

EXCLUSIVE CCP VIRUS COVERAGE

How the Chinese Communist Party Endangered the World

The Chinese Communist Party's coverup led to a pandemic that now threatens the lives of people around the globe. What really happened, and what lessons can we learn?

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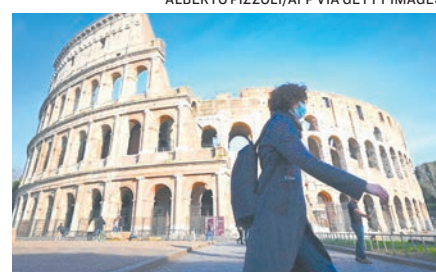
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EDITORIAL

Why The Coronavirus Should Be Called the CCP Virus

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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 "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 we call 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 puts 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, Communist Party officials knew in early December that the CCP 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 "rumours," and employed the regime's vigorous censorship to prevent media coverage and to delete any mention of it from social media.

What might have been contained 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 of all of the crematoria in Wuhan operating 24 hours a day, seven days a week



Medical staff move a patient infected with the CCP virus from an ambulance to a hospital in Seoul, South Korea, on March 9, 2020.

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 they died.

In lying about the danger facing China, the CCP was acting according to its usual script. The regime'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. In the case of SARS, the first response was also denial.

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

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 for the virus. 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 Party 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 Party's arrogance and incompetence, expressed in this viral pandemic.

The name CCP virus also sounds a warning: those nations and individuals close to the Chinese communist regime are the ones suffering the worst effects from the virus, as is seen in the raging infections in the CCP's close ally Iran and in Italy, the only G7 nation to sign on to the One Belt, One Road (formerly known as Belt and Road) initiative. Taiwan and Hong Kong, which are highly skeptical of the CCP, 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 Chinese Communist Party.



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TRUTH and TRADITION

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EDITOR'S NOTE

We trust this finds you and your loved ones well. We live in challenging times right now, and this special edition is intended to explain the reasons behind why we find ourselves in such a situation.

If the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) had shown compassion for the Chinese people and acted honestly and openly, much of China, and the world, could have been spared this COVID-19 pandemic. Now, the regime is waging a propaganda campaign claiming it has been a model in fighting the disease.

This special edition sets the record straight. If the world understands why the virus has wreaked such havoc, then it will understand the need to reject the CCP and its contagion of lies, selfishness, and lust for power.

We hope you enjoy this special edition and share it with others.

ABOUT US

The Epoch Times is a media organization dedicated to seeking the truth through insightful and independent journalism.

Standing outside of political interests and the pursuit of profit, our starting point and our goal is to create a media for the public benefit, to be truly responsible to society.

We endeavour to educate readers about today's most important topics, seeking to broaden and uplift minds. We believe that rational, balanced debate is key for fostering a healthy democracy and a compassionate society.

As an independent media outlet, we use our freedom to investigate issues overlooked—or avoided—by other media outlets. We seek to highlight solutions and what's good in society rather than what divides us.

We report respectfully, compassionately, and rigorously.

We stand against the destruction wrought by communism, including the harm done to cultures around the world.

We are inspired in this by our own experience. The Epoch Times was founded in 2000 to bring honest and uncensored news to people oppressed by the lies and violence in communist China.

We still believe journalism is a noble vocation, but only when it genuinely seeks to serve its communities and help them to flourish. In all that we do, we will hold ourselves to the highest standards of integrity.

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How Beijing's Coverup Led to a Global Pandemic

NICOLE HAO

THE EPOCH TIMES

The global pandemic now ravaging the world—disrupting everyday life, overwhelming hospital systems, and killing thousands—began as a small outbreak in the central Chinese city of Wuhan.

When 27 people were hospitalized with a mysterious pneumonia in early December 2019, eight doctors tried to warn their colleagues on social media.

When the online posts went viral, they were deleted by censors. Then, local police summoned the doctors for a verbal warning, requiring that they sign a statement promising not to engage in any more “rumour-mongering.”

Thus began the coverup by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) of one of the most deadly outbreaks in recent history.

Revelations from recent medical studies, media investigations, and Chinese government officials themselves illustrate how the CCP's deceit and mismanagement allowed the disease to spread, first across the country, then outside its borders to more than 185 countries and territories.

A recent study published in Science magazine examined data from 375 Chinese cities and estimated that 86 percent of all infections in Wuhan were left undocumented prior to travel restrictions and lockdown measures enacted by local authorities on Jan. 23. This contributed to the virus's quick global spread, the scientists concluded.

Initial Response

In its initial report confirming the presence of a new virus outbreak, the Wuhan Health Commission originally stated that the first patient exhibited symptoms on Dec. 12, 2019. The commission later revised the date to Dec. 8, without explanation. But a study based on data from Wuhan hospitals published in The Lancet medical journal revealed that the first patient presented symptoms on Dec. 1.

The Wuhan Health Commission didn't reveal the outbreak to the public until Dec. 31.

Meanwhile, authorities downplayed the threat of the virus.

In a Jan. 10 interview with the CCP's mouthpiece newspaper People's Daily, Wang Guangfa, one of China's top respiratory specialists within China's National Health Commission, assured the public that the disease could be contained.

Lack of Precautions

The Wuhan government went on with business as usual. The city didn't screen passengers and check body temperatures at airports,



An official in a protective suit checks on an elderly man who collapsed on a street near a hospital in Wuhan on Jan. 30, 2020.

railway stations, intercity coach stations, and maritime passenger terminals until Jan. 14.

The city also allowed large-scale gatherings to go on. The Baibuting residential compound in Jiang'an district organized a large-scale dinner in advance of the Lunar New Year on Jan. 18, with more than 40,000 families participating.

The Wuhan Health Commission didn't reveal the outbreak to the public until Dec. 31. Meanwhile, authorities downplayed the threat of the virus.

Baibuting residents later told The Epoch Times that scores of people contracted COVID-19, the disease caused by the virus, after attending the banquet.

In preparation for Lunar New Year festivities, many Chinese, unaware of the virus's contagiousness, travelled across the country or abroad to spend time with their families. Wuhan's mayor revealed that in the period before the Jan. 23 lockdown, 5 million residents had left the city.

Laurie Garrett, an expert on epidemics and former Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist known for her coverage of the 1995 Ebola outbreak, believes Chinese authorities had the chance to contain the spread in the first week of January.

Human Transmission

Chinese authorities initially denied that the disease could be transmitted between humans. The World Health Organization (WHO), citing Chinese research, stated on Jan. 14 that there was “no clear evidence” of human-to-human transmission.

