

WEEK 13, 2020

THE EPOCH TIMES

CHINA INSIDER

DISINFORMATION

CHINESE REGIME LAUNCHES GLOBAL CAMPAIGN
TO DEFLECT BLAME FOR CCP VIRUS

See Page **2**

CCP Virus:

Giving the Right Name to the Virus
Causing a Worldwide Pandemic **3**

KEVIN FRAYER/GETTY IMAGES



Chinese police march during a duty change in Beijing on Feb. 3, 2020.

PROPAGANDA

China Launches Global Disinformation Campaign in Attempt to Shift Blame for CCP Virus

BOWEN XIAO

A sprawling and aggressive disinformation campaign unleashed globally by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), sparked by a motley mix of internal failures, aims to upend the narrative over the pandemic—and it's happening in real time.

The propaganda push, which has escalated in recent weeks, aims primarily to deflect blame over the Chinese regime's botched handling of the CCP virus, sow discord internationally, and portray the image that the regime has contained the outbreak.

Former U.S. government officials, China experts, and national security consultants told The Epoch Times that the disinformation campaign points to a bigger issue—Beijing's global aspirations. The campaign has helped stir anger from Chinese citizens away from the regime and toward the United States, which has increasingly been a target of its propaganda. And some in the United States are buying it.

"Deception, disinformation, manipulation, distortion of the facts, obscuring their true intentions, and the patient steady erosion of the will to resist on the part of others is something that very much feeds into the global ambitions of the Chinese Communist Party to dominate the world," Frank Gaffney, former assistant secretary of defense for international security policy during the Reagan administration, told The Epoch Times.

"It's just one manifestation of it, but it's a particularly insidious one, and it's one that we ought to be alive to now," said Gaffney, who is the executive chairman of the Center for Security Policy.

"Because, in some ways, it's the leading edge of the larger, longer-term, and even more

dangerous effort they [China] are mounting."

Internal government documents obtained by The Epoch Times have highlighted how the regime purposefully under-reported cases of the CCP virus and censored discussions of the outbreak, helping to fuel the spread of the disease, which is now confirmed to have infected more than 240,000 people internationally.

Chinese officials and state-run media have amplified conspiracy theories on social media platforms such as Twitter, most recently pushing claims that the origin of the virus isn't clear, or came from the U.S. military, or that the CCP's containment efforts bought time for the rest of the world to prepare.

State-run Chinese outlets, many of which have an English-language website, have pushed these theories almost daily, with some articles even threatening the United States directly, as seen in a March 17 editorial in Xinhua, which stated, "The U.S. side should immediately correct its wrongful behaviors ... before it is too late."

Although Chinese citizens are blocked from using Twitter, bots have been swarming the platform to defend the communist regime, attack the United States, and parrot propaganda narratives. A Twitter spokesperson didn't respond to a request for comment about whether the company is aware of the bots and if it has any plans to remove them.

Another narrative gaining traction in U.S. media holds that calling the pathogen "the Wuhan virus" is racist, despite the fact that Chinese state-run media have used the term themselves, as seen in Xinhua, the Global Times, and elsewhere. Previous diseases such as Ebola, Zika, the West Nile virus, Lyme disease, and the Spanish flu

are all named after the location where the virus emerged.

Joseph Bosco, a former China country desk officer in the Office of the Secretary of Defense (2005–2006), told The Epoch Times the aim of the regime's sprawling disinformation campaign is to "shift blame and escape responsibility for its gross negligence and lack of cooperation with international health organizations."

[The CCP] seeks to enhance [its] credibility and legitimacy, and to delegitimize the U.S. and the West.

Joseph Bosco, national security consultant

Bosco, a national security consultant and a fellow at the Institute for Corean-American Studies, said there's an underlying reason why the United States was specifically targeted.

"Communist China sees the U.S. as the main obstacle to its aggressive global ambitions," he said. "It seeks to enhance the CCP's credibility and legitimacy, and to delegitimize the U.S. and the West."

The United States can combat the disinformation push "by fighting CCP lies with the truth," Bosco said. He said the administration should "demand and impose reciprocity on all aspects of U.S.-China relations," as President Donald Trump has mentioned before.

The disinformation campaign hasn't gone unnoticed. In recent days, Trump administration officials and U.S. politicians have spoken out against China's recent propaganda push. At a March 17 briefing, Trump said: "China was putting out infor-

mation which was false, that our military gave this [virus] to them. That was false, and rather than having an argument, I have to call it where it came from. It did come from China."

Bonnie Glaser, a former consultant for the departments of Defense and State, said Beijing seeks to protect the portrayal of its country internationally, as well as internally. She noted that there already several legal cases that Americans are filing against China, including The Berman Law Group, which recently filed a federal class-action lawsuit against the Chinese regime for causing the pandemic.

