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CHINA INSIDER

A man is wading past a submerged car along a flooded street following heavy rains in Zhengzhou in central China's Henan Province on July 20, 2021.

CENSORSHIP FOLLOW DEADLY FLOODS

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OPINION

From Health Care to Hollywood: How the Chinese Regime Attempts to Control America

JOHN MAC GHLIENN

We are fast approaching the two-month anniversary of the John Cena apology. For the uninitiated, in an interview for “Fast and Furious 9,” a movie he was starring in, the professional wrestler and actor made the “mistake” of calling Taiwan a country.

Ostensibly, Cena was apologizing to the people of China. In reality, though, he was apologizing to the Chinese regime, which essentially controls Hollywood.

As professor Aynne Kokas, author of “Hollywood Made in China,” notes, “Chinese production studios like Alibaba Pictures and Tencent Pictures” now play “a significant role funding films in Hollywood.”

Today, American “entertainment platforms” have become so “desperate to access the Chinese market” that they are now willing to “work against their own long-term interests.” Take Netflix, for example, the world’s largest streaming service. According to Kokas, the company “licensed its content to the Chinese platform iQiyi, which in turn bolstered iQiyi’s popularity.” Hollywood has made a Faustian bargain with Beijing. In return for its soul, it agrees to keep churning out tepid, franchise-heavy movies.

Although Cena’s groveling apology was indeed disturbing, it’s important to put it in context. Cena answers to Hollywood executives, and those executives answer to China. The fact that Cena’s apology was delivered in fluent Mandarin speaks volumes. The multi-millionaire didn’t learn the language for fun; he learned it because it’s a job requirement.

More worryingly, the Chinese influence extends well beyond Hollywood. An increasing number of Beijing-backed businesses have invested billions in American land. As the author and farmer Deborah J. Comstock writes, the goal of the Chinese regime is simple: “to invest in agriculture overseas and to gain greater control over oilseed and grain products, to create policies to support facilities, equipment, and inputs for agricultural production, and to create large multinational grain-trading conglomerates.” The revenue earned bypasses “the American commodities markets,” and the products are “flown through the foreign entities’ own distribution channels, directly to the home country.”

The influence doesn’t end there, either. A damning Fox News report outlines the many ways in which the United States has become dependent on China. Take medical supplies, for example. According to the report, China now “produces 97 percent of U.S. antibiotics” and “80 percent of active pharmaceutical ingredients used in American drugs.” In other words, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has “absolute control” over “potentially life-saving medicine.”

Furthermore, Beijing-backed “firms and investors own a controlling majority” in close to 2,400 U.S. companies.

These include the likes of “AMC Entertainment (entertainment), Complete Genomics (health care), First International Oil (energy), G.E. Appliances (technology), IBM—P.C. division (technology), Legendary Entertainment Group (entertainment), Motorola Mobility (technology), Nexter Automotive (automotive), Riot Games (entertainment), Smithfield Foods (food),” to name just a few.

The companies owned are as varied as they are numerous. Take Smithfield Foods, for example, the world’s largest producer of pork. In 2013, it was purchased by Shuanghui International Holdings for \$5 billion, considerably more than the company’s market value. The acquisition, as well as the price paid, raised eyebrows. The Chinese regime was clearly involved in the purchase. As Sen. Debbie Stabenow (D-Mich.) said at the time, “this isn’t just an acquisition of a company.”

No, she said, the Chinese regime had just bought “25 percent” of America’s “pork industry.”

There’s More

Both MSNBC and NBC, two of the biggest news providers in the United States,



The Smithfield Foods pork processing plant in Sioux Falls, S.D., on April 8, 2020.

are owned by NBC Universal, which appears to have close ties to Xinhua, a propaganda outlet run by the CCP. Other outlets such as ABC and ESPN also appear to have links to the Chinese regime. In 2019, ESPN staff were directly told to avoid discussing Chinese politics at all costs. The warnings came as protests in Hong Kong started to turn violent.

Two years on, one wonders if the influence from Beijing explains why the virus, which most likely originated in a Chinese lab, has been covered so badly—more specifically, so blindly. Malcolm X once called the media “the most powerful entity on earth.” They “have the power,” he said, “to make the innocent guilty and to make the guilty innocent.” All because “they control the minds of the masses.”

They most certainly do, and that’s because they control the narrative. The narrative isn’t just biased; it is, by and large, incorrect.

Is it any wonder that trust in traditional media is at an all-time low? Or that when the comedian Jon Stewart had the audacity to say that maybe, just maybe, the virus came from a lab in Wuhan—you know, a lab that researches novel coronaviruses—he was either ignored, condescended to, or heavily criticized by left-leaning, China-friendly outlets. Stewart was speaking for the masses, yet he was treated like a conspiracy nut. This is gaslighting in its purest form, whereby the manipulator(s) succeed in getting the target(s) to question their own memory and perceptions, and in some cases, their sanity. With the CCP busy opposing fresh investigations into the origins of the virus, the American media, not just Chinese propaganda outlets, have played

an instrumental role in preventing the truth from emerging.

This year, Time magazine ran a piece on why America is so divided today. The inability of so many media outlets to report the news in an objective manner is certainly a contributing factor. What we’re witnessing today is information warfare, which is intimately associated with psychological warfare in its purest form—and the Chinese regime has played a pivotal role in sowing innumerable seeds of doubt.

How did we get here? What can be done? These are important, even existential, questions that must be asked. More importantly, they must be answered.

In a recent interview with Guancha news, yet another Chinese propaganda outlet, China’s vice minister of foreign affairs, Le Yucheng, warned the United States that “the world has changed.” The U.S., he said, “needs to see these changes, adapt to them, and reflect upon and correct its mistakes in the past.” To see what Beijing-approved reflection and correction looks like, feel free to rewatch that John Cena apology.