Days later, on Jan. 20, the Chinese regime finally admitted that the virus was contagious. But authorities knew of the virus's potential to spread much earlier.

In December, a woman who had never visited the Wuhan food market—which authorities initially linked to the outbreak—was diagnosed with the disease after her husband, who worked at the market, contracted the virus. The husband, who died on Jan. 9, was China's first confirmed death related to the virus.

Garrett said that such a “coverup has put the people of China at risk and put the whole world at risk.”

Coverup

From the beginning of the outbreak, the regime under-reported infection and death toll figures.

In mid-January, Wuhan authorities reported just 41 cases as Thailand and Japan reported their first cases of infections—of people who had travelled to Wuhan.

The number of infections in Wuhan, meanwhile, stayed unchanged between Jan. 12 and 16.

Researchers analyzed that given the number of foreign cases at the time, Wuhan infections would be substantially higher than officially reported.

The Epoch Times also obtained internal documents from different local governments in China, revealing how they covered up data.

In Shandong Province, the local Centre for Disease Control (CDC) kept an internal tally of the number of samples that tested positive for the virus during nucleic acid testing. In February, the daily number of samples that tested positive was consistently lower than the officially reported number of cases published by China's National Health Commission.

In Liaoning Province—in the country's northeastern region,

thousands of miles away from the virus epicentre—authorities instructed their city governments to destroy documents and data related to the outbreak.

Officials were also required to sign letters promising that they would delete relevant documents from their personal devices and pledge to not share the contents of the documents with any party.

Most recently, The Epoch Times obtained internal data from the Wuhan Health Commission showing that on March 14, the city found 91 new samples that tested positive during nucleic acid testing. In Wuhan, samples are only taken from a throat swab. Thus, these 91 samples can be understood as 91 new patients.

That day, Chinese authorities reported just four new cases in Wuhan.

Some officials also publicly revealed how Party politics stymied their initial responses to the outbreak.

During a Jan. 28 press conference, the Party boss of Wuhan, Ma Guoqiang, said 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 for testing. Even then, the Hubei CDC only had enough capacity to run about 300 tests per day, he said.

Similarly, Wuhan Mayor Zhou Xianwang blamed his superiors for mismanaging the crisis.

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

“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.

Beijing Using 10,000 Fake or Hijacked Twitter Accounts to Spread Propaganda About Pandemic: Study

FRANK FANG

THE EPOCH TIMES

Beijing is using thousands of fake and hijacked Twitter accounts to carry out its disinformation campaign surrounding the CCP virus, according to a recent study.

New York-based nonprofit media ProPublica tracked more than 10,000 suspected fake and hacked Twitter accounts and found that the accounts have been “involved in a coordinated influence campaign with ties” to the Chinese regime since August 2019.

Many of the accounts, which previously targeted political dissidents and Hong Kong protests, have now begun posting “propaganda and disinformation about the coronavirus outbreak,” said the study, released March 26.

These 10,000 accounts did not act independently. Using computer programs, ProPublica found that the fake accounts were part of an interrelated network of more than 2,000 accounts.

However, ProPublica noted: “The true scale of the influence campaign is likely much bigger; our tracking suggests that the



ProPublica says the true scale of the influence campaign using Twitter is likely much bigger.

accounts we identified comprise only a portion of the operation.”

Tactics

The fake accounts sought to build “momentum for particular storylines,” ProPublica explained. First, central accounts, those with “more legitimate-looking histories,” would make eye-catching posts. Then, other more obviously fake accounts would interact with the posts, such as reposting or leaving positive comments.

Whether it was about the Hong Kong protests or the current virus outbreak, these posts used hashtags to “gain visibility for an account that had few followers.”

Sometimes, “posts would use hashtags unique to the influence

network, presumably to try to make them trend on Twitter,” ProPublica added.

Some of the accounts reviewed by ProPublica have since been suspended by Twitter.

Links to the Chinese Regime

ProPublica showed that Beijing had influence over many of these accounts.

For example, it pointed out that the influence network “suddenly shifted its focus to the coronavirus epidemic” on Jan. 29, six days after authorities imposed a lockdown in Wuhan, the epicentre of the virus outbreak.

That same day, OneSight, a Beijing-based internet marketing company with connections to the Chinese regime, announced the launch of a new app that would track virus-related information and help “transmit the correct voice of China” to the world.

The company's CEO previously worked at the Beijing city foreign propaganda department. Its clients include state media outlets and regime-friendly firms like Huawei and Alibaba.

Last year, ProPublica obtained a copy of a contract won by OneSight

to boost the Twitter following of state-owned news agency China News Service. According to the Jamestown Foundation, the agency also “covertly runs overseas media organizations.”

This agency is the international media arm of the Overseas Chinese Affairs Bureau, an office in charge of influencing overseas Chinese. This office in turn is run by the United Front Work Department, a Party organ dedicated to spreading Beijing's agenda inside and outside China.

“Our examination of an interlocking group of accounts within our data linked the effort to OneSight,” ProPublica added.

Many of the posts expressing approval for Beijing were made by fake accounts using the same text published by Chinese state-run media.

“Comment texts were often lifted word-for-word from state editorials, which have long served as political lodestars for government agencies and party officials,” ProPublica said.

ProPublica also said that in some instances, suspected Chinese operatives would offer influential Chinese-speaking Twitter users cash in exchange for posting messages favourable to Beijing.

21 Million Fewer Cellphone Users in China May Suggest a High CCP Virus Death Toll

NICOLE HAO
THE EPOCH TIMES

The number of Chinese cellphone users dropped by 21 million in the past three months, Beijing authorities announced in late March. Deaths due to the CCP virus may have contributed to the high number of account closings.

Cellphones are an indispensable part of life in China.

"The digitization level is very high in China. People can't survive without a cellphone," Tang Jingyuan, a U.S.-based China affairs commentator, told The Epoch Times on March 21. "Dealing with the government for pensions and social security, buying train tickets, shopping ... no matter what people want to do, they are required to use cellphones.

"The Chinese regime requires all Chinese to use their cellphones to generate a health code. Only with a green health code are Chinese allowed to move in China now. It's impossible for a person to cancel his cellphone."

On Dec. 1, 2019, China introduced mandatory facial scans to confirm the identity of anyone who registers a phone. As early as Sept. 1, 2010, all cellphone users were required to register phones with their real identification, enabling the state to monitor people's speech via its large-scale monitoring system.

Furthermore, people's bank accounts and social security accounts are bundled with their cellphone plans; apps on Chinese phones check SIM cards against the state's database to make sure the number belongs to the user.