"It will harm China's global image if Beijing is blamed for mismanaging the epidemic early on and allowing it to affect the rest of the world," Glaser told The Epoch Times via email. Glaser is a senior adviser for Asia and director of the China Power Project at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

"China seeks to be seen as a responsible global player that can contribute effectively to addressing global problems," she said. "By demonstrating the effectiveness of China's domestic governance system, Beijing can advance its goal of leading global governance reform and promote the Chinese model as an option for developing countries to copy."

If the regime successfully portrays itself handling the crisis effectively, "the CCP can further undermine the appeal of democracy and capitalism around the world."

Internally, China is actively pushing its propaganda about the virus on its own citizens. U.S. national security adviser Robert O'Brien, during a speech at Washington-based think tank Heritage Foundation on March 11, said the regime had initially attempted to censor doctors who tried to speak about the outbreak. "So that word of this virus

could not get out."

"It probably cost the world community two months to respond," O'Brien said.

In recent weeks, China has also pushed the narrative of a declining number of infections, and encouraged people to return to China. Li Lanjuan, a senior expert at China's National Health Commission, told Chinese state media that if all goes well, China might be cleared of all new infections by March 20.

Gaffney said: "We should be ensuring that the people of China are ... exposed to the truth. There's a lot of talk now about reciprocity, especially with respect to journalists."

The CCP is set to expel U.S. journalists based in China who work for The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, and The Washington Post in retaliation for the Trump administration's recent actions targeting Chinese state-run media outlets in the United States.

There are additional perceived benefits for the regime in focusing on America.

By targeting the United States, the CCP garners widespread attention and enables them to renege on some of their recent agreements with Washington on trade investment and intellectual property, according to Peter Huessy, president and founder of GeoStrategic Analysis, a defense and national security company in Potomac, Maryland.

Huessy told The Epoch Times that China's disinformation has dire effects and makes it more difficult to protect the health and welfare of people not only the United States, but globally.

"The entire Chinese strategy is one of mass disinformation and misdirection," he said. "While China pretends to be a responsible member of the international community, in reality, they are doing much to undermine the rule of law and human rights."

EDITORIAL

Giving the Right Name to the Virus Causing a Worldwide Pandemic

EDITORIAL BOARD

There has been controversy recently about what to call the virus that has unleashed a worldwide pandemic. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) prefers "novel coronavirus." Others have referred to it as the "Wuhan virus," after its place of origin, as is common in naming diseases.

The Epoch Times suggests a more accurate name is the "CCP virus," and calls upon others to join us in adopting this name.

The name holds the CCP accountable for its wanton disregard of human life and consequent spawning of a pandemic that has put untold numbers in countries around the world at risk, while creating widespread fear and devastating the economies of nations trying to cope with this disease.

After all, CCP officials knew in early December that the virus had appeared in Wuhan, but they sat on the information for six weeks. They arrested those who tried to warn of the danger, accusing them of spreading "rumors," and employed the regime's rigorous censorship to prevent media coverage and to delete any mentions of it from social media.

What might have been con-

tained was allowed silently to spread, showing up in all of China. Individuals who might have protected themselves became victims, in numbers far greater than the CCP has admitted. By late January, there were reports that all of the crematoria in Wuhan were operating 24 hours a day, seven days a week to deal with the crush of dead bodies.

Meanwhile, the measures taken to quarantine and treat the population of Wuhan were grotesquely inhumane. Apartment buildings were welded shut. Temporary "hospitals" were created that actually served as jails for those believed to be sick with the virus. Locked into these places with no medical treatment and little food, the unfortunates were trapped there until death.

In lying about the danger facing China, the CCP was acting according to its usual script. The CCP's dominant narrative is that the Party is "great, glorious, and correct." The presence of the deadly CCP virus in Wuhan, or, in 2003, of the SARS virus, doesn't fit the script. As with SARS, the first response was denial.

But in dealing with this virus, denial is not acceptable. The world needs to know its origin, and the CCP has refused to coop-

erate. Outside experts have not been allowed into Wuhan.

And there is understandable concern about the activities of the Wuhan Institute of Virology, China's only P4 lab, one meant for working with easily transmitted pathogens that can cause fatal illness. As the official narratives offered for the source of the virus have been disproven, questions have been raised about whether the CCP virus leaked from the institute.

CCP officials knew in early December that the virus had appeared in Wuhan, but they sat on the information for six weeks.

In any case, as questions about the origin of the virus have gone unanswered, the CCP has begun throwing out wild charges that the United States is responsible. This will be met around the world with perplexity, if not ridicule. President Donald Trump has pushed back by referring to the "Chinese virus."

