventually result in social collapse and civil war, according to Chi. He estimated that "more than 800 million" Chinese would die in such a collapse. Therefore, the Chinese Communist Party has no policy alternative.

Either the United States is "cleaned up" by biological attacks, or China suffers national catastrophe.

"We must prepare ourselves for two scenarios," Chi said. "If our biological weapons succeed in the surprise attack, the Chinese people will be able to keep their losses at a minimum in the fight against the United States. If, however, the attack fails and triggers a nuclear retaliation from the United States, China would perhaps suffer a catastrophe in which more than half of its population would perish. That is why we need to be ready with air defense systems for our big and medium-sized cities."

In his speech, Chi provides us with a key for understanding China's development strategy.

"Our economic development is all about preparing for the needs of war!" he said.

It's not about improving the life of Chinese people in the short run. It's not about building a consumer-oriented capitalist society. "Publicly," said Chi, "we still emphasize economic development as our center, but in reality, economic development has war as its center!"

The same can be said for China's intense interest in the biological sciences.

Weaponizing Viruses

The West has yet to grasp the underlying motive for China's ready participation in the West's P4 microbiology labs, where

the world's most deadly microbes are studied (i.e., pathogen lethality level 4 labs). This now bubbles to the surface in the novel coronavirus pandemic that has occurred in Wuhan, at the heart of China, just outside China's principle P4 virology lab (specializing in deadly viruses).

Not long after delivering his speech, Chi stepped down as defense minister in 2003, the same year as the SARS (coronavirus) outbreak in China. This was also (coincidentally) the same year Beijing decided to build the Wuhan P4 virology lab. Given Chi's speech, is the novel coronavirus outbreak in Wuhan an accident occasioned by weaponizing the virus at that lab?

Three data points are worth considering. First, in 2008, Taiwan's top security official told lawmakers that "Taiwan had intelligence linking the SARS virus to research done in Chinese labs," according to the Sydney Morning Herald.

We must have an investigation of the outbreak in Wuhan. The Chinese must grant the world total transparency. The truth must come out. If Chinese officials are innocent, they have nothing to hide. If they are guilty, they will refuse to cooperate.

Given China's economic clout and political infiltration of Chinese-language media, it's not surprising that National Security Bureau Director Tsai Chao-ming was forced to retract his statement, which had none of the usual features of a "gaffe." Was Tsai forced to retract a statement that was true, since he couldn't reveal his intelligence sources inside China?

Second, the Virology Journal published an article by Gulfaraz Khan on Feb. 28, 2013, that outlined the discovery of a novel coronavirus in Saudi Arabia in June 2012. It's the very same coronavirus, but with a difference: When first discovered, it couldn't be readily transmitted from human to human; something has changed in the virus since that time. Thus, the Wuhan version is labeled 2019-nCoV instead of simply nCoV. The latter isn't contagious, while the former is spreading rapidly throughout China.

What do you suppose changed its transmissibility between 2012 and 2020? Random mutation or weaponization? If the current lethal outbreak had occurred in

any other city than Wuhan, we might be inclined to believe in a random mutation. But Wuhan is ground zero for Chinese bioweapons.

Should we credit such a coincidence? Third, the journal GreatGameIndia published an article titled "Coronavirus Bioweapon – How China Stole Coronavirus From Canada And Weaponized It."

The authors were clever enough to put Khan's Virology Journal article together with news of a security breach by Chinese nationals at the Canadian (P4) National Microbiology Lab in Winnipeg, where the novel coronavirus was allegedly stored with other lethal organisms. Last May, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police were called in to investigate, and by late July, the Chinese were kicked out of the facility.

Prominent virologist Dr. Xiangguo Qiu, along with her husband and an unknown number of her students from China, were all removed from the lab, Canadian news outlet CBC reported. Qiu had been invited to "the Wuhan National Biosafety Laboratory of the Chinese Academy of Sciences twice a year for two years," it reported. (A later CBC report denied claims that there was evidence the Chinese scientists stole coronavirus from the lab.)

Here, we have a plausible theory of the nCoV organism's travels: first discovered in Saudi Arabia, then studied in Canada, from where it was stolen by a Chinese scientist and brought to Wuhan. Like the statement of Taiwan's intelligence chief in 2008, the GreatGameIndia article has come under attack. Whatever the truth, the fact of proximity and the unlikelihood of mutation must figure into our calculations.