Beijing first launched cellphone-based health codes on March 10. All people in China must now install a cellphone app and register their personal health information. Then the app can generate a QR code, which appears in three colours to classify the user's health level. Red means the person has an infectious disease, yellow means the person might have one, and green means the person doesn't.

Beijing claimed the health codes are intended to prevent the spread of the CCP (Chinese Communist Party) virus, commonly known as the novel coronavirus.

21 Million Cellphone Users

On March 19, China's Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MIIT) announced the number of phone users in each province in February. Compared with the previous announcement, which was released on Dec. 18, 2019, for November 2019 data, both cellphone and landline users dropped dramatically. In the same period the year before, the number of users increased.

The number of cellphone users decreased from 1.600957 billion to 1.579927 billion, a drop of 21.03 million. The number of landline users decreased from 190.83 million to 189.99 million, a drop of 840,000.

In the previous February, the number increased. According to MIIT, the number of cellphone users increased in February 2019 from 1.5591 billion to 1.5835 billion, which is 24.37 million more. The number of landline users increased from 183.477 million to 190.118 million, which is 6.641 million more.

According to China's National Bureau of Statistics, the country's population at the end of 2019 was 4.67 million larger than in 2018, reaching 1.40005 billion.

The 2020 decrease in landline users may be due to the nationwide quarantine in February, during which small businesses were shut down. But the decrease in cellphone users can't be explained in this way.

According to the operation data of all three Chinese cellphone carriers, phone accounts increased in December 2019 but dropped steeply in 2020.

China Mobile is the largest carrier, holding about 60 percent of the Chinese cellphone market. It reported that it gained 3.732 million more accounts in December 2019, but lost 0.862 million in January 2020 and 7.254 million in February 2020.

China Mobile's performance in the same months in 2019 was markedly different; it gained 2.411 million more accounts in January 2019 and 1.091 million more in February 2019.

China Telecom is the second-largest carrier, holding about 21 percent of the market. It gained 1.18 million users in December 2019, but lost 0.43 million users in January 2020 and 5.6 million users in February 2020.



NICOLAS ASFOURI/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

In 2019, it gained 4.26 million in January and 2.96 million in February.

China Unicom, which hasn't yet published the data for February, shares the same experience as the other two telecoms in January 2020 and in early 2019. The company lost 1.186 million users in January 2020, but gained 1.962 million users in February 2019 and 2.763 million users in January 2019.

China allows each adult to apply for at most five cellphone numbers. Since Feb. 10, the majority of Chinese students have taken online classes with a cellphone number due to their schools being ordered to stay closed. These students' accounts are under their parents' names, which means some parents needed to open a new cellphone account in February.

Analyzing the Numbers

The big question is whether the dramatic drop in cellphone accounts reflects the account closings of those who have died due to the CCP virus.

"It's possible that some migrant workers had two cellphone numbers before. One is from their hometown, and the other is from the city they work in. In February, they might close the number in the city they work in because they couldn't go there," Tang said. Typically, migrant workers would have gone to their home city for the Chinese New Year in January, and then travel restrictions would have prevented them from returning to the city where they held a job.

However, because there is a basic monthly fee to hold a cellphone account in China, the majority of migrant workers—the lowest income group—are likely to only have one cellphone account.

China had 288.36 million migrant workers as of April 2019, according to the Chinese National Bureau of Statistics.

On March 17, Meng Wei, spokesman of China's National Development and Reform Commission, said at a monthly press conference in Beijing that except for Hubei, all provinces reported that more than 90 percent of their businesses resumed operations. In Zhejiang, Shanghai, Jiangsu, Shandong, Guangxi, and Chongqing, almost all businesses resumed production.

If both the number of migrant workers and the level of employment are accurate, more than 90 percent of migrant workers have gone back to work.

The economic dislocation caused by shutdowns in China may have also led some people who have an extra cellphone to cancel it. With business poor or stopped, they may not want to carry the extra expense.

"At present, we don't know the details of the data. If only 10 percent of the cellphone accounts were closed because the users died because of the CCP virus, the death toll would be 2 million," Tang said.

The official death toll doesn't line up with what can otherwise be determined about the situation there.

Activities in the outbreak epicentre of Hubei Province seem to contradict the

▲ A security guard reads his cellphone while guarding the entrance of a nearly empty shopping mall in Beijing on Feb. 27, 2020.

“The digitization level is very high in China. People can't survive without a cellphone.”

TANG JINGYUAN
U.S.-based China affairs commentator

reported death toll in China. The seven funeral homes in the city of Wuhan were reported to be burning bodies 24 hours a day, seven days a week in late January. Since Feb. 16, Hubei has used 40 mobile cremators, each capable of burning five tons of medical waste and bodies a day.

Lacking data, the true death toll in China is a mystery. The cancellation of 21 million cellphones provides a data point that suggests the actual number may be far higher than the official number.

What People Are Saying About The Epoch Times

“I first learned about damage by the new, aggressive Wuhan virus from The Epoch Times. Kudos to ET for doing what we pay the departments of health billions of dollars to do.”

DR. SHAWN WHATLEY
PAST PRESIDENT OF THE ONTARIO MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

“Over the years, I have watched with growing admiration, amazement, and awe as The Epoch Times has gone from being a modest niche voice at its beginnings, growing in consequence until it is now Canada's most important newspaper. That's not a statement I make lightly. Legacy media are dying, but readership and an increasingly impressive stable of writers are flocking to your standard. And no wonder: week after week, other media repeat the washed-out establishment view, while you present a fresh take, full of the urgency and integrity of those who, having escaped repression, treasure the freedom to speak truth. Because of that commitment, you constantly scoop legacy media and get the story. I'm proud to have been a reader from the beginning. Keep it up and stay true to your mission!”

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TRUTH AND TRADITION

Timeline of CCP Coverup and Canada, Taiwan Actions

When Health Minister Patty Hajdu was asked by a reporter during a press conference if the number of COVID-19 cases and deaths coming out of China can be trusted, she replied that Ottawa has no reason to believe China's numbers are falsified.

The question was raised on April 2 in light of a Bloomberg report saying U.S. intelligence officials have advised the White House that Beijing covered up the extent of the CCP virus outbreak in China.

Hajdu said that Ottawa relies on the World Health Organization (WHO) for coordinating the collection of data from other countries. When the reporter asked whether WHO's numbers can be trusted if China's can't, Hajdu accused the reporter of fuelling conspiracy theories.

Hajdu's response comes at a time when an increasing number of news reports show that the Chinese regime

hasn't been forthcoming about the outbreak, costing the world precious time in combating the spread of the virus early on, and commentaries criticizing WHO for its praise of Beijing and repeating positions favourable to the regime.