If the CCP has its way, we’ll all be groveling in Mandarin.

John Mac Ghlionn is a researcher and essayist. His work has been published by the likes of the New York Post, The Sydney Morning Herald, The American Conservative, National Review, Public Discourse, and other respectable outlets. He is also a columnist at Cointelegraph.

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



A billboard along Hollywood’s famed Sunset Strip from the Center for American Security as part of its “China Owns US” campaign in Hollywood, Calif., on Aug. 29, 2016.



The P4 laboratory at the Wuhan Institute of Virology in Wuhan, China, on April 17, 2020.

OPINION

The Influential Westerners Helping the Chinese Regime

JOHN MAC GHLIENN

COVID-19 may very well be China’s Chernobyl, but try telling that to the masters of spin in Beijing. According to a recent editorial in the Global Times, a mouthpiece for the Chinese regime: “More than half a million Chinese netizens have signed a joint letter to the WHO.” They demand that “the organization conduct an investigation into the [United States’] Fort Detrick lab, a place whose sudden shutdown is still shrouded in secrecy.”

Why, they wonder, hasn’t the lab “been subject to any scrutiny from the international community.” A “thorough probe could prevent a future epidemic,” they suggest.

Not finished there, the authors of the shameless piece also take aim at “certain Western politicians” and media outlets who have identified China as the birthplace of the coronavirus. As Mark Twain once said, truth is often stranger than fiction. One wonders what the great man would have to say about this particular piece of fact-free garbage.

Now, although I have my own questions about the Fort Detrick lab—which is in Maryland—the Chinese regime’s intention is clear for all to see. It’s a brazen attempt to deflect blame and instead focus the spotlight on its sworn enemy, the United States. Who are the authors really fooling, though? Apart from themselves, of course, they’re deceiving absolutely no one.

Leaving the letter aside, a more worrying aspect of assigning blame for the pandemic involves the Chinese Communist Party’s (CCP) enablers, many of whom reside in western countries. They occupy positions of significant status, and a number of them are eminent scientists.

In an interview with The Defender, Richard Ebricht, a well-respected molecular biologist at Rutgers University, discusses the ways in which some of the most prestigious scientific journals played a pivotal role “in helping to shout down any mention of a lab leak.” The likes of “Nature, Science, and the Lancet,” according to Ebricht, are all guilty of intentionally ignoring alternative theories. These journals played a key role in silencing a number of credible lab-leak theorists. Other outlets, such as NBC, have also gone to great lengths to shut down lab-leak discussions, thus helping the CCP maintain some veneer of credibility—although an incredibly thin one.

Of the three aforementioned journals,

Scientists aren’t the only ones helping the CCP spread disinformation. Social media influencers are also busy spreading the state-approved gospel.

the Lancet has played the biggest role in facilitating China-friendly narratives. In February of last year, the journal published a statement from Dr. Peter Daszak, the president of EcoHealth Alliance. In the statement, Daszak, whose research, according to the EcoHealth website, “has been instrumental in identifying and predicting the origins and impact of emerging diseases across the globe,” was quick to dismiss lab leak reports. Daszak strongly condemned “conspiracy theories suggesting that COVID-19” was a man-made virus.

Interestingly, EcoHealth, up until spring of last year, received millions in funding from the U.S. government to conduct research on bats and coronaviruses in China. Daszak, rather conveniently, failed to mention this in his condescending message to the masses.

From Science Labs to Social Media Platforms

Scientists aren’t the only ones helping the CCP spread disinformation. Social media influencers are also busy spreading the state-approved gospel. According to a recent BBC report, a number of influential British expatriates are using their platforms to spread Beijing-backed lies. These people include “Barrie Jones, Jason Lightfoot, and father-and-son team Lee and Oli Barrett.” Of the four, Jones appears to be the most effective. China’s foreign ministry even used one of his videos “in a daily government press briefing.”

The BBC report discusses the ways in which a “growing network of foreigners” is being “pulled into Chinese state media campaigns.” CGTN, an international English-language cable TV news service based

in Beijing, employs hundreds of influencers around the world to promote very specific, China-friendly messages.

According to the BBC, CGTN, which has close ties to the Chinese regime, “aims to expand its influencer pool further by offering cash rewards of up to \$10,000 to reporters, podcasters, presenters, and influencers” who wish to join its carefully scripted campaign. The aforementioned Lightfoot has already “appeared in promotional material” for this particular campaign.

An American by the name of Nathan Rich, a convicted criminal, also enjoys spreading malicious lies. As the Taiwan Times reported, Rich has a sordid history of “condemning Hong Kong pro-democracy protesters,” often referring to them as “terrorists.” He has also parroted “the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) mantra that Taiwan is part of China.” He has also chastised “the U.S. for its folly in engaging in a trade war with China” and argued “that the coronavirus started in America.”

The CCP doesn’t seem to care that Rich’s “citations and arrests primarily involved damaging property, public intoxication, driving while under the influence, criminal conspiracy, traffic violations, and most seriously, possession of heroin.” And why would they? In the West, where the CCP has few friends, the regime will accept assistance from anyone willing to help spread its lies, be they scientists, vloggers, or convicted criminals. Any platform will do. Mix in these willing helpers with Beijing’s penchant for cyber espionage, theft, and the spreading of dangerous disinformation, and you have a recipe for genuine disaster.

With the Westerners willing to help the regime, one wonders why they do it. Is it the money? Is it the fame, or infamy, that comes from helping an enemy of truth? Whatever the answers may be—and I’m sure there are many—it’s concerning to see so many people willing to help the Chinese regime spread propaganda.