We must have an investigation of the outbreak in Wuhan. The Chinese must grant the world total transparency. The truth must come out. If Chinese officials are innocent, they have nothing to hide. If they are guilty, they will refuse to cooperate.

The real concern here is whether the rest of the world has the courage to demand a real and thorough investigation. We need to be fearless in this demand and not allow "economic interests" to play a coy and dishonest game of denial. We need an honest inquiry. We need it now.

J.R. Nyquist is a columnist and the author of the books "Origins of the Fourth World War" and "The Fool and His Enemy," as well as co-author of "The New Tactics of Global War."

Views expressed in this article are the opinions of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Epoch Times.

CHINATOPX VIA AP



Quarantine workers in protective suits check identity documents as tourists from the Wuhan area walk off of a chartered plane taking them home from Bangkok at Wuhan Tianhe International Airport in Wuhan, Hubei Province, on Jan. 31, 2020.



Wuhan City mayor Zhou Xianwang during an interview on China's state broadcaster CCTV that aired on Jan. 27, 2020. Wuhan is the epicenter of the coronavirus outbreak.

OPINION

Political Infighting Amid China's Coronavirus Outbreak

Behind the anomalous words and deeds of the Hubei Province governor and Wuhan mayor

XIA XIAOQIANG

After completely losing control of the coronavirus outbreak, which has spread all over China and across more than a dozen countries, Communist Party senior officials in Wuhan and Hubei Province can no longer escape facing the public.

On Jan. 26, the Hubei provincial government held a press conference on disease prevention and control. The Hubei governor Wang Xiaodong, Hubei Party Secretary-General Bie Bixiong, and Wuhan Mayor Zhou Xianwang also attended.

These three high-level officials' behavior during the news conference sparked heated discussion on the Chinese internet. First came the problem of wearing masks: Wang did not wear a mask. Zhou wore his mask inside out, and Bie wore a mask but left his nose exposed.

Next, in his introduction about wearing medical masks, Wang started by mentioning "certain advantages" of his province. He said Xiantao City can produce 10.8 billion masks annually. Later, someone passed a note to him. Wang corrected himself, saying it was a slip of the tongue, and the number is actually 1.8 billion. When he put down the note and resumed reading from his script, he corrected himself again and said it was actually 1.08 million pieces.

When the press conference ended, the three leaders clapped their hands.

The three officials' casual attitude triggered fierce debate among netizens. In particular, netizens doubted Wang's ability to lead the fight against the disease, when he could not even figure out the number of masks produced in his jurisdiction.

In fact, how the three leaders behaved at the press conference was in their true nature and not uncommon. Whenever Party officials attend public occasions, they all act in an awkwardly uneasy manner, panic-stricken and nervous. Words often fail them. The main reason is that, for Party officials to secure their position, it is only necessary to satisfy their superiors. They do not need to

Party senior officials are devoid of the ability to properly manage and govern the normal operation of a provincial or municipal government, let alone the ability to command in the event of major emergencies or catastrophes.

be responsible to the public.

Party officials are confident and calm only when they talk nonsense to their subordinates during internal meetings. But once exposed in public, their panic betrays them.

No matter how many times Wang misspoke during the press conference, as long as he does not make mistakes in his work with superiors and in "maintaining stability," it would not have a negative influence on his official position.

The fact is, Party senior officials are devoid of the ability to properly manage and govern the normal operation of a provincial or municipal government, let alone the ability to command in the event of major emergencies or catastrophes. Officials like them can only bring disaster and death to the people.

In addition, it is worth noting that Wuhan mayor Zhou Xianwang spoke and acted strangely in public and during interviews with the media.

In an exclusive interview with state broadcaster CCTV, Zhou responded to criticism of the Wuhan government's handling of the outbreak.

He said he did not have permission to disclose sensitive information, and that he could only reveal information if granted approval from the central government. He said, "we were more active in our work after the State Council meeting on Jan. 20, which defined the virus as a Type I level infectious disease and required local responsibility."