British media recently reported that Prime Minister Boris Johnson has been advised by scientists that the number of cases of infection may have been downplayed by a factor of 15 to 40 times.

And U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has said that Beijing wasted "valuable days at the front end" of the outbreak, noting that a similar situation could unfold again "if we don't get to the bottom of this."

The timeline below chronicles the early stages of the CCP virus outbreak in China and the regime's coverup, and contrasts some of the measures

taken by Taiwan and Canada.

Despite being next door to China and having a notably higher population density than Canada, Taiwan has had significantly fewer cases compared to Canada.

As of April 3, Canada, with a population of 38 million, had about 12,000 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and over 150 deaths. Taiwan, with a population of 24 million, had about 350 cases of infection and 5 deaths.

The actions Taiwan took to control the spread of the virus include stopping all travel from China in the early days of the outbreak, enforcing a mandatory two-week quarantine for all those who recently entered Taiwan, and using big-data analysis to track potential carriers of the virus. Authorities also banned the export of face masks and took early action to ensure a steady supply of personal protective equipment.

Taiwan Actions

Canada refused to impose any travel restrictions on China—which drew praise from Beijing—and until recently there were no restrictions at the Canadian border. Canadian authorities also shipped 16 tonnes of personal protective equipment to China in early February, while health professionals are now reporting a shortage of protective equipment.

Asked why Canada wasn't imposing restrictions on travel from China, Ottawa cited advice from Canadian health officials and WHO.

Canada's Chief Public Health Officer Dr. Theresa Tam, who has served as an adviser for WHO, also cited the organization's advice as justification for not imposing travel restrictions on China, saying, "Having measures that very negatively affect a certain country that's trying very hard to do its best can impede

whether this country in the future will ever share anything transparently with others. China posted the virus genome very quickly. What are they getting out of it? I think the idea is to support China."

In the early days of the outbreak, WHO advised against imposing travel restrictions on China, with Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus expressing "respect and gratitude to China for what it's doing," and saying WHO "opposes any restrictions for travel and trade or other measures against China."

Wu Se-chih, adjunct assistant professor at the Taipei College of Maritime Technology, told The Epoch Times that WHO "has been taking China's side" and that this has had dangerous consequences. "The reality is that the pandemic has become serious all over the world," Wu said.



Police talk to a driver near the U.S. border in Saint-Bernard-de-Lacolle, Que., on March 28, 2020.

'We Missed the Boat' on Containing COVID-19, Senator Says

MICHAEL WING
THE EPOCH TIMES

As long-time Conservative senator says Canada is suffering the consequences of being slow to close the border and failing to implement strict screening procedures amidst the COVID-19 pandemic—moves he recommended in early January.

"I thought at the time—and now history has proven that I was on the right side—that we should have created a bubble for Canada back in January and protected our borders from the importation of this virus," Leo Housakos told The Epoch Times.

"I mean, it's only logical if you're trying to contain a virus ... When it's all said and done, we missed the boat on that."

In January and February, Housakos adds, he was also among the many parliamentarians who called for a ban on flights between Canada and China—where the outbreak began—as well as flights from Iran and Italy, both of which have been hit hard by the pandemic.

But those calls were ignored by the government, he said. In early February, Ottawa drew praise from a spokesperson for China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs for not following the Trump administration's move to enact a travel ban.

"[Some] Western governments, for whatever reason, do not want to hurt the feelings of the Chinese government," Housakos said.

On March 16, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau finally announced that Canada's border would be closed to all foreign nationals except U.S. citizens, with flights restricted to four major airports with adequate screening capacity. On March 28, flights were banned for anyone with symptoms of COVID-19.

"They made a full flip-flop ... when they realized that we were actually importing the virus through our airports and through flights not just from China, and not just from Iran, not just from Italy, but from airport hubs around the world. Because viruses, of course, are very, very fluid and they're very, very mobile, and they're very transmissible," Housakos said. "There was a lax approach in January and February, and there was a lax approach up until mid-March, when everyone pressed the alarm button."

Beijing has been widely accused of covering up the coronavirus outbreak, which appeared in Wuhan in early December but wasn't publicly admitted to by the regime until six weeks later—giving the virus ample time to spread across China and around the world. Doctors who tried to warn of the danger were silenced and charged with "spreading rumours."

The origin of the virus has so far gone unexplained. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has floated several different theories, the latest being that the U.S. military introduced the virus to China—widely seen as an attempt to avoid blame.

This prompted U.S. President Donald Trump to push back by referring to it as the "Chinese virus." The Epoch Times now refers to the novel coronavirus, which causes the disease COVID-19, as the CCP virus because the Party's coverup and mismanagement allowed the virus to spread throughout China and create a global pandemic.

"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," an Epoch Times editorial states.

"The truth of the matter is you can't rely on information that comes out of China," said Housakos. "There's no doubt that if the Chinese were a reliable ally and partner, I believe we would have been better equipped in understanding the severity of the problem, and collectively the world [would have been able to] take measures to protect people and resolve the problem."

2019

- NOV. 17** **The first person is infected**—a 55-year-old from Hubei Province—according to the South China Morning Post, citing government documents.
- DEC. 1** **The earliest documented patient**, a man in his 70s who was bedridden from a stroke, falls ill. He has no connection with the Wuhan seafood market. This case is one week earlier than the official account, which says the first patient appeared on Dec. 8.
- MID-DECEMBER** **First evidence appears of human-to-human transmission** among close contacts, according to a study published in The New England Journal of Medicine on Jan. 29.
- DEC. 30** **Dr. Ai Fen**, a director of the emergency department at **Wuhan Central Hospital**, shares a report of a contagious, SARS-like virus in her department group chat on WeChat, a Chinese social media platform. She is later reprimanded by her hospital for "spreading rumours."
- DEC. 30** **Dr. Li Wenliang of Wuhan** shares the report with his former medical school classmates on WeChat, warning them to take precautionary measures.