But the CCP likely intends these charges of U.S. responsibility for its domestic audience. The CCP has victimized the Chinese people in its first denial of the virus and now seeks to victimize them again by shifting responsibility for its actions to others.

And this points out why the name "CCP virus" is needed, to distinguish the victims from the victimizer. The people of Wuhan and of China are the victims of the CCP's arrogance and incompetence, expressed in this viral pandemic.

The name CCP virus also sounds a warning: Those nations and individuals close to the CCP are the ones suffering the worst effects from this virus, as is seen in the raging infections in the CCP's close ally Iran and in Italy, the only G-7 nation to sign onto the Belt and Road Initiative, Taiwan and Hong Kong, which have rejected the CCP—Taiwan in a recent landslide national election and Hong Kong in months of massive demonstrations—have had relatively few infections.

Finally, the CCP virus reminds the people of the world that the source of the virus is itself evil. This is a communist virus, and with the name CCP virus, The Epoch Times reminds the world of the cure: ending the CCP.

KEVIN FRAYER/GETTY IMAGES



A Chinese boy hugs a relative as she leaves to board a train at the Beijing Railway Station before the annual Spring Festival on Jan. 21, 2020.

THE
EPOCH
TIMES

TRUTH and TRADITION

READ WHAT OTHERS WON'T REPORT

SUBSCRIBE TODAY

ReadEpoch.com



Members of Germany's coronavirus emergency task force sit down for a work session while a monitor shows the global spread and human toll of the virus at offices of the Federal Ministry of Health in Berlin on Feb. 28, 2020.

CCP VIRUS

'Wake-Up Call': Pandemic Should Prompt the West to Confront Chinese Regime, Experts Say

CATHY HE

The global pandemic that has resulted from the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) initial cover-up of the COVID-19 outbreak should serve as a "wake-up call" for Western governments dealing with the regime, a China expert and rights activist said.

Benedict Rogers, a UK human rights activist and founder of non-profit Hong Kong Watch, told The Epoch Times that the crisis should prompt countries to review their relations with the Chinese regime, "because we would not have a global pandemic if the Chinese authorities had listened to doctors in Wuhan instead of silencing, repressing, and punishing them."

"The global coronavirus pandemic should be a wake-up call for the world, and especially Western governments and multilateral organizations such as the WHO [World Health Organization], who have naively kowtowed to the Chinese regime and blindly trusted this regime that is manifestly based on lies and repression," Rogers said in an email.

The CCP virus, which causes COVID-19, originated from the central Chinese city of Wuhan in December 2019. Despite being aware of the severity of the outbreak, Chinese authorities suppressed vital information about the disease and silenced doctors who tried to draw attention to the situation.

As a result of the Chinese regime's initial coverup, the CCP virus, commonly known as the novel coronavirus, has spread to more than 100 countries, infected more than 100,000 people, and killed thousands outside of China.

In Europe, where the outbreak is most severe outside of China—particularly in Italy, Germany, Spain, and France—countries should reassess their ties with the regime after they deal with the crisis, said Charles Parton, a former British diplomat stationed in China and a senior associate at UK-based think tank Royal United Services Institute.

At that time, it is important that "those making policy are aware of the facts and how the CCP put

We would not have a global pandemic if the Chinese authorities had listened to doctors in Wuhan instead of silencing, repressing, and punishing them.

Benedict Rogers, founder, Hong Kong Watch.

politics above people in the early stages of its reaction to COVID-19," Parton said in an email.

He added that the task of European governments would be to "stress that for the sake of the world's future ability to deal with such threats, the CCP has to allow more transparency and truth to shine forth."

Economic Ties

In the past year, European countries have been weighing a tougher stance toward the regime, driven by Beijing's unfair trade practices, Chinese acquisitions in critical sectors, and its failure to open its markets to European companies in the same way that Europe has done for Chinese firms.

The executive arm of the EU called Beijing a "strategic rival" in a March 2019 report on EU-China relations. The EU also hopes to reach a deal with the regime to address unfair investment practices, although those efforts appear to be on hold as an EU-China summit scheduled for the end of March has reportedly been postponed due to the pandemic.

Amid this push for a more balanced trade relationship, European countries also found themselves grappling with how not to antagonize their major trading partner.

"In closed-door meetings, member state officials vent their frustration about China, but at the end of the day, short-term opportunism prevails," Jonathan Holslag, professor of international politics at the Free University of Brussels and special adviser to the first vice president of the European Commission, told The Diplomat in January.