What did Zhou's words mean? In Chinese politics, it is extremely rare that subordinate officials dare to pass the buck to their superiors. It may spell the end of their official career, since they have violated a taboo.

During the SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome) outbreak in 2003, Zhang Wenkang, then-health minister, was "courageous" enough to take the blame and was removed from office. However, he returned safely to the political sphere in October 2003 and served as vice-chairman of the government-run charity, the Soong Ching Ling

Foundation. He was also appointed as deputy chairman of the Committee of Education, Science, Culture, Health, and Sports in 2005.

There are two possible explanations for Zhou's violation of this political taboo.

First, Zhou was manipulated by senior officials who requested him to say that; second, he made this mistake without realizing it. However, his subsequent performance can rule out one of these possibilities.

The kind of attentiveness Party officials spend on catering to their superiors was on display when Chinese Premier Li Keqiang rushed to Wuhan City on Jan. 27.

As Li accompanied by Zhou went to inspect a new hospital under construction, Zhou took off his hat and passed it off to his staffers after he found that Li did not wear one, according to an online video. The gesture has been seen as intended to save Li from embarrassment.

This indicated that Zhou, well-versed in the rules of the party, was unlikely to make the mistake of inadvertently pinning the blame on the central government. Then there is a high possibility that Zhou followed instructions from a superior to give such public remarks.

What does that mean?

This suggests that at a time when the lives of millions and millions of Chinese people are at stake, Communist Party leaders are still engaged in fierce internal strife, and even people's lives and the outbreak itself can be used by the Chinese regime as tools. From this perspective, what is indeed more fearful than the virus itself is the existence of the Chinese Communist Party.

Mayor Zhou may end up being the target of an "anti-corruption" campaign in the future—as retribution for not complying with the Party's unwritten rules.

Within Chinese officialdom, any official could be made the next victim at any time.

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CORONAVIRUS

China Hides True Scale of Deadly Outbreak, Fueling Crisis

NICOLE HAO

As a deadly coronavirus outbreak ravages China, the communist regime's omission of critical details about the virus's spread have come to light.

The coronavirus, first confirmed by Chinese authorities on Dec. 31—weeks after the first patient was diagnosed—has now spread to all regions and provinces of China. Outside the mainland, Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan, and 14 other countries around the world have also reported infections of the deadly virus.

Revelations from doctors, whistleblowers, and government officials demonstrate that a culture of cover-up and deceit within the Chinese Communist Party's bureaucracy contributed to the disease's spread.

In order to avoid political blame, authorities didn't disclose to Chinese citizens details about the disease nor the true scale of the outbreak. Information about the first infected patients in the disease epicenter Wuhan was omitted, while authorities restricted testing of the disease, thus effectively capping the number of people who could be diagnosed.

As a result, many Chinese were unaware of the perils until it was too late.

For example, Yang Jun, a Beijing resident and vice president of solar energy firm Trine Solar, started feeling unwell and exhibiting pneumonia symptoms on Jan. 15 after returning from a trip to Wuhan, according to a report by state-run newspaper Beijing Daily.

Yang didn't know about the severity of the disease. Neither did he wear a facial mask when outdoors. At that time, Chinese authorities had said that there was no obvious evidence that the virus could be transmitted between humans.

On Jan. 20, Yang participated in a parents meeting at his child's school in Beijing. The meeting was attended by more than 600 parents. He was diagnosed with the disease on Jan. 22.

Five days later, Yang passed away at 50 years old. His daughter, a high school student, was also diagnosed with the coronavirus.

Wrong Data

The medical journal The Lancet published a Jan. 24 study on the clinical features of the first 41 patients who were infected with the new coronavirus in Wuhan, the capital of Hubei Province. The study was authored by a team of 29 doctors from Beijing, Wuhan, and other areas of China. The data was collected from Wuhan hospitals by China's Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The information was starkly different from what Wuhan health authorities had claimed initially.

In its initial report confirming the presence of a new virus outbreak, the Wuhan health commission originally said that the first patient exhibited symptoms on Dec. 12, 2019. The commission later revised the date to Dec. 8, without explanation. But The Lancet study stated, "The symptom onset date of the first patient identified was Dec. 1."