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WHO team member Peter Daszak leaves his hotel after the World Health Organization team wrapped up its investigation into the origins of the COVID-19 coronavirus in Wuhan in China’s central Hubei Province on Feb. 10, 2021.



HECTOR RETAMAL/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES



People walk in front of a large screen showing China's leader Xi Jinping giving a speech during celebrations to mark the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China in Beijing on July 1, 2021.

CCP INFLUENCE

81 Percent of Americans Are Concerned About Chinese Influence in US: Poll

FRANK FANG

A vast majority of Americans across the political spectrum are worried about the Chinese regime's influence in the United States, according to a national poll.

Eighty-one percent of respondents to a Convention of States Action and Trafalgar Group poll said they are concerned, somewhat concerned, or very concerned about Beijing's influence over the U.S. government, media, and culture.

While the results crossed party lines, in general, Republicans were more alarmed by the issue. More than 90 percent of Republican voters were concerned, with 71 percent saying they were very concerned. A total of 71 percent of Democratic voters expressed concern, with 39 percent being very concerned. Nearly 80 percent of independent voters were concerned.

The survey of 1,089 people was conducted on July 12 and July 13.

The results weren't a surprise to Mark Meckler, president of the Convention of States Action, who said people from across the political spectrum are voicing the same concern to him on a near-daily basis.

"People understand that there is an existential and evil threat to the world represented by the CCP," Meckler told The Epoch Times, referring to the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

Sen. Marsha Blackburn (R-Tenn.), who has introduced various bills aimed at countering Beijing's infiltration of U.S. institutions, said the CCP is "determined to undermine the United States' interests through a battle of malicious influence."

"While the American people have caught on, it's time for the Biden administration to follow suit and stand up to [Chinese leader] Xi Jinping," she told The Epoch Times in an emailed statement.

Awareness Rising

A string of controversies in recent years have helped to awaken the American public to the CCP's malign influence in the country, Meckler said. On top of that, the Trump administration's efforts to expose the various threats posed by the communist regime have also assisted in "raising people's radar" regarding this issue, he noted.

The American people are greatly concerned about China's malicious influence operations in our country, which goes to show they have much more sense than our political leaders and elites.

Gordon Chang, China expert

The Chinese Communist Party is determined to undermine the United States' interests through a battle of malicious influence.

Marsha Blackburn, U.S. senator (R-Tenn.)

Examples of American businesses caving to CCP censorship demands are numerous.

In July 2019, when the trailer for the upcoming "Top Gun" sequel was released, fans noticed that the Japanese and Taiwanese flags had been removed from the Navy patch on the leather jacket worn by Tom Cruise's character, naval aviator Pete "Maverick" Mitchell.

It turns out that one of the production companies of the sequel is Tencent Pictures, the film unit of Chinese tech giant Tencent. The company is known for complying with the Chinese regime's censorship rules in China and for extending its monitoring and censorship to U.S. users of its popular messaging app WeChat.

Paramount Pictures, which will release the "Top Gun" sequel later this year, was criticized at the time by Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas) over its decision to change the Navy patch.

"Top Gun is an American classic, and it's incredibly disappointing to see Hollywood elites appease the Chinese Communist Party," Cruz told the Washington Free Beacon in July 2019.

Cruz subsequently introduced a bill (S.3835) in April 2020 to stop Hollywood from censoring films for the Chinese regime. He hoped that the legislation would "serve as a wake-up call by forcing Hollywood studios to choose between the assistance they need from the American government and the dollars they want from China," according to a statement accompanying the bill.

A similar incident occurred in May, when actor John Cena, who stars in the latest "Fast & Furious" movie, apologized to fans in Chinese after he was excoriated by the regime's state-run media for referring to Taiwan as a country. The regime in Beijing considers Taiwan a rebel province and has pressured countries around the world to treat the island nation as part of China.

Chinese Infiltration

U.S. officials have sounded the alarm on the regime's infiltration across all spheres of American society.

"The tools in their toolbox to influence our businesses, our academic institutions, our governments at all levels are deep and wide and persistent," FBI

Director Christopher Wray said during a Senate hearing in April.

Then-Secretary of State Mike Pompeo gave similar warnings in a speech to governors in February 2020. He said CCP officials were "cultivating relationships with county school board members and local politicians" through sister cities programs.

Many Chinese entities in the United States, including Chinese consulates, grass-roots level "united front" groups, and language centers known as Confucius Institutes, have been tied to the communist regime's effort to infiltrate America's civil and political institutions.

Through these bodies, the CCP seeks to gain "control, or at least veto power, over public discourse and political decisions" in the United States, a senior state department official said last year.

American universities are among the regime's biggest targets, Meckler noted. Pompeo, in a December speech, warned of Beijing's efforts to steal U.S. research and stifle academic freedom across college campuses.

"So many of our colleges are bought by Beijing," he said, citing the deep financial ties between many American universities and China.

A 2020 investigation by the Department of Education found that universities received almost \$1.5 billion in contracts and gifts from China from 2014 to 2020.

"We cannot allow this tyrannical regime to steal our stuff to build their military might, brainwash our people, or buy off our institutions to help them cover up these activities," Pompeo said.

For China expert Gordon Chang, the poll results revealed a disparity between ordinary Americans and political leaders in their understanding of the problem.

"The American people are greatly concerned about China's malicious influence operations in our country, which goes to show they have much more sense than our political leaders and elites," Chang said in a statement to The Epoch Times.

"The apparent lack of alarm at the top of our political system means America is at great risk."

Cathy He contributed to this report.