"We are all being pressured by Chinese diplomats to accept [Chinese telecom giant] Huawei, scared that European companies that invested in China could suffer from trade tensions, but we still keep sending delegation after delegation to China to pursue business opportunities."

These competing interests were exemplified during Chinese leader Xi Jinping's visit to France last March, Holslag said.

"The one day, [French President]

Emmanuel Macron calls [German Chancellor] Angela Merkel and the [EU] Commission president to meet President Xi Jinping together in Paris. The next day, he desperately tries to sell Airbus planes [to China]," he said.

The professor noted that the same applied to Germany. "Companies like Volkswagen, BASF, and BMW shape the China agenda much more than long-term strategic concerns or the national interest," he said.

China is Germany's largest trading partner. As of 2019, Chinese businesses accounted for 7 percent of German private sector's total income. Over 5,000 German companies have invested in over 8,000 projects in China, while over 2,000 Chinese companies have invested in Germany.

Other European countries have also welcomed Chinese investments. In 2018, Portugal became the first European country to sign up to Beijing's infrastructure investment plan, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI, also known as One Belt, One Road). This was followed by Italy last year, which became the first G-7 nation to join.

BRI, a project aimed to connect Asia, Africa, and Europe through a network of railways, ports, and roads, has been criticized for saddling developing countries with debt burdens they cannot repay. Meanwhile, the United States worries that the plan is also designed to strengthen China's military influence and spread technologies capable of spying on the West.

The regime has also made inroads into Spain. Chinese firms in 2016 acquired two Spanish engineering firms Artex and Eptisa, which was part of Beijing's global drive to dominate high-tech sectors, as dictated by its national industrial plan "Made in China 2025," which serves as a blueprint for China to become a tech manufacturing powerhouse.

Also, in June 2017, China's state-owned shipping company COSCO bought majority stakes in Noatum Port Holdings, the operator of two container terminals in the ports of Valencia and Bilbao, illustrating Beijing's hopes to pull Spain into its

BRI paradigm. Noatum is Spain's largest maritime terminal operator.

Meanwhile, many European countries are in the midst of deciding whether to include Huawei technology in their 5G rollouts. While the United States has warned its European allies that doing so would pose national security risks, Chinese officials have exerted pressure on some countries to accept Huawei or face retaliation.

The UK in January announced that it would allow Huawei in "non-core" parts of its 5G network. According to Reuters, France is poised to make a similar decision. In neighboring Germany, Merkel's ruling coalition has stopped short of banning Huawei, but favors imposing tougher rules on vendors.

'Seek Truth From Facts'

Since the virus spread across the world, the Chinese regime has launched significant efforts to portray itself as a global leader in fighting the virus, while deflecting attention away from its mishandling of the outbreak.

"The CCP will be exerting great efforts through its external propaganda machinery to ensure that foreign governments adopt its narrative of success and working on behalf of the world to combat COVID-19," Parton said.

Beijing has sent teams of medical experts to Italy and Spain, while Chinese state media has lauded Beijing's provision of medical aid, such as masks and protective gear, to other hard-hit countries. Some of the supplies sent to Italy, however, were not donations, but rather exports of goods for purchase.

Parton said countries should combat such propaganda efforts by proverbially "seeking truth from facts," and demanding more transparency from the CCP.

"We should talk to the Chinese government about its experience and we should try to work together to draw up lessons for the future for all of us," he said.

Rogers said European countries ought to "alert the world to the fact that the Chinese regime is to blame for this pandemic."

"The Chinese regime is the problem, not the solution," he said.

CCP VIRUS

Beijing's Claim of No New Infections Contradicts Reality on the Ground



A medical staff member checks equipment in Wuhan, China, on March 19, 2020.

Chinese citizens report long lines outside of hospitals, new makeshift hospitals, and forced quarantines

NICOLE HAO

F

or the first time since the virus outbreak began, China's national health commission claimed on March 19 that there were no new infections in the entire country.

But Chinese citizens describe a different reality.

In Wuhan, ground zero of the epidemic, residents witnessed long lines at hospitals while more facilities were reportedly being set up to accommodate ill patients.

Meanwhile, netizens said they don't trust the Chinese regime's narrative. The CCP virus, commonly known as the novel coronavirus, first emerged in Wuhan in December 2019.

The Epoch Times refers to the novel coronavirus as the CCP virus because the Chinese Communist Party's cover-up and mishandling allowed the virus to spread throughout China and create a global pandemic.

Hospitals

In a video posted to social media on March 19, a Chinese citizen shows the Wuhan Union Hospital, one of 46 designated facilities to treat COVID-19, and the queue in front of it. "Look, Look! People are lining up in front of the fever clinic at Wuhan Union Hospital," the person says. The Epoch Times confirmed the footage was filmed at the hospital.