2020

- JAN. 1** **A Hubei Provincial Health Commission** official tells a genomics company to stop testing virus samples and to destroy all existing samples.
- JAN. 2** **Government-run Wuhan virology lab** obtains the full virus genome. This information is not made public until seven days later.
- JAN. 3** **Local police in China** call in Dr. Li Wenliang and reprimand him for "rumour mongering."
- JAN. 5** **Taiwan CDC** starts monitoring all individuals who had travelled to Wuhan over the last 14 days in case they have illness symptoms.
- JAN. 7** **Li contracts the virus** while treating an infected patient. He later dies on Feb. 7. **Chinese leader Xi Jinping** gets involved in response by issuing the first containment order. This isn't made public until February.
- JAN. 9** **WHO "advises against"** the application of any travel or trade restrictions on China.
- JAN. 9** **Xu Jianguo**, a lead expert in the response team, tells Chinese state media that researchers mapped the full virus sequence two days earlier, and believe it's a new coronavirus.
- JAN. 11** **Chinese health authorities** share the genome sequence with WHO.
- JAN. 13** **Thailand confirms its first infection**—a Chinese tourist who travelled from Wuhan—in the first known case outside China.
- JAN. 14** **WHO** says that Chinese authorities had found **no clear evidence of human-to-human transmission**. It also notes "limited human-to-human transmission, potentially among families" is possible.
- JAN. 21** **First case of infection reported in Taiwan.** **Border control** procedures changed. People travelling from high-risk areas quarantined at home for 14 days. **Government announces** a ban on the export of face masks.
- JAN. 22** **Canadian Health Minister Patty Hajdu** confirms there are no plans to impose travel restrictions on travellers from China.
- JAN. 23** **Canada announces** passengers arriving at major airports will undergo additional questioning to find out if they have travelled to Wuhan. **People showing symptoms** are asked to voluntarily self-isolate for 14 days.
- JAN. 25** **Wuhan imposes a lockdown.** By then, around **5 million** people had left the city without being screened for the virus. A study published in Science magazine on March 16 estimates **86 percent** of all infections were undocumented prior to the Jan. 23 travel restrictions.
- JAN. 27** **Canada's first case of infection** is reported in a man in Toronto who had recently travelled to Wuhan.
- JAN. 27** **Authorities in Hubei Province** say they will free up 100,000 hospital beds for patients. **Wuhan Mayor Zhou Xianwang** concedes that disclosures of the outbreak were not timely, but attempts to shift blame to the central government, saying he needed permission from higher-ups before releasing information. **Beijing extends the New Year holiday** to Feb. 2 and closes schools indefinitely.
- JAN. 27** **Taiwan combines individuals' past 14-day travel history** with their **health card**, enabling the tracking of individuals at high risk because of recent travel to affected areas.
- JAN. 28** **Taiwan requires** all those travelling from China to go into **mandatory quarantine**.
- JAN. 30** **The WHO declares** the outbreak a **global health emergency**. **WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus** says "WHO doesn't recommend, and actually opposes, any restrictions for travel and trade or other measures against China," while also praising China for its response to the outbreak.
- JAN. 31** **The United States declares a public health emergency**, imposes travel restrictions on those who have been in China in the past 14 days.
- FEB. 3** **A spokesperson for Beijing's foreign ministry praises Canada** for not imposing travel restrictions on China, while rebuking the United States for its travel restrictions.
- FEB. 5** **In response to questions** from opposition MPs on travel restrictions, **Canada's Chief Public Health Officer Dr. Theresa Tam** reiterates that "WHO advises against any kind of travel and trade restrictions." She adds that "having measures that very negatively affect a certain country that's trying very hard to do its best can impede whether this country in the future will ever share anything transparently with others. China posted the virus genome very quickly. What are they getting out of it? I think the idea is to support China."
- FEB. 6** **Over 50 countries**, including Taiwan, Australia, and the United States have announced travel restrictions on China. **A Chinese spokesperson** lashes out at countries restricting travel over the outbreak, saying "we deplore and oppose those countries who went against WHO's professional recommendations."
- FEB. 9** **Foreign Affairs Minister François-Philippe Champagne's** department announces that Canada has deployed 16 tonnes of personal protective equipment such as masks and gloves to China.
- FEB. 17** **Canada's Health Minister Patty Hajdu** says "China has been very open. Now some will say, 'Were they open enough?' and 'How fast were they open?' But what we know is that within a week or so they were letting the World Health Organization and therefore all of the partner countries know that they had an outbreak on their hands."
- FEB. 29** **WHO reiterates** that it advises "against the application of travel or trade restrictions to countries experiencing COVID-19 outbreaks."
- MARCH 13** **Ottawa announces** that international flights will be limited to specific airports. **Canadian Health Minister Patty Hajdu** says, "Canadians think we can stop this at the border. But what we see is a global pandemic, which means that border measures are highly ineffective and, in some cases, can create harm." **Prime Minister Justin Trudeau** says, "A number of weeks ago, in the beginnings, there were discussions on whether or not we should entirely close our borders to China the way the United States did. We did not, and we were able to manage it in a way that allowed for control and non-spread of the virus, that gives us confidence that our public health officials are giving us the right recommendations for Canada."
- MARCH 16** **Canada severely restricts international flights**, refusing entry to international visitors and allowing only Americans, diplomats, and flight crews. **Two days later, Canada and the United States** announce the closure of the border to non-essential traffic.
- MARCH 18** **U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo** says the Chinese Communist Party covered up details about the virus outbreak, warning that a similar situation could unfold "if we don't get to the bottom of this."
- MARCH 22** **Ontario doctors and nurses** report a shortage of personal protective equipment for health workers, calling it "an urgent priority."
- APRIL 2** **Canada's Health Minister Patty Hajdu** says Ottawa has no reason to believe Beijing's infection and death rates are falsified, and adds that Canada relies on WHO to coordinate the collection of data from various countries. When a reporter asks whether WHO's numbers can be trusted if China's aren't reliable, she accuses the reporter of fuelling conspiracy theories.
- APRIL 7** **U.S. President Donald Trump** says in a tweet: "The W.H.O. really blew it. For some reason, funded largely by the United States, yet very China centric. We will be giving that a good look. Fortunately I rejected their advice on keeping our borders open to China early on. Why did they give us such a faulty recommendation?"

ALTA/GETTY IMAGES; SHUTTERSTOCK/KEEPT WIND; KOTO

Editorial: Where Ties With Communist China Are Close, the CCP Virus Follows

Severe COVID-19 outbreaks highlight various countries' entanglements with Beijing

EPOCH TIMES EDITORIAL BOARD

In the final weeks of 2019, a novel coronavirus outbreak occurred in the city of Wuhan, in central China. As the world welcomed a new decade, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) opted to suppress information about the emerging crisis until it could no longer remain hidden.

Now, a few months after mainland Chinese authorities acknowledged the outbreak and the existence of the contagious virus, the crisis has spread around the globe, assuming epidemic proportions in multiple regions. The number of infected beyond China's borders is now over a million, with tens of thousands having succumbed to the virus. The stock market has plunged as experts warn of a possible economic recession.

A variety of factors have facilitated the rapid spread of the CCP (Chinese Communist Party) virus, commonly known as the novel coronavirus. Globalization has brought the peoples of the world into closer contact, increasing the risks of a worldwide pandemic.