MILITARY

China Spurs Domestic Military Sector With Stolen Tech, R&D Investment: Report

DANIEL HOLL

China is racing to catch up to the military superiority of the United States, and it's doing so by beefing up domestic innovation efforts in tandem with ongoing intellectual property theft efforts, according to a recent think tank report.

At the same time, the military arm of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is hindered by both the trappings of a socialist command economy and an inability to develop cutting-edge technology on its own, according to the RAND Corporation report "Defense Acquisition in Russia and China."

"China's reliance on intellectual property theft means its weapons are years behind, but the Chinese recognize that shortcoming and are investing in and growing organic capabilities through joint ventures and acquisition of foreign technology," the report reads.

The report, drafted for the U.S. Army, outlines how China is moving away from its standard model of copying other countries.

"Overall, the PLA [People's Liberation Army] has overcome many technological barriers and is the clear pacing threat to the United States in defense acquisitions," it reads.

Theft and Acquisition

The Chinese innovation model for years has been to steal and replicate, which the RAND authors refer to as the "copy-replace model." Many divisions of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) are armed with replicates of other nations' weaponry.

The report notes that Chinese aircraft bear striking similarities to their U.S. and Russian counterparts. Among the list of potential replicates is the Chinese J-31 Gyr-falcon, which resembles the American F-35 Lightning II.

Another jet, known as the J-20 Mighty Dragon, is similar to the American F-22 Raptor. But according to the report, despite the J-20 going through relatively quick development, the report estimates that China is as far as 20 years behind the United States



Chinese People's Liberation Army soldiers taking part in military training at Pamir Mountains in Kashgar, northwestern China's Xinjiang region on Jan. 4, 2021.

in military aviation.

On the ground, the PLA's domestically produced standard service rifle of roughly the last 25 years, the QBZ-95, may soon be replaced by a copied model. The replacement, which is unofficially known as the QBZ-191, is a near copy of the Heckler and Koch 416, according to analysis from The Firearm Blog. This rifle is also strikingly similar to an AR-15.

The CCP's "reliance on theft of intellectual property for its weapon development has helped keep it competitive but has pegged it several years behind the cutting edge," according to the report. This has led China to increase efforts in its own research and development.

Innovation

China's domestic military spending has been on the rise in recent decades, and its approach to innovation has been met with a paradigm shift in recent years.

"Chinese military expenditures grew tenfold in constant dollars over the past

25 years, with spending reaching an all-time high of \$250 billion in 2018," the report reads.

By comparison, the United States had a defense budget of \$700 billion that same year.

Chinese leader Xi Jinping's takeover of the CCP in 2012 led to several systemic changes in the PLA's weapon development strategy. Since 2016, the military and commercial sectors have become more closely integrated. Military designs are often contracted out to civilian, albeit state-owned, companies.

"For a sense of scale, of the top 22 highest-grossing defense firms worldwide, nine are from the United States and eight are from China," the report reads.

Chinese salaries for project managers and engineers are also becoming competitive with the United States. This further serves to lure Chinese nationals attending universities abroad back home.

Almost all Chinese students began living abroad after graduating in 2000. By 2016,

nearly 65 percent of Chinese students had returned to China.

Barriers to Battle

Money and theft aren't able to solve all of China's development problems.

"The PLA is still struggling to spur domestic innovation and close the gap on a few glaring technical deficiencies, such as high-end chips, silent submarines, and aircraft engines," the report reads.

The RAND authors highlight internal impediments stemming from the political structure of communism.

"Even as it strives to clear these technical hurdles, the PLA must address the institutional inefficiencies and barriers related to management and quality assurance that continue to frustrate its efforts at reform," the report reads.

Many Chinese businesses' internal hierarchies are based on the duration of employment and personal relationships, rather than meritocracy. Despite large numbers of students returning to the country, many existing Chinese companies fail to effectively integrate returning talent, the report states, citing ineffective management practices.

The Chinese innovation model for years has been to steal and replicate, which the RAND authors refer to as the 'copy-replace model.'

"The design of Chinese defense contracts also does little to encourage transparency and accountability," the report reads.

The language in contracts is vague, contract winners are guaranteed a share of profits on top of costs, and low bidders for contracts are given consolation projects. These vestiges of the command economy result in little to no incentive to innovate, according to the report.

VIRUS ORIGINS

Public Health Experts Tell House GOP Forum CCP Virus 'Likely Originated' in Wuhan Lab Leak

MARK TAPSCOTT

A panel of public health experts told a Republican-sponsored congressional forum that the CCP virus, also known as the novel coronavirus, "likely originated" in a leak from China's Wuhan Institute for Virology (WIV).

A memorandum written by Republican staffers on the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform's Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis and released July 20 said the five main conclusions of the experts were:

- The CCP (Chinese Communist Party) virus likely originated in the WIV.
- The virus was likely modified through dangerous gain-of-function research.
- The National Institutes of Health (NIH) and its National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) likely continue to be involved in dangerous research in China.
- The World Health Organization (WHO) didn't conduct an impartial investigation of the origins of the virus.
- The CCP and its People's Liberation Army (PLA) have an advanced biological weapons research and development program that may be functioning within or in coordination with the WIV.

The June 29 forum's witnesses included Adm. Brett Giroir, who, as assistant secretary for health at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) during



Security personnel stand guard outside the Wuhan Institute of Virology in Wuhan, China, on Feb. 3, 2021.

the Trump administration, managed the development of the first tests used to detect the presence of the virus in an individual.

The second expert witness testifying was Dr. David Asher, a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute, who, while working under Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, led the State Department's investigation of the virus's origins.

The other expert witnesses included Dr. Richard Muller, professor emeritus of physics at the University of California-Berkeley, and Dr. Steven Quay, founder of Atossa Therapeutics, a Seattle-based clinical-stage biopharmaceutical research firm.