More than 30 people are seen waiting in line, keeping a safe distance from the person in front of them. A hospital security guard is stationed nearby, dressed in a protective suit and wearing an N95 mask.

Those waiting in line wore masks, some dressed in surgical gowns or plastic raincoats—worn by many during the initial outbreak as people sought to protect themselves from contracting the virus.

Meanwhile, Mr. Wu, a resident in nearby Huanggang city, cried for help. He said no hospital in Huanggang or Wuhan could diagnose his disease because all the facilities he visited were full of virus patients.

Wu's daughter told The Epoch Times in a phone interview: "I called doctors from Wuhan. They said it's very possible that my father has a kidney tumor, but they couldn't accept him.... Their hospitals are full of [virus] patients."

New Facilities

On March 19, a construction worker shared a video of a new makeshift hospital set up within a stadium in

All roads are still blocked, and businesses have not resumed production in Wuhan.

Ms. Zhang, Wuhan resident

suburban Wuhan.

"After another night, our mission is almost complete," the man said. "A new makeshift hospital will be in operation soon."

Ms. Li, a resident in Wuhan, told The Epoch Times that authorities have recently set up so-called relay stations around the city. Typically set up inside universities, diagnosed virus patients are being held there in quarantine.

"After the 14 makeshift hospitals were closed [on March 10], they set up 300 relay stations. I believe they are like a new type of makeshift facility," Li said.

Coinciding with Chinese leader Xi Jinping's first visit to Wuhan since the outbreak, authorities closed down the makeshift field hospitals, saying there was no longer a need for them.

Ms. Li also said many people are undiagnosed and self-isolating at home. "[From what I know], each residential compound in [Jiang'an district, an area of Wuhan] has infected virus patients. The patients are forced to stay at home."

Ms. Zhang, another Wuhan resident, believed the epidemic was much more severe than authorities are admitting.

"If the outbreak isn't critical, it [the government] would allow us to return to work. Now all roads are still blocked, and businesses have not resumed production in Wuhan," Zhang said in a March 17 phone interview.

Since late January, Wuhan has been under lockdown. To prevent the virus from spreading, workplaces were closed down, public transportation and road travel banned, and public events canceled.

Aside from Xinjiang and Guizhou, two remote areas of China that recently reopened high schools and middle schools for seniors who will take entrance exams, all schools in other provinces and regions are closed.

China's schools have remained closed since the Lunar New Year holiday. Classes are held online.

Netizens

Many netizens are skeptical of the authorities' claims that the epidemic has been contained. One widely circulated article posted onto a Chinese internet bulletin board said that only when three criteria are met will it indicate that the epidemic is truly over.