Wuhan authorities also claimed that most of the initial 41 patients were elderly and already had other health issues. The study revealed that the median age was 49, and that "less than half had underlying diseases (13, including diabetes (eight), hypertension (six), and cardiovascular disease (six))."

Chinese authorities also initially denied that the disease could be transmitted between humans.

On Jan. 20, Zhong Nanshan, a leading expert working for the central government, officially announced at a press conference in Beijing that the disease has limited human-to-human transmission.

But The Lancet study revealed that the first known case of human-to-human transmission happened much earlier.

The first person to have died from the virus perished on Jan. 9. He had "continuous exposure" to a fresh food market that Wuhan authorities said is the likely source of the outbreak.

In order to avoid political blame, authorities didn't disclose to Chinese citizens details about the disease nor the true scale of the outbreak.

Five days after he exhibited symptoms, "his wife, a 53-year-old woman who had no known history of exposure to the market, also presented with pneumonia and was hospitalized in the isolation ward," the study said. She was later diagnosed with the coronavirus. So, the virus must have infected the wife before Jan. 9.

Cover-Up

On Jan. 28, the Party boss of Wuhan, Ma Guoqiang, made a surprising revelation.

At a press conference, Chinese Communist Party (CCP) secretary Ma said that the central government didn't allow the Hubei CDC to diagnose the disease until Jan. 16; previously, patients' samples had to be sent to Beijing. Even then, the Hubei CDC only had enough capacity to run about 300 tests per day, he said.



A Chinese visitor wears a protective mask as she tours the grounds of the Temple of Heaven in Beijing on Jan. 27, 2020.

On Jan. 24, Beijing finally allowed nine Wuhan hospitals and the city's CDC to also diagnose. All these organizations had the certifications before but weren't allowed to make diagnoses.

Similarly, Wuhan Mayor Zhou Xianwang blamed his higher-ups for mismanaging the crisis.

During a news program that aired on state broadcaster CCTV on Jan. 27, Zhou said that the central government made the decision to withhold information about the outbreak.

He said the city government also didn't publish information in time, and failed to properly contain the virus.

"Disclosures about the outbreak were not timely. ... As the leader of a local government, I could only publish information after I received permission from the authorities [central government]," Zhou said in the interview.

Data Manipulation

Long Can, a Chinese independent reporter based in Los Angeles, shared screenshots of since-deleted social media posts written by Meng Xin, a researcher at China's National Institute for Viral Disease Control and Prevention in Beijing.

Meng said that he and his colleagues received biosamples from Wuhan on Jan. 2 and successfully separated the virus on Jan. 7.

"We worked day and night. Within one week, we separated the virus and obtained the genome sequence. ... In the next two weeks, we developed the diagnosis kits and distributed them to each provincial CDC," he said.

"However ... Wuhan continually reported no new cases," Meng said.

He accused government officials of withholding information in order to maintain

an illusion of safety and security.

"Our institute had an all-staff meeting on Jan. 19. Ma Xiaowei, the director of China's National Health Commission, gave us the instruction: Politics is the first priority; then it's safety; the third priority is science," Meng said.

Chinese portal websites recently reposted a leaked letter from a doctor who works at a Wuhan top-tier hospital. The letter, addressed to Ma, was originally posted on the internal messaging board of the China CDC website.

The doctor wrote that since Jan. 12, a large number of pneumonia patients had visited his hospital. "The infections on their lungs are abnormal. ... We highly suspect that it's the coronavirus."

But the Wuhan health commission didn't report any new confirmed cases between Jan. 12 and 16.

The doctor said the patients' CT scan results showed infections consistent with symptoms of the novel coronavirus, but "our managers didn't allow us to give a diagnosis report of coronavirus to the patients."

An insider told the Chinese-language Epoch Times on Jan. 24 that China's CDC manipulated the number of confirmed cases by controlling the number of diagnosis kits available to hospitals.

The insider, who works at an organization licensed to give out such diagnosis kits, said that only certain "qualifying hospitals" could obtain them, and that the number of kits they're supplied with is less than 10 percent of what they need to test patients.

"That explains why all of a sudden, China reported more than one hundred newly confirmed cases in a couple days.

They're manipulating the tally. The real number of patients is far greater," he said.