Dr. Francis Collins, director of the NIH, and Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the NIAID, were invited to testify but declined.

"Every scientific test that distinguishes between the zoonotic and lab leak origins gives results

that highly favor the lab origin. We have found no credible evidence that favors zoonotic origin," Muller told the forum, according to the memorandum.

Giroir agreed, saying, "I assess that the most likely origin was an accidental infection of laboratory personnel from the [WIV lab], with secondary transmission to the local population, and subsequent spread to hundreds of millions of people around the world."

Among the evidence they pointed to in support of their conclusion was that while more than 80,000 samples were taken from more than 200 animal species linked to the Wuhan open-air meat market near the WIV and elsewhere in China, none tested positive for the virus. The only animals not tested were the humanized mice being used at the WIV in gain-of-function experiments, they said.

In addition, the witnesses noted that a study of the earliest known victims of the virus in China hadn't visited the Wuhan market, and the CCP acknowledged in May 2020 that the market wasn't the source of the virus jumping from bats to humans, as both the Chinese regime and the WHO had originally claimed.

The witnesses also said the evidence was overwhelming that gain-of-function research was being conducted at the WIV for some time prior to the original outbreak of the virus in China in November 2019. The first confirmed case appeared in the U.S. in January 2020.

Quay told the forum that the virus "has a unique trigger on its surface called a 'furin cleavage site' and a unique code for that site, called a 'CGG-CGG dimer ... in gain-of-function experiments, the WIV ... [has] inserted furin sites into viruses."

"It is the only sure method that always works and makes viruses more infectious. And the CGG-CGG code found in [the virus] is commonly used in the laboratory; you can literally order it on the internet."

The virus, he added, was "pre-adapted for human-to-human transmission from the first patient. Specifically, the part of the virus that interacts with human cells was 99.5 percent optimized."

Giroir cited a 2015 Nature Medicine publication in which WIV researchers reported "the creation of a new, hybrid bat coronavirus that could bind to and infect human airway cells."

All of the witnesses noted that NIH and NIAID funding went to the WIV via sub-grants from the New York-based nonprofit EcoHealth Alliance for gain-of-function research prior to and during a three-year moratorium on such activities from 2014 to 2017.

"After 2017, the pause was lifted

and replaced with an impartial oversight body, the P3. According to recently released emails, the NIH bypassed the P3 to continue funding gain-of-function research at the WIV," the memorandum said.

"No coronavirus work has gone through P3 oversight process. In fact, since 2017, not a single grant, for any research, has gone through P3 oversight process," the memorandum stated.

Every scientific test that distinguishes between the zoonotic and lab leak origins gives results that highly favor the lab origin. We have found no credible evidence that favors zoonotic origin.

Richard Muller, professor emeritus of physics, University of California-Berkeley

"It's unbelievable to me that coronavirus work would not get even into the [P3] process," Giroir told the forum. "If you look at the abstract from the latest grant that was done to EcoHealth, it talks about using protein sequence data, infectious clone technology ... this is all gain-of-function."

In a related development on July 20, House Democrats defeated a Republican motion to bring a proposal to a floor vote that would require the Director of National Intelligence to make public evidence held by the intelligence community on the origins of the virus. The GOP motion, which had passed the Senate unanimously, was defeated in the House on a party-line vote of 216-207.

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FLOODS

As Deadly Flood Ravages Chinese City, Beijing's Censors Go Into Overdrive Suppressing 'Negative Energy' Content

NICOLE HAO

Heavy rains are flooding cities in central China, leading to rising casualties and widespread destruction of property. Information about the disaster is increasingly difficult to come by, as the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) ramps up censorship of any content that it deems contains "negative energy."

By July 22, the Chinese regime announced that 33 people have died from the flooding, with eight missing. But videos recorded by locals suggest much a higher figure. Chinese netizens, meanwhile, have taken to social media demanding the regime reveal the true death toll.

During recent rescue efforts, bodies were found in a submerged tunnel of the worst-hit city thus far, Zhengzhou, on July 22. Zhengzhou is home to over 12 million people, and the capital of central China's Henan Province.

While locals demand transparency, the regime has been busying itself promoting so-called positive energy propaganda programs. Such content includes those praising party officials, the military, and rescue efforts. In turn, online censors have swooped in to quickly remove any content deemed to carry "negative energy," such as footage captured by locals documenting the destruction and calling for official accountability.



People wade through a flooded street following heavy rain in Zhengzhou, a city in China's Henan Province on July 22, 2021.

When a disaster happens, the regime won't allow any voice to report the true scale. It always reports how many rescue efforts the regime has carried out, and then claims that it leads Chinese people to conquer a disaster again.

Tang Jingyuan, U.S.-based China affairs commentator

Suffering and Censorship

In the past few days, videos of the devastation have proliferated on Chinese social media, prompting quick action by censors. Videos showed that hundreds of cars were trapped inside a highway tunnel in Zhengzhou that was submerged in floodwater. Some drivers and passengers' bodies still sat inside the vehicles.

Five minutes was all it took for the tunnel to be inundated, according to those who survived on July 20. Water reached nearly 20 feet deep (six meters) in the 2.6 mile (4.3 km) long tunnel. "The water rose so fast. The chance of surviving was only ten percent!" said a female driver, surnamed Yang, according to the private Chinese media platform Toutiao.

While rescuers eventually drained the highway tunnel, thousands of Zhengzhou residents crowded around and filmed the process. However, as submerged cars began to peek through the murky water, police drove onlookers away and blocked the nearby roads.

