

Anti-China propaganda gone mad: The bizarre case of the “Corgi killers”

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18 November 2021

In an extraordinary outburst, the Western press has seized on the killing of a pet Corgi by epidemic prevention workers in the Chinese city of Shangrao to vilify the Chinese government’s efforts to suppress outbreaks of COVID-19.

The minor incident, while no doubt distressing to the pet’s owner, has been inflated out of all proportion in the blanket coverage in the American and international media. It would be farcical if it were not for the fact that none of the stories even touch on the real tragedies occurring on a daily basis as the pandemic is allowed to run rife around the world.

If one simply glanced at the headlines, one would be forgiven for believing that the crime of decade had just occurred in China. The *Wall Street Journal* blared out: “China left in shock following brutal killing of Corgi during Covid-19 disinfection.” The *Washington Post* declared: “Chinese health workers killed a corgi while its owner was in Covid quarantine, sparking widespread anger.”

The confected outrage over the “Corgi killing” ran through US media like wildfire—the *New York Times*, *Fortune*, *Bloomberg* and NBC published lurid stories of the horrors—then moved on to Europe where it was taken up by prominent news outlets—Deutsche Welle and France 24—as well as the British yellow press, the *Daily Mail*.

The facts of the case. The pet’s owner, known only as Ms Fu, had to leave her Corgi, Chaofen, in her flat after going into quarantine during a COVID-19 outbreak in Shangrao, a midsize city in Jiangxi province. A security camera in the flat showed two hazmat-suited epidemic prevention workers entering the flat and chasing the “cowering” dog. The “murder” takes place off screen but the local government authority acknowledged that the workers “safely

disposed” of the dog.

The widespread anger. Ms Fu posted the video of the ill-fated Corgi on social media last Friday. A Weibo hashtag was viewed some 240 million times, provoking more than 68,000 comments. While many expressed shock and anger over the incident, others defended the government’s zero-COVID policy or declared that of more concern were the health and lives of people amid dangerous outbreaks of the highly-infectious Delta variant in many of the country’s provinces.

Overwhelmingly, the expressions of outrage came from wealthier sections of China’s middle and upper classes—the only ones who can afford to buy and keep pets. In 2019, there were only around 100 million pet cats and dogs in China—a country of 1.4 billion people. As the *Wall Street Journal* noted: “Pet dogs, especially expensive breeds such as corgis, have grown in popularity as status symbols and companions among China’s middle class and wealthy urbanites.”

These well-heeled social strata are also primarily responsible for the social media posts criticising the infringement on their personal liberties by the COVID-19 restrictions that have largely suppressed the epidemic in China. It is to these layers in China and around the world that the media is appealing.

The official response. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) regime is clearly sensitive to the sensitivities of the wealthier layers of society. An article in the state-owned *Global Times* referred to the “imperfect behaviour” of the anti-epidemic workers but called for “more understanding toward the front-line workers who are working tirelessly to curb the epidemic.”

The same article reported that the workers involved had been told to apologise to the pet’s owner and removed from their posts.

The grossly-inflated international attention paid to the

incident would appear ridiculous, indeed inexplicable, unless one understands the context. In recent weeks, the Western media has mounted an escalating campaign to vilify China's zero-COVID policy and pressure Beijing to abandon it. CNN, in its "analysis" of the issue, linked the issues in its headline: "The killing of a corgi shows how government power has grown unchecked in China in the name of Covid prevention."

Really! The *World Socialist Web Site* has well-known and fundamental political differences with the Chinese Communist Party, which has betrayed the socialist and internationalist principles on which it was founded. We have exposed and opposed its police-state methods, which are directed, above all, at suppressing the working class. But its response to the COVID-19 pandemic, regardless of any bureaucratic excesses, is not one of its crimes.

The real criminals are the governments around the world and their media accomplices. They have implemented the murderous policies of "herd immunity" and "living with the virus" that have cost millions of lives. Now they are pushing for China to adopt the same criminal policy—all in the name of boosting the economy and businesses, that is the profits of the wealthy few.

An editorial last weekend in the British-based *Financial Times*, entitled "Zero-Covid countries have run out of road" is the latest shot in the campaign. Its argument is that "Covid elimination is simply not possible" and therefore China and other Asian countries will eventually be compelled to lift restrictions.

It is simply false to say that elimination is impossible. The record of China demonstrates that it is possible to suppress the virus by implementing rigorous public health measures, combined with a comprehensive vaccination campaign. The continuing outbreaks in China make clear that elimination will be successful only as an internationally coordinated strategy.

The latest figures from the World Health Organisation speak volumes:

In the past 24 hours, the United States experienced over 150,000 new cases and 1,157 deaths. The cumulative total of cases was nearly 47 million and deaths totalled over 750,000.

In the same 24 hours, the United Kingdom had nearly 37,000 cases and 214 deaths, with total cases nearing

10 million and total deaths exceeding 143,000.

By contrast, China recorded 34 cases and no deaths. Total cases were over 127,000 and total deaths slightly less than 5,700.

The vast majority of cases and deaths in China took place in early 2020 when Chinese authorities were grappling with what was then an unknown, deadly and highly-infectious disease. The total death toll in China is less than the number of people dying each week in the US.

If China had adopted the COVID policies of the Trump and Biden administrations, at a rough estimate, allowing for population differences, its total case numbers would be 200 million, with deaths of 3 million. If the *Financial Times* and other media mouthpieces for the corporate elite have their way, China would become part of the "new normal" and hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of people would face death.

In implementing COVID-19 policy, who are the real criminals? To ask the question is to answer it.



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