Chinese Premier Li Keqiang (L) speaks with people at a supermarket in Wuhan in central China's Hubei Province on Jan. 27, 2020.

CORONAVIRUS

Chinese Officials Get Preventive Treatment for Coronavirus, While Ordinary Citizens Are Turned Away by Hospitals

NICOLE HAO & OLIVIA LI

After two high-ranking government officials in China's Hubei Province died from the new form of viral pneumonia, many officials in Hubei are getting special intravenous immunoglobulin (IVIG) injections at medical facilities to protect themselves against the disease. Meanwhile, locals who have symptoms of the deadly virus are being turned away by hospitals.

The outbreak first occurred in Wuhan City, the capital of Hubei Province, in early December last year. Officials did not confirm the outbreak until Dec. 31.

Special Treatment

The information was made public when Chongqing-based Upstream News published a report about an official named Huang Tongzheng in Shangrao City, Jiangxi Province, a neighboring province of Hubei, who recently developed symptoms similar to Wuhan pneumonia.

However, the report was soon revised. The current version is only a short announcement of Huang's case, and the section about Hubei officials receiving IVIG injections was completely deleted.

After the recent deaths of two Hubei officials due to the coronavirus, Chinese authorities in Hubei started to rush to medical centers to get their immune systems boosted with IVIG injections, according to the news report, which was also confirmed by an insider who spoke to Radio Free Asia.

IGIV enhances the immune system, and thus helps a person to fight off infections.

Cases

Prior to Huang's case, Chinese state media reported the deaths of two high-ranking officials who died of Wuhan pneumonia in Hubei.

The first was Wang Xianliang, a former Director of the Ethnic and Religious Affairs Committee of Wuhan. The main responsibilities of this committee are to ensure that members of the various ethnic and religious

My father passed away on Jan. 29 and was immediately cremated on the same day. Now my husband also has symptoms. No one came to help us disinfect the room my father used to stay. We tried to purchase disinfectants to do it ourselves, but they are all sold out.

Wuhan resident

groups follow Party regulations; and to persecute adherents of Falun Gong, a peaceful meditation practice persecuted in China since 1999. Wang was said to have always executed his supervisors' orders.

He died on Jan. 26. The second reported death was of a Hubei official named Yang Xiaobo, who was the mayor of Huangshi City between 2008 and 2014.

Cao Shanshi, a well-known financial blogger and whistleblower, wrote on Twitter that Yang "was infected during the provincial Two Sessions. He developed symptoms after the Two Sessions and died only two days after getting his diagnosis."

The "Two Sessions" are parallel administrative meetings of the government and Communist Party, held annually at various levels of government.

In Hubei Province, the meetings were held this year between Jan. 11 and 17. State-run media reported that officials did not wear facial masks during the meetings. In total, 1,348 people participated in the Two Sessions.

On Jan. 30, Huang Xianglong, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) secretary of Songzi City in Hubei, began receiving treatment at a local hospital.

Upstream News reported that he is suspected of contracting the coronavirus, but the hospital would not confirm. He was promoted to his current position in September 2018.

The deputy director of the Hubei commerce department Huang Mouhong is also being treated at a hospital in Wuhan.

According to Chinese state-run media, Huang started to feel sick on Jan. 19, and visited the provincial institute hospital on Jan. 21, where he was diagnosed with the coronavirus. He then was transferred to another hospital.

The Hubei provincial institute hospital especially serves government officials. However, it does take ordinary civilians when there is availability.

Ordinary Citizens Turned Away by Hospitals

Meanwhile, several individuals from Wuhan disclosed to the Chinese-lan-

guage Epoch Times that their family members who experienced coronavirus symptoms couldn't get admitted into the hospital for treatment.

Mr. Wang, who currently lives in Toronto, Canada, told The Epoch Times that his mother in Wuhan had a fever on Jan. 15. When over-the-counter medication failed to relieve her symptoms, she went to the No. 4 Hospital in Wuhan on Jan. 19 and learned that she was infected by the virus.

However, she couldn't receive treatment for Wuhan pneumonia needed to register with their community service director first. The director will then report the case to "upper levels." After approval, the patient will be put on a waiting list.

"We don't know how many people have been waiting to get treatment before my mother," Wang said. "We can only wait. And the director refused to tell us who the 'upper level' is."