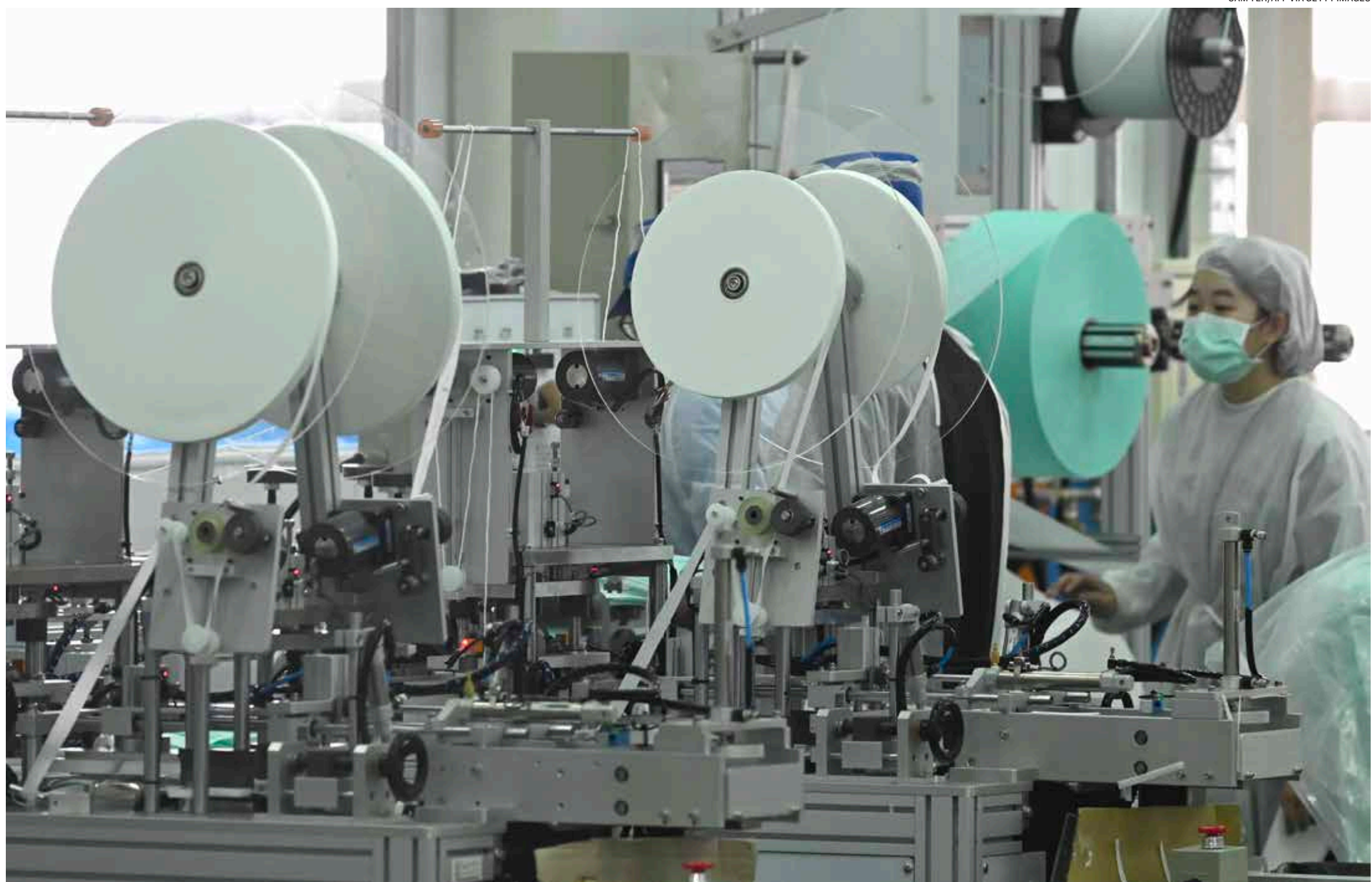
The three criteria are: all schools in China reopen; North Korea and Russia reopen their borders to China; and the CCP holds its Lianghui ("Two Sessions"), the Party's annual conference for its rubber-stamp legislature and the advisory body, the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference.

This year's Lianghui was scheduled for March 3 to March 13. On Feb. 24, the Party announced that it would be postponed due to the epidemic.



Medical information written on a window in a ward treating CCP virus patients, at a hospital in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China, on March 19, 2020.

SAM YEH/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES



A worker at Taiwan's Universal Incorporation, a manufacturer of protective masks, operates machines at a factory in Tainan, Taiwan, on March 6, 2020.

TAIWAN

Taiwan's Swift Response to Virus Threat Allowed It to Contain Outbreak

FRANK FANG

TAIPEI, Taiwan—It has been roughly three months since the CCP virus, commonly known as the novel coronavirus, first emerged in the Chinese city of Wuhan.

It's now spread to more than 140 countries and territories around the world, killing thousands of people outside China.

The Epoch Times refers to the novel coronavirus as the CCP virus because the Chinese Communist Party's coverup and mismanagement allowed the virus to spread throughout China and create a global pandemic.

Despite Taiwan's proximity to mainland China—80 miles—it has managed to control the outbreak, reporting a relatively low 100 confirmed cases and one death as of March 18.

Community spread hasn't occurred among Taiwan's population. Thus, life on the island is largely uninterrupted—without the widespread restrictions currently adopted in the United States and Europe.

Taiwan's response has earned praise from health experts.

Local lawmaker Chao Tien-lin, a member of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), said the island's successful containment efforts demonstrate that countries don't need to adopt draconian measures such as those in authoritarian nations. "We can share with other countries how the outbreak can be contained under a democratic system," Chao said.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has made it difficult for Taiwan to do so, as it has refused to grant Taiwan membership, or invite Taiwanese health experts to recent health meetings related to the pandemic held by the WHO Emergency Committee.

As the Chinese regime claims Taiwan as part of its territory, it has asserted that Beijing can sufficiently represent the island in international organizations. Since 2017, Taiwan has been barred by China from taking part in WHO-related meetings.

We can share with other countries how the outbreak can be contained under a democratic system.

Chao Tien-lin, Democratic Progressive Party lawmaker

Local experts criticized the WHO for catering to Beijing and not responding swiftly to the virus's threat—leading to a global pandemic.

Taiwan's Response

"When it comes to fighting enemies, we must anticipate the worst and prepare for the worst," Chao said, using a Chinese idiom to explain Taiwan's approach to limiting the virus's spread.

"Whether it is border control, regulations on people's movements, or the control of equipment and supplies, I think we are way ahead compared to other countries."

