

Washington's Wuhan laboratory lie

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In the face of universal scientific consensus on the natural origins of COVID-19, the Biden administration and the US media have doubled down on the lie that the disease was released from a Chinese laboratory.

There is not a shred of truth to this claim. The most recent, and most damning, refutation came from members of the World Health Organization team researching the origins of the pandemic. They announced that the WHO would abandon any investigation into a man-made origin of the disease because there was no evidence to support the claim.

Professor Liang Wannian from Tsinghua University, speaking at the WHO press conference, made clear that the theory that the "virus was engineered by humans" had "already been refuted by the whole scientific community around the world."

As to the claim that the virus escaped from a laboratory by accident, Liang added, "in all the laboratories in Wuhan, there is no existing virus of SARS-CoV-2. If there is no existence of this virus, there will be no way that this virus would be linked."

WHO food safety expert Peter Ben Embarek added that "nowhere previously was this particular virus researched or identified or known."

The WHO scientists' categorical conclusions prompted a furious response by the Biden White House. "We have deep concerns about the way in which the early findings of the COVID-19 investigation were communicated and questions about the process used to reach them," wrote the White House in a statement on February 13.

This marked the open embrace by the Biden administration of what was widely considered the most absurd and outlandish of Trump's conspiracy theories: That COVID-19 was a "weaponized" virus released from a Chinese laboratory. It was promoted by far-right ideologues like White House trade advisor Peter Navarro and chief strategist Stephen Bannon.

In May, when asked if COVID-19 "originated in that Wuhan lab," then-Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said, "There is enormous evidence that that's where this began." In June, Navarro declared that the "Chinese Communist Party... spawned the virus," and called the disease a

"weaponized virus."

Seizing on the Biden White House statement criticizing the WHO, the *Wall Street Journal*, which has served as an outlet for anti-vaccination propaganda, went on the offensive to personally attack the scientists in the WHO delegation, complaining that "the recent WHO trip ended with a propaganda coup for Beijing."

It singled out for condemnation WHO zoologist Peter Daszak, one of the most outspoken members of the team. He recently condemned the *New York Times* for falsely alleging a cover-up by Chinese authorities and correctly pointed out that the "Wuhan lab" conspiracy theory is heavily promoted by the right-wing extremist Falun Gong movement and its publication, the *Epoch Times*.

Why, in the midst of universal scientific consensus, are the US government and media promoting this absurd conspiracy theory?

In the recent period, the US has spun one propaganda campaign after another in an attempt to make the American population hate China and, by extension, the Chinese people. Before the Wuhan lab conspiracy theory, there was the claim that China is carrying out "genocide" against its Muslim population. Before that it was Tibet; before that it was Taiwan.

When COVID-19 first emerged in China, the scenes of mass death and illness prompted outpourings of solidarity in America and internationally. Americans voluntarily sent supplies to China. Symphony orchestras dedicated concerts to its medical workers.

This human impulse to support the suffering of others in their moment of need cut across the aims of the US government, which sees China as the greatest obstacle to its domination of the world.

Hence arose the Trump administration's big lie—that COVID-19 was the "Chinese virus," deliberately inflicted upon the world by the Chinese Communist Party. This explosive claim aimed to debase public consciousness and dehumanize China as the "enemy."

Millions of people voted for Biden with the hope that the new president would reject the racism, xenophobia and militarism of his predecessor. These hopes were misplaced.

Biden, like Trump, speaks for an American financial oligarchy determined to prevent any challenge to its global hegemony, for which it has fought countless wars—and killed millions of people—to secure.

After decades of wars for control of the Middle East, the United States has shifted to what the Trump administration termed “great-power conflict” and, in particular, preparation for war with China.

“The oldest trick of the propagandist is to demonize and dehumanize the hated other or others and make the enemy a faceless object,” wrote one author on the subject of propaganda techniques. “Doing this makes it easier to hurt the opponent.”

A war between the United States and China would involve the deaths of millions of people. A bloodbath on such a scale requires years of preparation—of lie piled upon lie—until the population is conditioned to hate the ‘enemy.’

The absurdity and falsehood of the lie is ultimately unimportant. What matters is that some, or indeed many people will believe it. Public opinion will become poisoned, and what in normal times is called mass murder can be presented as self-defense.

Thus, the US invasion of Iraq, preceded by a “shock and awe” bombing campaign, was sold to the public as self-defense from an imminent threat of nuclear weapons. This technique has been repeated over and over, in country after country—Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Libya and Syria.

But the bigger the war, the bigger the lie needed to justify it, and a war with China would be the biggest war of all. Thus, the claim by the US State Department that “nearly two million people have died” because “the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has systematically prevented a transparent and thorough investigation of the COVID-19 pandemic’s origin.”

The effort to poison public opinion against China is intimately linked with distracting attention from domestic failures. More than 500,000 people are dead in America because its government refused to warn the public about the pandemic, sabotaged testing, then prematurely reopened businesses and schools with the aim of boosting the stock market.

By contrast, China surged public resources into the provision of health care and kept schools and businesses closed until the pandemic could be contained. For that reason, as many people have died during the entire pandemic in China as have died in a single day in the United States.

The logic of the campaign to demonize China is spelled out by *Financial Times* columnist Janan Ganesh in a column titled, “America’s best hope of hanging together is China.” Ganesh concluded, “Without an external foe to rail against, the nation turns on itself,” adding, “only an external foe”

can end the “age of discord.”

But while Ganesh presents the striving for “national unity” in glowing terms, the entire history of the 19th and 20th centuries shows that the promotion of wars, particularly against historically oppressed countries, is always accompanied by the most vicious forms of racism. The racist myth of the “yellow peril” was used to justify the carve-up and subjugation of China in the late 19th century.

With Trump, the campaign against China took on an overtly racist form, with his invocation of the “Kung flu” and the “Chinese virus.” Biden’s political allies, however, have also employed racist language and imagery. In 2019, the *Washington Post* promoted a report by the Hoover Institution that refers to Chinese Americans as “sons and daughters of the Yellow Emperor,” implying that “the whole worldwide Chinese diaspora” owes its allegiance to Beijing on the basis of race.

Is it any surprise that, with this type of filth flowing from both parties, anti-Asian racism is on the rise? New York City alone has seen an 867 percent increase in Asian hate crime victims compared to the previous year. Since 2006, negative views on China have more than doubled in the American population, according to the Pew Research Center.

The “national unity” Ganesh is seeking would be accompanied by a filthy campaign of racism in a country whose history has been scarred by anti-Asian discrimination, prejudice and oppression, including the internment of Japanese Americans in World War II.

German capitalism, too, wanted an enemy to unify the “Volk.” Under the Nazis, it found just such an enemy in the Jews, with horrendous consequences not only for the six million Jews who perished in the Holocaust but also for the working class of Germany and all of Europe.

The lessons of the past cannot be forgotten. The greatest disasters in human history were prepared with xenophobia and the demonization of nationalities and ethnic groups.

This type of demonization is the last refuge of desperate ruling classes already condemned by history. American capitalism must answer for its crimes. Those responsible for the deaths of half a million people in America are not the workers of China but the capitalists of America!



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