Videos were shot from the buildings, capturing rescuers removing bodies from the tunnel.

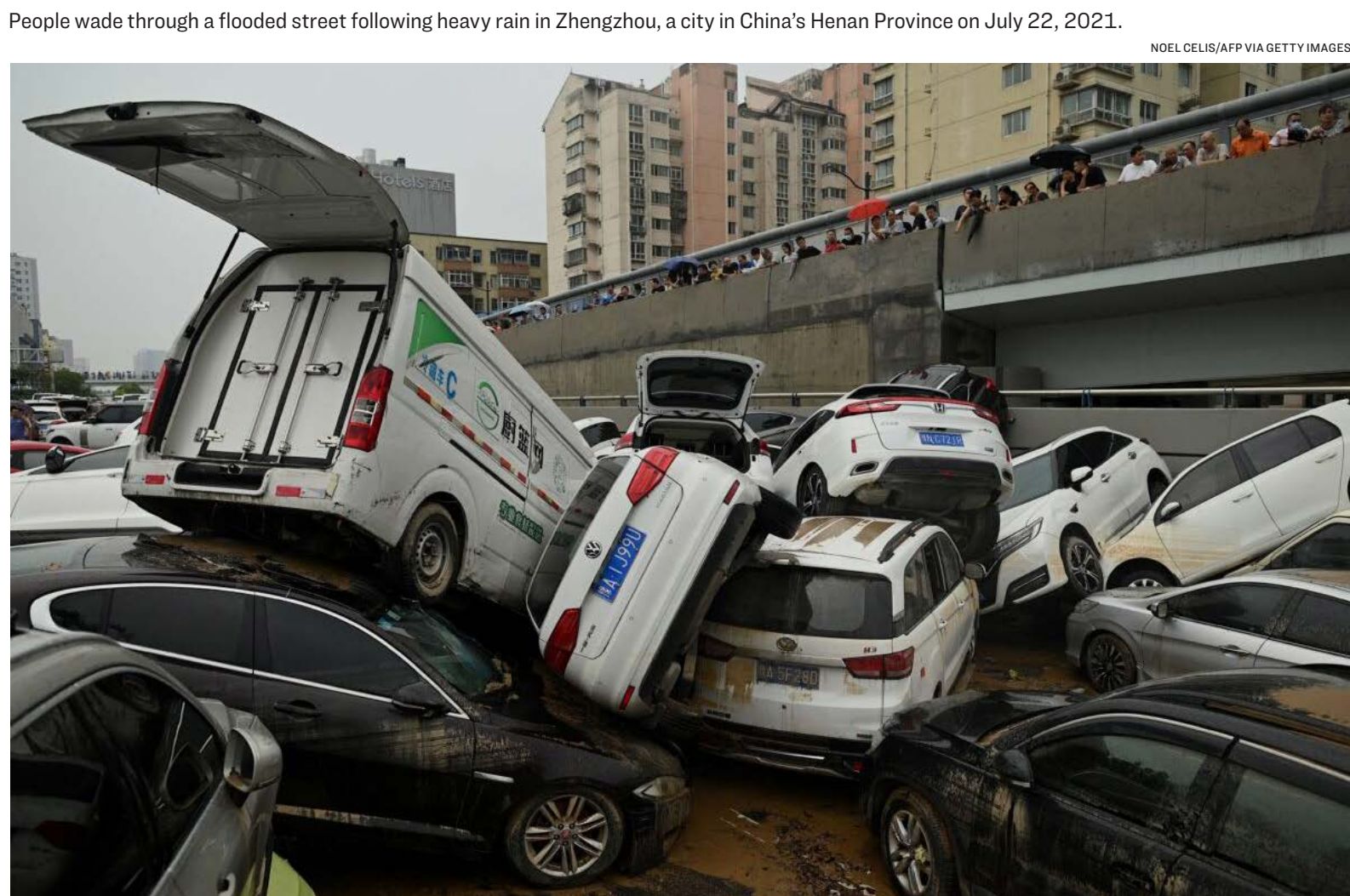
In other video clips circulated on social media on Thursday, cries of "It's horrible to see," "I'm shocked to watch this happen," "completely terrible," accompanied gruesome imagery of the flood's devastation.

Yet such mournful wailing has been marked by censors as carrying "negative energy" and scrubbed. Other content about people's helplessness, distress, and suffering, along with public calls for transparency about the disaster received the same treatment.

A staff member of the state-run Zhengzhou metro company posted online an account of the cause of metro trains being trapped in floodwaters on July 21. The incident caused 12 deaths, according to the regime.

The employee said the design of the metro system allowed it to operate safely, but the company managers didn't want to take responsibility. They also didn't stop the metro's operation earlier when the risk of flooding became apparent, the staff member said.

Around 500 passengers ended up trapped



People look at piled up vehicles near a tunnel in Zhengzhou, central China's Henan Province on July 22, 2021.

in the flooded trains. Many took videos and shared them online, pleading for help.

This content was quickly circulated on Chinese social media platforms, but all were removed hours later.

Meanwhile, Chinese state-run media hasn't reported any news involving death. Their message, instead, has been that the CCP has led the Chinese people to conquer the flood.

In times of emergencies, the promotion of news extolling the regime's leadership and suppression of anything that may make Beijing look bad is a worn-worn tactic of the CCP, according to Tang Jingyuan, U.S.-based China affairs commentator.

"When a disaster happens, the regime won't allow any voice to report the true scale. It always reports how many rescue efforts the regime has carried out, and then claims that it leads Chinese people to conquer a disaster again," Tang told The Epoch Times on July 22.

'Positive Energy' Propaganda

The CCP's propaganda efforts were in full swing amid this disaster.