Yet the early heaviest-hit regions outside China, which also contributed to the global spread of the pandemic, all share a common thread: close or lucrative relations with the communist regime in Beijing.

Medical Crisis, Political Peril

Under political or economic influence from the People's Republic of China (PRC), many foreign entities and politicians, including international organizations, have been swayed to the extent that they take the side of the CCP, accommodating the pernicious communist system and turning a blind eye to unspeakable crimes committed by the mainland Chinese authorities.

Recent decades have seen the PRC greatly expand its power in economic and geopolitical affairs. Deceiving the world with a narrative of "China's peaceful rise," the communist regime has lured foreign governments and international firms to invest in China's rapidly developing markets.

But the CCP has never abandoned its ideological tenets of class struggle and totalitarian control. In the 30 years since the Tiananmen Square massacre, and from the start in 1999 of the persecution campaign against the spiritual practice Falun Gong to today's systematic persecution of all faiths and independent thought, the state of human rights in China has only worsened.



▲ A tourist wearing a respiratory mask to protect against the spread of the CCP virus walks past the closed Colosseum monument in Rome, Italy, on March 10, 2020.

It is apparent that the coronavirus pandemic is a calamity linked with the CCP and its 70 years of brutal rule.

The true nature of the CCP and communism has long been known to readers of The Epoch Times. Fifteen years ago, The Epoch Times published the editorial series "Nine Commentaries on the Communist Party," igniting a grassroots movement in China to reject communism. Since 2004, more than 350 million people have renounced their ties to the Party and its affiliated youth organizations.

Seen in conjunction with the CCP-hijacked geopolitical environment of today, the geographical distribution of the COVID-19 pandemic highlights the ultimate peril facing those who align themselves with the spectre of communism.

Outside China, the spread of the virus was initially most severe in Italy, Iran, South Korea, and Japan. Not all of these countries are located near China, but all have extensive interests in the PRC.

Italy, at one point the most heavily affected country outside China, was the first (and only) G7 nation to sign onto the PRC's Belt and Road Initiative. In an attempt to prop up its weakening economy, Italy has also sought to capture the Chinese market for selling its luxury goods.

With the outbreak forcing Rome to put the country under lockdown, such prospects have been put on hold.

Italy also has signed scores of sister-city agreements with China, the cities of Milan, Venice, and Bergamo among them. These are the areas hardest-hit by the virus.

In the Middle East, Iran experienced a surge in the number of infections, particularly among government officials.

The Iranian regime has had a comprehensive strategic partnership with the Chinese regime since 2016, and its ties beginning years before that. In violation of international sanctions, Iran has imported embargoed materials from China, while continuing to sell oil to the PRC. The Islamic Republic allowed flights in and out of four major Chinese cities until the end of February.

On-the-ground footage taken by Iranian citizens is reminiscent of the tragedy that played out in Wuhan, with overworked medical staff, despondent patients, and body bags lining hospital floors.

In South Korea, the public became increasingly critical of President Moon Jae-in for refusing to ban Chinese tourists in general and instead only barring entry to those who recently travelled to Hubei Province, ground zero of the outbreak in China.

More than 1.4 million people have signed a petition to the Presidential Blue House calling for Moon to be impeached. The petition text reads, "Seeing Moon Jae-in's response to the new epidemic, we feel that he is more of a President for China than Korea."

History's Lessons

Despite its proximity to, and extensive business with, mainland China,

Taiwan has seen a relatively small number of infections.

On Jan. 26, Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore identified Taiwan as having the second-highest risk of epidemic spread outside China. However, robust prevention measures have proven effective.

Taiwan officials began to board planes and assess passengers on Dec. 31, 2019, after Wuhan authorities first confirmed the outbreak. In early February, Taiwan banned entry to foreign nationals who had travelled to the PRC. As of March 31, there were just over 320 confirmed cases and five deaths in Taiwan. The self-ruled island has been held as a model for epidemic control, despite being repeatedly denied participation in the CCP-friendly World Health Organization.

As China affairs commentator Heng He put it, Taiwan has a clear understanding of the communist regime and may be the only state that learned the lessons of the 2003 SARS outbreak, which also began in China.

In Hong Kong, which has seen millions of residents stand up to Beijing's encroachment on the city's freedoms and rule of law since last year, the outbreak has been similarly subdued.

By contrast, Japan, albeit not geographically aligned with the PRC, placed profit over prudence. With millions of Chinese travelling to Japan for shopping and sightseeing annually, the country was slow to close its borders to mainland arrivals. Japan was among one of the first countries to report cases outside China, and the number of infected increased to more than 9,000 locally.

Recently, the CCP has attempted to portray its draconian handling of the epidemic as a triumph for the Party's authoritarian system. But the Chinese historical record is more sobering. Throughout the centuries, plagues and other calamities signalled the downfall of imperial dynasties.

Taking history as a mirror, as ancient Chinese scholars did, it is apparent that the coronavirus pandemic is a calamity linked with the CCP and its 70 years of brutal rule. And today, the world is an interconnected community. Any country, community, or organization that keeps too close to the CCP and falls for its deception will taste the bitter fruits of that involvement.

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

US Lawmaker Calls for International Court Trial Against China for Failing to Contain Virus Outbreak

FRANK FANG THE EPOCH TIMES

U.S. Congressman Jim Banks is calling on the State Department to bring a legal case against China at the United Nations' International Court of Justice over the regime's mishandling of the virus outbreak.

"If China's leaders hadn't become embarrassed by the outbreak and tried to cover up its spread, the world may have had a better chance to prepare for this or even contain it in Wuhan or China. Instead, we have a pandemic," said Banks in an April 8 statement.

The Republican congressman pointed to examples of Chinese authorities silencing doctors and journalists in late December when they tried to warn the public about a new form of pneumonia that emerged in Wuhan.

Chinese ophthalmologist Li Wenliang is the most high-profile example. After posting about the new pneumonia on Chinese social media, Li was summoned to a local police station for "rumour-mongering" and forced to sign



U.S. Congressman Jim Banks on Capitol Hill on March 27, 2019.

a "confession" statement in early January.

Li died the following month after contracting the CCP (Chinese Communist Party) virus, commonly known as the novel coronavirus, from an infected patient.

Another misstep happened on Dec. 31 last year, when the Wuhan Municipal Health Commission falsely said the disease was a "seasonable flu" with no risk of human-to-human transmission.

Authorities claimed the virus was "preventable and controllable."

On Jan. 14, the World Health Organization repeated Beijing's claim that there was "no clear evidence of human-to-human transmission" of the virus.