On Dec. 31 last year—the same day that Wuhan authorities publicly acknowledged that there was an outbreak of a mysterious pneumonia-like illness—Taiwan's Centers for Disease Control (CDC) announced that it activated its border quarantine measures. The measures included having Taiwanese officials board planes and assess passengers for fever and pneumonia symptoms on direct flights from Wuhan.

On Jan. 5, Taiwan's CDC urged people who traveled to Wuhan in the previous 14 days to be tested at hospitals if they exhibited a fever or respiratory symptoms.

Fifteen days later, the CDC activated the Central Epidemic Command Center (CECC) and named Taiwan's minister of health and welfare as its commander, to coordinate efforts among different government ministries to combat the virus. And, on Jan. 25, Taiwan suspended all group tours to China, and on Feb. 6, the island banned entry to all mainland Chinese visitors.

These early actions lowered the possibility of the virus spreading in local communities, Chao said.

Another key factor in Taiwan's success in fending off the virus was how the government was able to build public trust, said Wu Mingtsang, distinguished professor at the public health department of Taiwan's Kaohsiung Medical University.

"The government found a commander who is willing to be transparent and holds daily press con-

ferences to build up a foundation of trust among people," Wu said in a phone interview, praising the CECC's commander, Chen Shih-chung.

WHO

Meanwhile, the WHO may have neglected early warnings from Taiwan about the virus.

Taiwan's Vice President Chen Chien-jen recently told a local magazine that Taiwanese authorities warned a WHO point of contact on Dec. 31 about the risk of human-to-human transmission of a pneumonia-like disease in China.

Beijing didn't openly acknowledge the virus was being transmitted between people until Jan. 20.

Chen said that the WHO should have taken action after Taiwan's warning, instead of waiting until Jan. 30 to declare the outbreak a "public health emergency."

In an emailed response to The Epoch Times, WHO spokesperson Tarik Jasarevic said the organization was informed of a "pneumonia of unknown cause" in Wuhan on Dec. 31, and since then, has "regarded the event as very serious and applied the full range of attention to it from across the organization."

Chao accused the WHO of "making erroneous judgments and decisions" by considering the outbreak in political terms, wary of upsetting the Chinese regime. The poor judgment led to the virus spreading from China and nearby Asian countries to the rest of the world, Chao said.

On Jan. 27, the WHO conceded in a report that it had wrongfully assessed the risk of the virus. In a footnote, it said it had stated "incorrectly" the global risk as "moderate" in its reports from Jan. 23 to Jan. 25.

It added that the risk is, in fact, "very high in China, high in the region, and high globally."

Professor Wu similarly said that the WHO failed to recognize the virus is an "enemy to all people."

"It seems that the WHO has dealt with the [outbreak] as if it were a political event. But the virus does not distinguish your political affiliations," Wu said.

OPINION

One Belt, One Road ... One Virus

BRIAN CATES



As the entire world has struggled to cope with the fallout from the CCP virus, all eyes have remained fixed on Italy, where the virus is reaping its most awful toll. Deaths in Italy from the virus have now surpassed the official count claimed by the communist officials of China.

As of March 23, China has acknowledged a total of 3,270 deaths from the disease, while Italy's toll has far surpassed that at 5,476 and is climbing rapidly.

Another of the hardest-hit countries is Iran, which claims 1,812 dead, although as with China, there's good reason to believe the Iranian regime is hiding the true numbers. Spain and France have also been deeply affected, with 2,206 and 674 deaths, respectively.

When you consider that the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) and Iran's numbers are likely far higher than what has been reported because those regimes can't be trusted to accurately self-report, the true impact of this disaster on Italy is even more apparent. Italy's numbers can be trusted, as can Spain and France's, and so the disparity is stark, ranging from 5,476 to 2,206 to 674.

So the question immediately arises: Why does Italy, a free, democratic country, have such a high death toll?

Why Italy Indeed

There has been much recent speculation and commentary about this development, mostly centering around Italy's aging population or the quality of available health care.

In fact, the chief reason that Italy now finds itself at the center of the worst of this current pandemic isn't due to a larger elderly population or substandard medical care. It can be summed up in one word: globalism.

Italy's political elite class made two key mistakes.

The first mistake was to allow a huge migration of ethnic Chinese into the country. There are now an estimated 320,000 Chinese living in Italy, many of them in the northern part of the country where the virus has been especially bad. (The actual number could be far higher since there is a booming illegal human-smuggling trade.)

The second mistake was to enter into an economic agreement with the CCP called the "Belt and Road Initiative" (BRI, also known as One Belt, One Road). The Party is using this economic policy in countries such as Italy to position itself for world dominance,

The CCP is a hostile foreign power and it is far past time that many governments around the world begin treating it that way.

and specifically as a competitor to the United States.