The Chinese regime announced after the floods that the recent heavy rain in Zhengzhou was a once-in-a-millennia event. However, Zhengzhou experienced much heavier flooding less than 50 years ago in August 1975. Areas of Henan province experienced as much as four times the amount of rain in a two-day period

back then compared to this year's volume, according to the Chinese Meteorological Administration. Moreover, China only began keeping official records of rainfall in 1951.

Rather than focus on flood coverage, the state-run Henan TV channel broadcast videos of singers exalting the CCP as well as propagandistic World War II dramas

extolling China's war efforts.

The reporting blackout extended to national state-run outlets. From July 20 to 22, the CCP's official mouthpiece People's Daily didn't feature anything about the Zhengzhou floods on its front page. State-run broadcaster CCTV broke the silence on July 21, to mention that rescue efforts were underway.

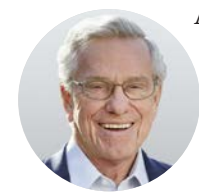


A road collapses after severe flooding and landslides in recent days have hit the county-level city of Gongyi, near Zhengzhou, in central China's Henan Province on July 22, 2021.

OPINION

The Great American Weakness

CLYDE PRESTOWITZ



A recent headline in The Wall Street Journal calls attention to a great American weakness—love of money over the country.

The headline says: "China's Huawei Hires Democratic Lobbyist Tony Podesta." By itself, that may not mean much to the vast majority of readers. So let me explain. Tony Podesta is the brother of John Podesta. John is a longtime Washington political veteran of the Democratic Party. He served as chief of staff to President Bill Clinton, has been a prodigious fundraiser for the Democratic Party, and founded the very liberal-leaning Center for American Progress think tank in Washington.

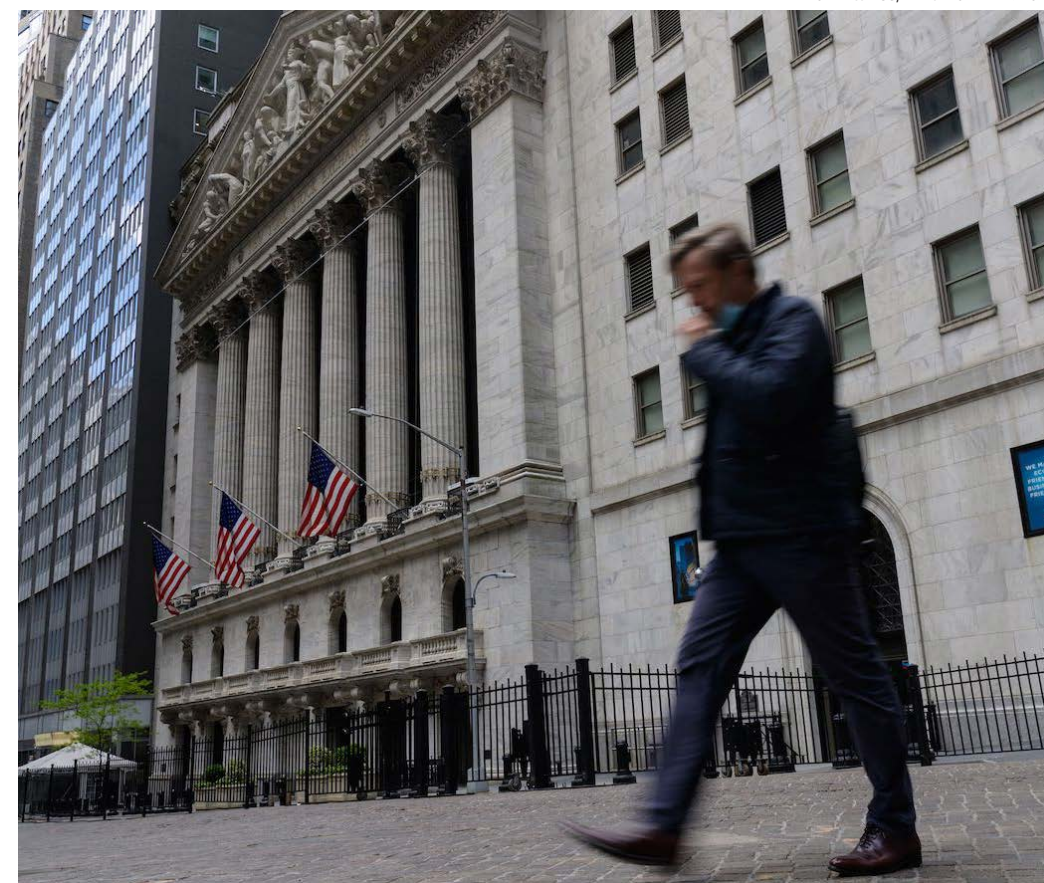
He's a constant adviser to President Joe Biden, with more or less instant entrée to the Oval Office at any time.

All of this makes Tony's brotherly relationship something of potentially extreme value. I mean, a message can go from his lips to John's and then to the president's in a few seconds if not micro-seconds.

In becoming a lobbyist for Huawei, Tony Podesta is also becoming a lobbyist for the Chinese regime and for the CCP whose objectives and values are at nearly complete odds with the objectives and values of the United States.

In the past in America, it was deemed unseemly and a matter not only of poor manners but of poor personal character to attempt to take advantage of high-level personal relationships for the low purpose of making money. It was seen as akin to selling one's soul merely to gain filthy lucre. It was understood to be dishonorable and something that people of character simply did not do.

