

China Is the Big Winner from Our COVID Hysteria

by Conrad Black



The tidal wave of probability, circumstantial evidence of such mass and consistency that it is now almost irrefutable, that the novel coronavirus escaped from the Wuhan Institute of Virology, will alter China's relationship with the world and particularly with the United States.

Accompanied as it is by the increasing volume of evidence that Anthony Fauci, director of the U.S. National Institute for Allergy and Infectious Diseases—a post he has held for 37 years—and chief medical advisor to the president, went to unjustified lengths to deny that the coronavirus was anything but an unforeseeable escapee from a live food market, the unraveling story will ramify very widely. Seen as a whole, it has been an immense strategic victory for the People's Republic of China. This victory is all the more remarkable because it was probably an extraordinary act of improvisation.

There is no reason to believe at this point that the Chinese authorities deliberately manufactured this virus and unleashed

it mindless of the great damage it wrought among China's civilian population. The great preponderance of evidence now is that the coronavirus was indeed manufactured, presumably for the purpose of enhanced research. As not infrequently occurs, it escaped, and while China imposed draconian measures to contain its spread among the Chinese population (and has never published believable figures about the extent of the harm that it did in China) it waited an unconscionable length of time before taking any measures to reduce its spread outside China.

The Chinese government objected, as did leaders of the U.S. Democratic Party, when President Trump stopped direct flights from China to the United States on January 31, 2020.

The campaign of outright misinformation conducted by the World Health Organization (WHO), whose director effectively was fronting for the People's Republic, was much disputed when President Trump made those allegations in March 2020. He has been completely vindicated.

It must be said that the speed and discretion with which the Chinese government moved to protect its own population while effectively promoting the COVID-19 contagion to the world, and then denying that anything of the kind took place while proclaiming that its authoritarian administrative methods were demonstrably superior to those of the West in combating the pandemic, was a remarkable, if cynical, tour de force. China's cool-headed shift from domestic containment of the virus to unctuous and barely contained rejoicing at their success in promoting political chaos and economic disaster throughout the West was a textbook case for how to turn misfortune into comparative triumph (for those countries prepared to dispense so cavalierly with the normal civilities and ethics of international affairs).

No matter how astute they are, the Chinese leaders could not have seen the full proportions of the triumph of their

initiative; they could not possibly have seen that the pandemic would drive President Trump from office. But this is certainly what happened.

Once the Democrats got a glimpse of the proportions of the pandemic and had heard the more prominent members of the scientific community calling for a lockdown, they instantly saw their chance to transform what was, after the first impeachment trial of President Trump in March of last year, the high likelihood of his reelection, into a means to regain the White House.

The customary response to national disasters: a bipartisan bracing determination to see it through under the general tocsin of "We are all in this together," lasted for approximately a week until the Democrats started accusing Trump of mismanaging the issue. In fact, he made a serious error in effectively taking over the committee that he had set up under the vice president, conducting daily press briefings, and allowing his media enemies to turn them into embarrassing and degrading baiting sessions.

Trump also gave ammunition to his enemies by fluctuating in the gravity that he accorded the pandemic, by being drawn into sideshows such as the efficacy of certain therapies. It does him no good now that he has finally been vindicated in the case of hydroxychloroquine. His poorly articulated reflections on the possible utility of combining heat with a cleansing activity enabled House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) and many others falsely to accuse him of favoring ingestion of household detergents and Lysol.

The Democrats and their allies who comprised 95 percent of the national political media and effectively made the campaign on behalf of the absent Democratic candidate, did everything possible to promote hysteria about COVID-19, and to accuse the president of a primitive antagonism to science that amounted to criminally negligent philistinism. In addition to allowing

his press briefings to descend into obnoxious levels of indignity, he was accused of racism by attaching the Chinese origin to the name of the virus, and of complacency in resisting the collective insinuation of the Democratic media and party that COVID-19 was capable of killing absolutely anyone and had assumed proportions reminiscent of deadly plagues of ancient and medieval history.

The first media personality who saw what was coming (and was fired for her foresight) was Fox News reporter Trish Regan, who correctly predicted that the Democrats would use the generation of public hysteria over COVID-19 as their replacement for the Trump-Russia collusion hoax and the spurious impeachment case. Almost all the rest of the media ignored the fact of the 95 percent recovery rate, nearly 99 percent for healthy people under the age of 65, until they had tucked the election away for Biden. All the while, Fauci conducted a personality cult scarcely seen since the days of [Rudolph Valentino](#), and unfortunately not remotely as silent. He appeared everywhere and shouldered the president aside as the most familiar figure in the American media with his whitewash of the Chinese and the WHO, and his assertions that we would never shake hands again, and his ricocheting between not bothering with masks and wearing two of them, even outside.

President Trump led the activity to accelerate development of a vaccine which was always the only durable resolution of the crisis, and he ignored the Fauci-Democratic nonsense of frenetic testing and then tracing those who had been in contact with those who tested positive.

Forgotten now, this testing and contact tracing hysteria was the official wisdom of the Democrats until the generation of a similar public hysteria ceased to be politically useful for them. It is all unwinding now, and the health crisis is passing and the lockdowns have been shown to be excessive and damaging.

Poor numbers in declining unemployment demonstrate that the Democratic effort to inundate the country with an inflationary money supply increase is torquing up inflation without reducing unemployment. The U.S. national political media are now almost totalitarian in their biases but they don't really subscribe to the death wish that currently motivates much of liberal America.

China has won this round so completely that the administration is visibly dazed, and is lashing out at the wrong opponents. The anti-Trump movement was a vast coalition, and pieces are starting to fall out of it. Now that Trump has at least temporarily departed public office, most of the constituent parts of what is now an out-of-control, woke, largely anti-American movement, will peel off as the exposure of its excesses and outrages in the last year become more obvious.

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