Another woman from Wuhan said she and her husband sent her father to the hospital for treatment on Jan. 25. They literally "knelt down" to beg the hospital staff to admit him, but the hospital refused to admit her father, she said.

"My father passed away on Jan. 29 and was immediately cremated on the same day," the woman said. "Now my husband also has symptoms. No one came to help us disinfect the room my father used to stay. We tried to purchase disinfectants to do it ourselves, but they are all sold out," she added.

The Chinese-language Epoch Times called Jinyintan Hospital, a designated hospital for the treatment of Wuhan pneumonia, to inquire about the hospital's current guidelines for admitting patients.

A hospital staff stated that the hospital now only admits patients who were selected and approved by the Wuhan Health Commission.

"Any patient who wants to seek treatment in our hospital will have to communicate with the Wuhan Health Commission," he said.



Chinese police officers walk in front of the gated entrance of the Palace Museum in Beijing on Jan. 26, 2020.

MIDDLE EAST

China Free-Rides on US-Built Security System in Middle East, Experts Say

VENUS UPADHAYAYA

As China continues to challenge the United States for global dominance, in the Middle East, oil-hungry China gets a “free ride” on the security system established by the United States there, according to experts interviewed by The Epoch Times.

They are of the opinion that while the United States has strategically started to look away from the Middle East, the Chinese regime will continue to project its own interests into the region and avoid directly getting involved in conflicts.

Howard Stoffer, an associate professor at the National Security Department at the University of New Haven, said China’s focus on its economic interests is the main reason behind its unwillingness to openly engage in confrontational actions, a behavior that the State Department report calls “playing both sides.”

Stoffer, who served as senior foreign service officer in the State Department for 25 years, says that oil will not fundamentally change the dynamics between the United States and China in the Middle East, despite the fact that the United States is the largest oil producer in the world, while China continues to be the largest oil importer.

Stoffer said that even in escalated situations like the one after the death of Qassem Soleimani, China’s foreign policy of non-interference “would not fundamentally change if we saw the United States and Iran in a confrontation or even a war—then China would stay out.”

“They don’t want to get caught in that, and they would find alternative sources [to meet their oil needs],” he said.

Bernard Haykel, director of The Institute for the Transregional Study at Princeton University, corroborates Stoffer’s analysis.

“China will never challenge the U.S. in the Gulf, at least not until it can establish its own capacities at force projection over long distances, and it is very far from doing this,” said Haykel.

Erbil Gunasti, a Turkish Middle East expert and author of the book “GameChanger,” believes that neither the Chinese regime nor any other country will go to “war on energy supply in the foreseeable future” because the balance of power is not be-



South Pars gas field development in the southern Iranian port town of Asaluyeh, in this file photo.

tween the United States and China but rather “dispersed among many countries and regions, that no one country can start or try to dominate any other country with resources exclusively.”

He said Washington doesn’t need the Middle East anymore, and there’s no geopolitical paradigm arising between Washington and Beijing in the Middle East based on their energy needs alone.

“The U.S. eventually has to walk away from the Middle East because the U.S. is now an energy-positive country,” he said.

“The Middle East is someone else’s problem. It does not affect much if China is buying all the oil from the Middle East.”

Like Stoffer and Haykel, Gunasti also believes that China benefits from the United States’ presence in the region and has its own strategic agenda when it comes to Iran or any other country in the region.

The State Department report supports Gunasti’s opinion, saying that while the United States has contributed “\$2.5 billion in humanitarian aid to conflict-affected and displaced Iraqis in the region, and \$363 million to stabilize areas liberated from ISIS,” China has provided less than \$1 million to Iraq since 2013.

The State Department said that, instead of helping, China has played “both sides in a range of regional disputes” and has intended to exploit openings to increase its own influence at the expense of its partners.

tarly in this region anytime soon,” Haykel said.

The State Department wrote in its report that after the Saudi Aramco oil facilities were attacked by Iran on Sept. 14, the United States took care of the emerging security situation as China played both sides.

“A sizable percentage of this oil is destined for China. China is Saudi Arabia’s number one customer, and Saudi Arabia is China’s leading oil supplier. Yet where was China, when its primary energy source was threatened?” the State Department said, adding that China instead helped Iran to circumvent sanctions.