"China shoulders most of that blame. Rather than succumb to the propaganda and spin of Chinese officials, the world must hold them accountable for mishandling this outbreak. If the United Nations cannot even do that, it has completely lost its purpose," Banks said.

Bill to Open Potential Lawsuits

Meanwhile, another Republican congressman has introduced a bill that would make it easier for Americans to bring legal action against the Chinese regime for its role in causing the global pandemic.

The regime currently enjoys protection from lawsuits filed in U.S. courts under the doctrine of sovereign immunity, a legal rule that insulates countries from being sued in other countries' courts. There are, however, exceptions to this rule found in the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act (FSIA).

“The world must hold them accountable for mishandling this outbreak.”

U.S. REP. JIM BANKS

The Stop COVID Act, introduced by Rep. Lance Gooden, would amend FSIA to provide another exception to immunity for any state that is found "intentionally or unintentionally, to have discharged a biological weapon ... in the United States or such discharge results in the bodily injury of [a] United States citizen."

The legislation would pave the way for the U.S. Department of Justice to investigate the source of the virus, and file claims against the Chinese regime in the United States, the statement said.

Several lawsuits have already been launched in the United States in domestic courts against the Chinese regime, seeking to hold it liable for the damage the CCP virus has caused to Americans.

One of them is a class action filed by Florida law firm The Berman Law Group in March. In a joint statement issued on April 3 with Lucas Compton, a Washington-based lobbying firm hired to do PR for the lawsuit, the firm welcomed Gooden's bill, saying it would "provide additional firepower to our legal position."

With Myriad Links to Chinese Regime, New York Is Now America's CCP Virus Epicentre

TIAN YUN

THE EPOCH TIMES

Commentary

Outbreaks of the CCP virus around the world have been strongly correlated with the affected regions' ties to the Chinese communist regime.

In the United States, infection rates in Washington state—known for being the first port of entry for trade goods coming from the People's Republic of China (PRC) following the United States' establishment of diplomatic relations with Beijing in the late 1970s—were the highest nationwide as late as March 16, when it had more than 900 out of roughly 4,300 confirmed cases.

Since mid-March, however, Washington has been overtaken and far eclipsed by New York state in terms of confirmed cases. On March 20, Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced a 10-point plan to put "New York State on PAUSE."

At the time of writing, more than 220,000 New Yorkers have been sickened, making up a third of the 670,000 cases across the country. The in-state death toll passed 1,000 on March 29, and is now over 16,000.

Reddening the Big Apple

Early outbreaks of the virus outside China were most pronounced in countries with extensive economic or strategic relations with the PRC, such as Italy, Iran, and South Korea. Lured by trade benefits or caving in to Beijing's pressure, governments and officials in many regions have taken accommodating or even supportive stances on the Chinese regime.

Such attitudes likely fuelled acceptance of CCP propaganda regarding the virus, and made local authorities reluctant to take protective measures, increasing those countries' and regions' vulnerability during the critical first stages in the epidemic.

In recent decades, the CCP has established a formidable nexus of "soft power" in New York. China is the state's biggest trade partner outside North America, and the PRC (including Hong Kong) forms New York's largest export market. Bilateral investments are similarly large, with New York being one of the prime destinations for Chinese capital.

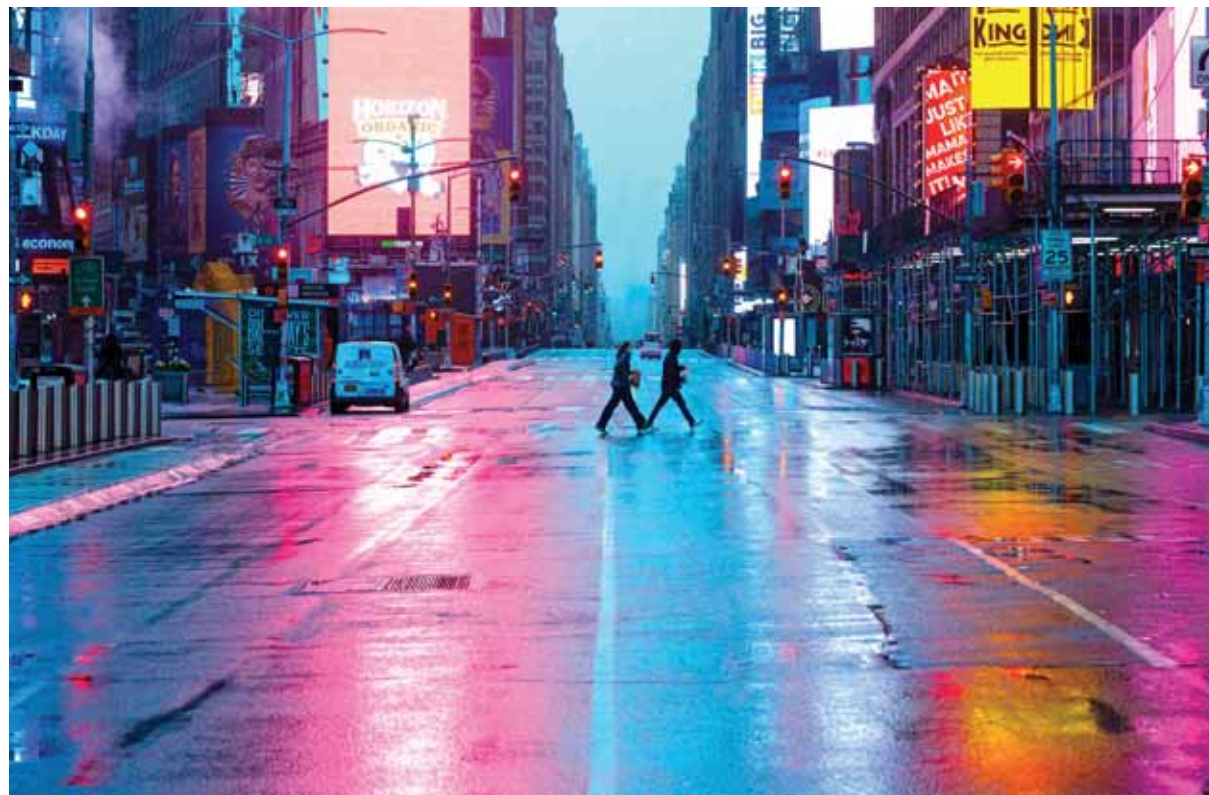
The significant volume of trade and investment has had wide-ranging effects in New York politics and society, from PRC-friendly attitudes among elected officials to Beijing's incremental subversion of the local Chinese-American community. By extension, New York's economic and cultural importance means that the PRC's influence there is felt throughout the rest of the United States.