After leaving the White House, Presi-



A man walks past the New York Stock Exchange on Wall Street in New York on May 10, 2021.

dent Ulysses S. Grant was destitute and dying. To support himself and his family financially, he wrote "Personal Memoirs of Ulysses S. Grant." He died of cancer of the throat shortly after finishing the manuscript. President Harry Truman retired from the Presidency to return to his very modest home in Missouri. He had no government pension and lived on modest savings and donations from friends.

Neither he nor any of his relatives took money in exchange for political lobbying efforts.

Huawei is nominally an independent Chinese corporation making telecommunications and other high-tech equipment. In fact, its founder and chief executive is a former high-ranking officer in the People's Liberation Army (PLA), and the company is closely aligned with and tied to the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Indeed, so much so that it operates effectively as a state-owned enterprise. It is one of China's champion high technology cor-

porations heavily subsidized and promoted by Beijing.

In becoming a lobbyist for Huawei, Tony Podesta is also becoming a lobbyist for the Chinese regime and for the CCP, whose objectives and values are at nearly complete odds with the objectives and values of the United States. Not only has he made himself a foreign agent in America, but he has made himself a foreign agent for a client who aims to undermine and displace American values, power, and influence.

In short, he has made himself a traitor to his country.

It would be bad enough if this were an exception to the standard rule. Alas, it is not. Major U.S. corporations and CEOs have set the example Podesta is now following. To get around U.S. laws on handling customer data, Apple has made a deal with ceding legal ownership of its customer data to a Chinese state-owned corporation. If you're an Apple customer, you might be surprised to now find out that, without tell-

OPINION

Feds Drop Case Against Chinese Researcher: Surprise Move Greenlights More Chinese Espionage in US

LLOYD BILLINGSLEY



Federal prosecutors have dismissed the case against Chinese national Tang Juan, whose trial on visa fraud charges was to begin on July 26, the Sacramento Bee reports. Acting U.S. Attorney Phillip Talbert declined to comment and Assistant U.S. Attorney Heiko Coppola "gave no reason for seeking the dismissal," which has little or nothing to do with criminal justice.

According to a federal criminal complaint filed on June 26, 2020, in the Eastern District of California, Tang applied on Oct. 28, 2019, for a nonimmigrant visa to conduct cancer research at the University of California at Davis. She answered "no" to the question "have you served in the military?" and denied affiliation with the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Tang was issued a J-1 visa on Nov. 5, 2019, but that was premature, according to other evidence in the complaint.

The FBI found an April 14, 2019, article on a Xi'an, China, health care forum that showed Tang in a military uniform bearing the insignia of the Civilian Cadres of the Chinese People's Liberation Army. The FBI also found two other articles listing Tang's employer as the People's Liberation Army's Air Force Medical University (AFMU), also known as the Fourth Military Medical University (FMMU).

According to a July 23, 2020, report in the Davis Enterprise, Tang told the FBI she was required to wear the uniform and was unaware of the insignia's meaning. That claim was hardly credible and the FBI search found Tang wearing a different People's Liberation Army uniform. FBI agents also learned that Tang had identified herself as a member of the CCP when she applied

for benefits.

UC-Davis officials told the Enterprise that Tang came through an exchange program with Xijing Hospital, which includes "eight specialized medical centers of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA)." U.S. Attorneys Talbert and Coppola didn't show any of that evidence to be false, and produced nothing to show that Tang had answered truthfully.

Talbert once taught professional responsibility as an adjunct professor at the UC-Davis King Hall School of Law. Talbert took over from McGregor Scott after the Biden administration fired 55 U.S. attorneys nominated by President Donald Trump.

The case of Tang, as the Bee reported, "is one of the dozens initiated by the Trump Administration through its 'China Initiative' in 2018 to prosecute alleged instances of trade secret theft and economic espionage by researchers who were accused of lying about their backgrounds to obtain access to American research institutions on behalf of the Chinese military."

As Reuters reports, the dismissal "comes as U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman is set to visit China" for a meeting with State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi and other officials. That visit "could help set the stage for further exchanges and a potential meeting between President Joe Biden and Chinese leader Xi Jinping later this year."

In Beijing on July 23, The Associated Press reports that Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian accused the United States of arresting its citizens studying in the country "under fabricated charges, violating legitimate rights and interests of Chinese nationals." Zhao urged the United States to "immediately release the person involved and earnestly guarantee the legitimate rights and interests



Tang Juan, a researcher at the University of California-Davis, was arrested on July 23, 2020, for hiding her ties to the Chinese military in her visa application.

Tang's visa, like those of other Chinese researchers associated with the PLA and CCP, never should have been granted in the first place. Her case should have been prosecuted as espionage.

of Chinese nationals in the U.S."

How soon Tang returns to China remains unclear, but other realities don't stand in doubt. The United States gains little or nothing from the exchange programs with China. Tang's visa, like those of other Chinese researchers associated with the PLA and CCP, never should have been granted in the first place. Her case should have been prosecuted as espionage.

According to July 20, 2020, court documents that cite Tang, Xin Wang, and other Chinese nationals, the cases are "part of a program conducted by the People's Liberation Army—and specifically, FMMU or associated institutions—to send military scientists to the United States on false pretenses with false covers or false statements about their true employment." Evidence exists of "copying or stealing information from American institutions at the direction of military superiors in China" and "the Chinese regime instructing these individuals to destroy evidence and in coordinating efforts."

By any definition, that's espionage. Embattled Americans can expect a surge in this activity following the dismissal of Tang Juan's visa-fraud case.

Lloyd Billingsley is the author of "Yes I Con: United Fakes of America," "Barack 'em Up: A Literary Investigation," "Hollywood Party," and other books. His articles have appeared in many publications, including Frontpage Magazine, City Journal, The Wall Street Journal, and American Greatness. Billingsley serves as a policy fellow with the Independent Institute.

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



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