“These violations of our sanctions give the Iranian regime crucial cash it needs to further its regional efforts to sow discord and terrorism.”

US-Iran Tensions and US Sanctions Experts say that while the U.S. sanctions are designed to prevent Iran from becoming a nuclear state, the China-Iran oil trade has found ways to circumvent them.

The Chinese are purchasing Iranian oil despite U.S. sanctions and have decided to invest \$400 billion into Iranian oil and gas under a 25-year deal signed last year, according to Petroleum Economist (PE).

“This will include up to 5,000 Chinese security personnel on the ground in Iran to protect Chinese projects, and there will be additional personnel and material available to protect the eventual transit of oil, gas, and petchems supply from Iran to China, where necessary, including through the Persian Gulf,” an Iranian source told PE.

Stoffer said that the Chinese relationship with Iran is a strategic one. “I can’t believe that China feels that Iran is a country that they want to have warm and friendly relations [with]. It’s a strategic country that can stand up to the United States. It’s a country that is supported by Russia to some degree,” he said.

Gunasti said there’s nothing extraordinary about China finding gaps in the U.S. sanction laws to trade with Iran. “U.S. sanctions will create tensions, of course, but that is the attrition of the trade war between the U.S. and China. That game will be there but also elsewhere between the U.S. and China throughout the 21st century. So it must not be treated as something extraordinary,” he said.

The U.S. eventually has to walk away from the Middle East because the U.S. is now an energy-positive country.

Erbil Gunasti, Middle East expert



A man walks beside a PetroChina oil delivery vehicle in rural Beijing, in this file photo.

Epoch Times Reporting Helped Mother Finally Receive Care in Wuhan for Coronavirus, Toronto Man Says

BECKY ZHOU

Toronto area resident Jason Wang, whose elderly mother has contracted the coronavirus in Wuhan, the epicenter of the outbreak in China, says she is finally receiving care at a hospital thanks to The Epoch Times’ reporting on her case.

Wang approached the Chinese edition of The Epoch Times earlier this week to report that his 72-year-old mother had been told by doctors on Jan. 19 that she had contracted the coronavirus, but she wasn’t able to get treatment at a hospital. “The deadly virus has infected thousands of people in Wuhan and other locations in China and around the world.”

“There are no beds in the hospital. Countless people are standing in line at the hospital, and some people can only lie in the hospital entrance or outpatient department,” Wang told The Epoch Times

at the time.

Wang said the Wuhan No. 4 Hospital refused to admit his mother, and her subsequent follow-ups with the administration for coordinating medical care produced no results.

He said he called the director of the hospital administration, Ms. Zhou, on Jan. 26, but Zhou’s response was that she had reported the case to her superior and there was nothing that could be done at that point but wait.

Due to travel bans to Wuhan, no relatives could travel there by vehicle to care for his mother, who lives with Wang’s elderly father, Wang said, and he himself couldn’t fly there either. His mother had to stay in isolation at home, running out of food and supplies.

The day after The Epoch Times reported about his mother’s situation on Jan. 28, Wang said he received a call from Zhou,



Medical staff transfer patients to Wuhan Jinyintan Hospital in China on Jan. 17, 2020.

US Report Offers Comprehensive Strategy to Counter Chinese Regime in Indo-Pacific

CATHY HE

A congressionally mandated report lays out a comprehensive U.S. strategy, involving nearly 100 recommendations, to counter the Chinese regime’s threats in the Indo-Pacific region.

The study, released Jan. 28 by Washington-based think tank Center for New American Security (CNAS), was mandated by the U.S. Congress in the 2019 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).

“Business as usual in Washington will be insufficient to address the China challenge in the Indo-Pacific,” the report states. “The China challenge—too often described as a problem for the future—is here and now.”

To respond to the Chinese regime’s ambitions in the region, the United States will need to compete across several domains—not only in the military sphere, according to the report. These include economics, technology, diplomacy, ideology, governance, and human capital.

The report’s authors, a bipartisan group of experts who have served on both sides of the aisle in Congress and in several administrations, argue for a “whole-of-government” approach to combat the threat.

