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Sez WHO?

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February 17, 2021

China must be put on notice

The joint China-World Health Organisation investigation into the origin of the Covid pandemic was always going to be a farce and the press conference announcing the team's initial findings did not disappoint. Team head, Dr Peter Ben Embarek, announced that a leak from a Wuhan laboratory was 'highly unlikely' and the WHO would not investigate it further.

To add insult to the massive injury the virus has visited on the world – two million dead and counting – the team said it would investigate the claim of Chinese scientists that the virus might have been imported from Australia on frozen beef packaging.

China was cock-a-hoop. Once again, its lackeys at the WHO did its bidding, further eroding the already battered credibility of the WHO.

As Professor Raina MacIntyre, head of the Biosecurity Program at the University of NSW commented, it was not surprising that the team dismissed the idea that the virus leaked from a laboratory, 'given the political sensitivities, not just for China, but for the world' but what was damning was that they didn't even bother to 'provide any evidence for dismissing a lab leak'.

If there were an iota of evidence, China would have trumpeted it to the world, so the fact that a joint China-WHO came up with nothing at all speaks volumes.

Dr Kristian Andersen, whose name reflects a prodigious ability to believe fairy tales, and who was the lead author of a paper published in March 2020 that claimed a lab leak was not 'plausible', tweeted his support saying, 'All the lab origin "theories" come down to a single fact – the pandemic was detected in Wuhan. That's it – there's nothing more to it'.

It's a testament to Dr Andersen's credulity that the fact that a pandemic broke out within spitting distance of the Wuhan Institute of Virology, which publicly disclosed in 2017 that it had developed the techniques to modify the dozens of novel bat coronaviruses that it had collected and make them both more infectious and more deadly, using humanised mice, doesn't strike him as damning evidence. But that's not all. The closest relative to Sars-Cov-2 is a bat virus WIV researchers found in an abandoned mineshaft in Mojiang, Yunnan, almost 2,000 kms away and was brought by them to Wuhan.

In a paper leading researcher Dr Steven Quay published on 29 January, he lists more than two dozen facts about Sars-Cov-2 from the nature of its spike protein, the lack of furin cleavage sites in similar viruses, the lack of posterior diversity or evidence of seroconversion in Wuhan, which combined together make it more or less certain that the virus was engineered in a lab.

That China would not allow a team to visit Wuhan until January 2021, fifteen months after Sars-Cov-2 started circulating in Wuhan's Hubei province, is a sign of bad faith. During the WHO

investigation, Chinese scientists said there were 174 moderate to severe cases of Covid-19 in December 2019 which means there were probably 1,000 people infected and already thirteen different genetic sequences.

This corroborates independent studies in the US and Spain and intelligence collected by the US government that suggest the virus started circulating in Wuhan's Hubei province in October 2019 not December as China claims.

Yet when the WHO asked their Chinese counterparts for access to 200,000 blood samples collected in Hubei from 1 October to 31 December of people treated for pneumonia who might actually have had Covid-19, the request was refused.

When you add this to China's ridiculous claim that the virus originated in Australia, it is obvious that China is just trying to distract and deflect from its responsibility and unless astonishing evidence to the contrary emerges, Western governments must proceed on that basis.

Why does it matter? As Nobel prize winner Luc Montagnier pointed out last year, the reason China was making viruses more deadly was probably because it wanted to develop a vaccine to prevent them.

That raises a crucial question. If China engineered the virus with the intention of helping humanity by developing a vaccine, why has it been so secretive about the viruses that it has collected and the data it has amassed? Developing a dangerous pathogen and possessing the vaccine to protect against it would give a country the ability to wage biological warfare against its enemies.

In the US, President Biden's top national security advisor, Jake Sullivan, expressed 'deep concerns' saying that 'China must make available its data from the earliest days of the outbreak'. He's right, but hell will freeze over before China admits liability. So what to do?

In response to US criticism of China's lack of cooperation, the Chinese embassy in Washington had the chutzpah to say, 'What the US has done in recent years has severely undermined multilateral institutions, including the WHO, and gravely damaged international cooperation on Covid-19,' and the US 'is pointing fingers at other countries who have been faithfully supporting the WHO and at the WHO itself'.

China has bought influence in the WHO on the cheap. It gave a paltry \$86 million in 2018/19 compared with the US which gave \$893 million. 'The Chinese give as little money as they can get away with' and 'as little money as will buy influence', Rear Admiral Kenneth Bernard, a former adviser to the director-general of the WHO, and special assistant for biodefense to President George W. Bush, told Kathy Gilsinan of the *Atlantic*.

The top contributors to the WHO – the US, Germany, Japan, South Korea, the European Commission, Australia, the UK and New Zealand, need to wise up. They should insist that Tedros be sacked for his disgraceful role in facilitating the pandemic and replaced with a credible medical expert that will stand up to China.

China should be put on notice that its membership has been suspended and it will be expelled from the WHO if it does not cooperate with an independent investigation into the outbreak of Sars-Cov-2.

In 2005, Doug Bandow, a senior fellow at the Cato Institute wrote that after the Sars 1 outbreak, it might be better to call the WHO the World Harm Organisation. Unless, the West bands together to stop them, the harm that China and the WHO do in the future will be far worse.