As the Council on Foreign Relations explained in an article published in January, titled "China's Massive Belt and Road Initiative":

"China's Belt and Road Initiative, sometimes referred to as the New Silk Road, is one of the most ambitious infrastructure projects ever conceived. Launched in 2013 by President Xi Jinping, the vast collection of development and investment initiatives would stretch from East Asia to Europe, significantly expanding China's economic and political influence."

Opening the Door to a Pandemic

Tracy Beanz of the investigative news website UncoverDC.com published an amazing report on March 20, titled "Why Italy?" that took an in-depth look at why it so quickly became the world's most vulnerable country to the CCP virus and its devastating effects.

In her report, Beanz cites several news articles from years ago where this decades-long mass migration from China to Italy was examined in a mostly positive light, such as this article, which appeared in September 2010 in The New York Times, titled "Chinese Remake the 'Made In Italy' Fashion Label."

It was exactly one year ago that the BRI economic agreement between the CCP and the Italian government was finalized.

Now, it appears a far more accurate title for this policy would be "One Belt, One Road... One Virus."

The biggest overall result of this worldwide pandemic launched from inside China is that it is causing many of the world's political leaders to reassess their relationship, both economic and diplomatic, with the CCP.

A World Awakens to the Globalist CCP Threat

The pandemic has awakened many to the direct and very real danger of being dependent on the regime in Beijing, under the CCP's iron-fisted control, for vital products and services such as medical supplies, lifesaving drugs, and key electronics.

Globalism was sold by our political elite class as a wonderfully positive concept over the past several decades, since it was framed as the inevitable wave of the future. However, there are also very real dangers and pitfalls that come with outsourcing your country's vital medical and national security infrastructure to what may very well be a hostile foreign power.

Before the outbreak of this pandemic, the CCP had certainly engaged in enough blatantly bad behavior in recent years to lead any responsible

political leader to seriously question any policy of outsourcing vital infrastructure to China.

Sen. Josh Hawley (R-Mo.) and Sen. Tom Cotton (R-Ark.) and several other legislators have been tirelessly working to point out the very real threat of the CCP's rampant spying and tech theft, and also how outsourcing 5G technology to Huawei was a direct compromise of the United States' national security.

In just the past year, with its crude handling of the Hong Kong protests, followed by the NBA's blatant self-censoring, along with the revelation of massive concentration camps created for Uyghurs, there were already plenty of reasons for President Donald Trump's administration to begin looking for ways to decouple from the United States' economic and infrastructure dependence on China.

Even some top Democrats who were at the forefront of the globalist agenda in the Bush and Obama years have come around to the wisdom of steering clear of the CCP when it comes to vital US infrastructure.

Stark Truth Emerges: CCP Is a Hostile Foreign Power

Had China's present totalitarian government been honest with the rest of the world from November 2019 through January, the virus could have been contained within China.

Instead, even into mid-January, the CCP was lying to the World Health Organization, which was passing fake information to Trump. That was while the Chinese authorities were desperately trying to suppress the truth, arresting and imprisoning doctors and whistleblowers who were revealing the reality of the situation.

The CCP government has followed this duplicity with engaging in an infuriating disinformation campaign about the virus's origins in China, followed by a threat to withhold Chinese-manufactured medical drugs from the United States during this present crisis.

These aren't the actions of a friendly government. They certainly aren't the actions of a trusted business partner.

The CCP is a hostile foreign power, and it is far past time that many governments around the world began treating it that way.

The Epoch Times refers to the novel coronavirus, which causes the disease COVID-19, as the CCP virus because the Chinese Communist Party's coverup and mismanagement allowed the virus to spread throughout China and create a global pandemic.



Medical workers in coveralls move a patient under intensive care into the newly built Columbus Covid 2 temporary hospital to fight the new coronavirus infection, at the Gemelli hospital in Rome on March 16, 2020.

THE
EPOCH
TIMES

TRUTH *and* TRADITION



How to Keep Safe From the CCP Virus

In times like these, you need trusted information.

The Epoch Times was months ahead of other media in covering the CCP virus, commonly referred to as the novel coronavirus.

Similarly, The Epoch Times was among the first to report on the SARS epidemic in 2003.

That is because we are truly independent and not afraid of reporting honestly on

the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and the threat it poses to the world.

Now, during the CCP virus outbreak, the CCP is flooding the world with deceptive propaganda, and The Epoch Times is at the forefront of exposing the truth.

See through the deception, and keep yourself and your family truly informed, by reading The Epoch Times.



Please Visit:

ept.ms/CCPVirus