They called on Washington to “enlist a broader set of stakeholders in bolstering U.S. competitiveness, including technology companies, media, universities, civil society, and the private sector.”

“This assessment outlines a path for competition with China and other adversaries that will utilize all tools available to the United States,” Sen. Jim Inhofe (R-Okla.), chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, said in a CNAS release.

“A whole-of-government approach isn’t just necessary to compete effectively with China; it’s also a reminder that just like our security, our prosperity and the values we share with allies and partners are at stake in this competition.”

Countering High-Tech Authoritarianism

The Chinese regime, the report stated, has been exporting its high-tech surveillance and censorship through the “One Belt, One Road” (also known as Belt and Road) initiative, an infrastructure investment project

that seeks to link Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East through a network of railways, ports, and roads.

“Through the provision of technology, funding, and know-how, Beijing’s digital expansion is making repression easier and more attractive to governments with weak democratic institutions, and further entrenching the rule of fellow authoritarian regimes,” it stated.

In response, the report recommends that the Trump administration establish a U.S. digital development fund that would support information technology projects in the region.

The United States should also step up efforts to offer an alternative to China’s Huawei, the dominant player in the global 5G market, by working with industry leaders and its allies to “identify market-driven solutions to revitalize the health of the global 5G ecosystem,” the report stated.

Exposing the Regime’s Repression

Along with increasing U.S. diplomatic ex-



The military honor guard parade during a welcome ceremony for Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan outside the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on Oct. 8, 2019.

The day after The Epoch Times reported about his mother’s situation on Jan. 28, Wang said he received a call from Zhou, who had a completely different attitude, showing more concern for Wang’s mother and promising to arrange a bed for her.

who had a completely different attitude, showing more concern for Wang’s mother and promising to arrange a bed for her.

“My superior already knows about her illness, the city’s senior management know about it, and they really care about her,” Wang quoted the director as saying. “My superior is paying attention to the availability of beds and wards. If there are any available, we will make it available for your mother immediately.”

Zhou then told Wang that for the time being his mother can get medicine from the community hospital and that if they encounter any issues, they should notify her directly.

Wang said his mother’s condition has now improved after getting medication at the community hospital.

“Director Zhou’s attitude is completely different now, it’s changed. Without that [Epoch Times] report, they wouldn’t care about my mother at all,” he said. “Thank you Epoch Times for your help saving my mom. I don’t know how to express my gratitude. Thank you very much.”

Wang added that the director of the community hospital told his father that they shouldn’t be talking to media.

Wang and his family moved to Toronto a year ago from Wuhan.

“I often read Epoch Times reports and have come to know a lot of the truth [about the Chinese regime]. I had been deceived by the Chinese Communist Party before,” he said, referring to Epoch Times’ independent coverage of China.

“I am thankful to Epoch Times staff for their hard work over so many years.”



A V-22 Osprey takes off from the USS Wasp during an annual joint U.S.-Philippine military exercise in the South China Sea on April 11, 2019.

The China challenge—too often described as a problem for the future—is here and now.

Center for New American Security

changes with Asian countries, the report emphasized that Washington should boost measures to counter Beijing’s aggressive propaganda and messaging, which promotes “a narrative of its inexorable ascendance coupled with America’s inevitable decline.”

Democratic principles, such as the rule of law, and freedom of the press and religion “are all vital U.S. assets that ... can be trumpeted abroad—particularly when contrasted with the Chinese Communist Party’s [CCP] tightening chokehold on the rights and freedoms of the Chinese people,” it stated.

At the same time, the United States should work to expose, both at home and abroad, the CCP’s repressive actions.

The authors urged the administration and lawmakers to lead a “systematic campaign” to educate the public—including universities, civil society, and the private sector—about the nature of the Chinese regime’s threats. In doing so, officials and lawmakers should clearly differentiate between the Chinese people and the CCP, to avoid allegations of mischaracterizing the China challenge in racial terms.

Information gathered by U.S. intelligence agencies about the CCP’s illegal and corrupt practices against its own people and abroad could be declassified to better inform the public about the regime’s malign activities, the report suggests.

The authors also recommended that the United States convene regular dialogues with its allies to share best practices for rooting out the CCP’s influence in politics, media, entertainment, academia, and the private sector.



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