Making Capital Serve the Communist Party

Wall Street is one of the major conduits through which the PRC exercises its soft power abroad, and has long played the "dove" in influencing Washington's China policy.

In 1999, then-premier Zhu Rongji visited New York, where he met with a number of Wall Street executives to discuss China's potential membership in the World Trade Organization. President Bill Clinton thereafter supported Beijing's entry into the WTO, which it joined in December 2001. Economic relations continued to strengthen as the United States became embroiled in the war on terror.

Robert Kuhn, a financial executive and public intellectual, has had his writings appear in many Chinese



An empty Times Square in New York City amid the COVID-19 pandemic on April 13, 2020.

state-run media. In 2005, Kuhn published a fawning biography of former CCP leader Jiang Zemin, despite Jiang being responsible for enormous crimes against humanity and his "make-a-fortune-while-keeping-a-low-profile" policies that encouraged corruption on an unprecedented scale.

In later years, pressure by Wall Street lobbyists influenced the decisions of presidents George Bush and Barack Obama to remove China from the list of currency manipulators. In August 2019, following an escalation in the Sino-U.S. trade war, the Trump administration re-designated China a currency manipulator.

On April 25, 2019, Prague Security Studies Institute chairman Roger W. Robinson Jr. warned of the worrying degree to which the CCP had penetrated the U.S. financial market in a speech made to the Committee on the Present Danger: China.

Robinson noted that more than 1,000 Chinese companies were listed in the three major American stock exchanges, with more than 650 China-based firms listed on the New York Stock Exchange alone. These include Chinese state-run companies, many of which play roles in the CCP's human rights abuses, mass surveillance, and military industry. Being listed in U.S. stock indices means these companies receive investment via the stock portfolios of millions of Americans.

Many Wall Street investors' affinity with Beijing became especially apparent following the start of the U.S.-China trade war in June 2018.

He Qinglian, a U.S.-based Chinese economist, wrote that the recognition of A shares of Chinese corporations by three major financial indices, Morgan Stanley Capital International, FTSE Russell, and Bloomberg, in 2018 and 2019—after the start of the U.S.-China trade war—was equivalent to endorsing the Chinese regime's unfavourable bonds. Thanks to Wall Street, the resulting influx of foreign capital thus helped allay the PRC's domestic economic troubles and the recent pressures brought about by the trade war.

Buying Political Power

Chinese economic inroads gave the CCP many opportunities to win political allies across the United States, particularly in salient regions like New York.

On April 11, 2016, New York lieutenant governor Kathy Hochul and

Zhang Xiangchen, China's commerce ministry's deputy representative of international trade, signed a Memorandum of Understanding to formally establish the China Provinces-U.S. State of New York Trade and Investment Cooperation. The agreement linked New York with six Chinese provinces on various forms of economic and industrial exchange.

In June 2019, the New York State Senate passed a resolution naming Oct. 1—the founding date of the communist regime in 1949—the state's "China Day" so as to commemorate the contributions of ethnic Chinese to New York. A PRC foreign ministry spokesperson praised the move as a "positive" development.

At an evening reception hosted that Sept. 16 by the New York Chinese Consulate to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the PRC's founding, Consul-General Huang Ping delivered remarks praising "socialism with Chinese characteristics" and condemned the ongoing trade war for hurting the economic prospects of both countries. Many New York politicians, entrepreneurs, and representatives from the local Chinese diaspora were in attendance.

Reshaping Society

As late as the mid-1980s, the most prominent Chinese-American organizations in New York were those aligned with Taiwan, officially known as the Republic of China. But as mainland China came to dominate the economic and diplomatic landscape, Taiwan's Blue Sky with a White Sun flag began to disappear from the local Chinatowns, replaced by the five-starred red flag of the PRC.

CCP organizations in New York have established links with the local triad gangs, and sometimes even enable the Party to project its political repression into the United States, Falun Gong being a case in point.

In 1999, the CCP launched an all-out persecution campaign against the Falun Gong spiritual practice and its tens of millions of adherents. The deadly campaign continues to this day.

Groups linked to the extralegal Communist Party commission tasked with overseeing the persecution have been peddling hate speech against the practice in New York's Chinatowns for over a decade. Individual members of these groups have been prosecuted for physically assaulting local Falun Gong adherents.

JOHANNES EISELE/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Vigilance

Having long served as the gateway to America for immigrants and shipping, New York seems uniquely susceptible to the spread of the pandemic. On March 25, Gov. Cuomo said New York "has more cases than other U.S. states ... because we welcome people from across the globe, and we live; move; commune, and do so many other things close to one another."

But in the COVID-19 virus pandemic, globalization isn't the only factor to blame.

Due vigilance and realistic views of the Beijing regime, as demonstrated by the people of Taiwan and Hong Kong, have provided no small measure of inoculation against the outbreak. Despite their proximity to, and extensive trade ties with, mainland China, these two regions did not delay measures to stop the virus. As of early April, the number of infections in either territory has remained in the hundreds.

In South Korea, the authorities were slow to cut down on trade and travel with China. However, knowledge of the epidemic and its seriousness rapidly spread among the public. In January, videos exposing the bleak situation in the virus epicentre of Wuhan were widely viewed and shared by Koreans. Millions of people criticized President Moon Jae-in for placing business above national health.

While South Korea had one of the worst early outbreaks outside China, the combination of public awareness, popular pressure, and civic cooperation seems to have brought the virus under control.

Yet the same vigilance appears sorely lacking in the Empire State, even as the CCP promotes its supposed success in controlling the disease in China, and painting the U.S. response as the epitome of administrative incompetence. The narrative is reinforced by many Western media outlets, in large part because they tend to report the regime's official numbers of confirmed cases and deaths at face value.

On March 18, the New York Times published an article titled "Its Coronavirus Cases Dwindling, China Turns Focus Outward."

The article's subheading echoes the CCP's propaganda: "Beijing is mounting a humanitarian aid blitz in countries struggling with their own outbreaks. In doing so, it's stepping into a role the West once dominated."

A March 19 editorial by the Washington Examiner criticized the Times report as perhaps "the most shameful piece of Chinese disinformation published by any newsroom in the United States since the COVID-19 outbreak first became a story."

"The article parrots China's claim that its daily coronavirus cases have dwindled 'into the single digits,' the Examiner notes. "No attempt is made to verify these numbers. ... With the media acting like this, who even needs the Publicity Department of the Communist Party of China?"

Tian Yun is a U.S.-based China affairs commentator.

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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