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Your Papers Please: The Enslavement of the Free World

The West, once defined as “The Free World,” has been locked down and liberty destroyed in the name of fighting the current pestilence.



“At 2AM on January 23, authorities in Wuhan suddenly issued the order to close off the city.” Chinese journalist Da Shji lives in Wuhan and documented the abrupt lockdown of the city, and shortly after that many more Chinese cities, in a report he filed with the China Media Project, an independent program operated in partnership with the Journalism & Media Studies Centre at the University of Hong Kong.

“All public buses, subways, ferries, long-distance buses and other transport services would be suspended; the airport and train stations would be shuttered,” he wrote of the then-shocking development. Soon the lockdown would extend beyond Wuhan. “In less than two days, up to noon on January 24, a total of 14 cities in Hubei province would be brought into the quarantine zone.” He concluded, “This was no longer a city under lockdown, but effectively an entire province under quarantine.”

The results were predictable. Those who could, having heard of the coming lockdown, fled the city, with up to an estimated million Wuhan residents leaving in the hours before the lockdown. Many carried the virus to their destinations, exacerbating the epidemic. In Wuhan and other locked-down areas, the captive population was left with an uncertain future, at best.

“What we have is the shutting off and shutting down of a city, plain and simple. A quarantine that means 11 million people are trapped within their city. No one seems to have considered how public order will be maintained, and how our lives here in Wuhan will be supported,” Da Shji wrote.

Critics, meanwhile, were silenced. One writer, Zhang Ouya of the *Hubei Daily* newspaper, expressed frustration online, demanding, “Wuhan must immediately change out its commanders.” For a time, according to Da Shji, this became a rallying cry for the newly oppressed.

“But such a story cannot have a happy ending in China’s stability-obsessed political environment — where anything can be stopped. Zhang Ouya’s post was quickly expunged. The Party leadership of the Hubei Daily Media Group, Zhang’s employer, wrote a letter of apology to the Municipal Party



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Committee expressing its ‘deepest apologies’ for Zhang Ouya’s ‘incorrect remarks.’ The group also made clear that it was starting ‘relevant procedures’ to hold Zhang accountable.”

As Da Shji noted, this is normal behavior in China where “society [is] closely monitored by the government, and the shadow of Big Brother is everywhere.” There, tyranny is an ever-present latent force, ready always to show its fangs.

But latent tyranny, it turns out, is endemic in the West. Like an unseen geological fault, it was just waiting for a tremor to let slip the dogs of oppression. And so, since the lockdown in Hubei province — now being lifted according to reports — the only things spreading faster than the coronavirus are fear, panic, propaganda, and tyranny.

The Situation in Europe

Europe has become an epicenter in the COVID-19 outbreak, and at the same time, several European nations have adopted strict authoritarian approaches to stopping the spread of the virus:

United Kingdom: The regime of U.K. Prime Minister Boris Johnson has put in place highly restrictive regulations on the movement and activity of the British people. Under current rules, people are allowed to leave their homes to shop for necessities, to perform one form of exercise per day, for medical needs, to help a vulnerable person, or to travel to work in the event that working from home is not possible. “You should not be meeting friends. If your friends ask you to meet, you should say no. You should not be meeting family members who do not live in your home. You should not be going shopping except for essentials like food and medicine — and you should do this as little as you can,” Johnson said, according to *The Guardian*. “If you don’t follow the rules, the police will have the powers to enforce them, including through fines and dispersing gatherings.” Among activities banned in the U.K. are weddings and baptisms.

Italy: On March 9, Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte put the whole of Italy on lockdown in what Reuters described as “the most severe controls on a Western nation since World War Two.” Those restrictions, which at the time included forcing restaurants to close at 6 p.m., were made more stringent starting on March 24 when every business other than grocery stores, pharmacies, post offices, and banks were forced to close their doors for two weeks. Additionally, according to Reuters, officials “banned travel within the country ... to slow the spread of the coronavirus.” Anyone venturing outside must carry official paperwork stating the reason for travel, and that will be checked by authorities. Some Italian citizens have chafed under the tyrannical rules. “It looks like an apocalypse has struck, there is no one around,” restaurant owner Mario Monfreda said, according to Reuters. “It is a total disaster. This will reduce us to nothing. More people are going to die as a result of the economic crisis than this lockdown is going to cause than the virus itself.”

Elsewhere in Europe: Spain and France have moved to enforce restrictions that are similar to those in Italy. In both countries, citizens have occasionally challenged their captivity. In Spain, one woman was apprehended by police after “she was caught visiting the home of a man she had met on a dating app,” according to *Newsweek*. In another example of the absurdity of totalitarian government, a person walking on the street while wearing a dinosaur costume was stopped by police. By March 18, Spanish police had arrested 88 people for violating the lockdown. In France, as in Italy, official documents are required for those stepping outside. Of the French lockdown, Ira Katz, a great American writer living



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and working in France, observed in a dispatch for LewRockwell.com: “We are not really allowed to leave our domiciles so it really feels like the [Nazi] Occupation around here, and we must always carry our paper when we leave the apartment.”

Locking Down the Land of the Free

So far, in the formerly free United States of America, several states have imposed restrictions on what government has deemed “nonessential work.” Some of these states have violated the U.S. Constitution even more severely by, in effect, putting their citizens under house arrest. So far the states that have abolished freedom in the most egregious fashion include New York, California, Rhode Island, Michigan, and Illinois. More than 20 states, so far, have followed a similar path and the trend seems likely to continue.

Most of these states have followed the general plan as implemented in Europe, though in slightly milder form. Some governors, though, are taking harsher steps. In Rhode Island, Democratic governor Gina Raimondo ordered police to stop cars first with New York plates and then from all other states, and used the National Guard to conduct house-to-house searches for out-of-staters to be quarantined.

In New York City, Mayor Bill de Blasio has said he will go so far as to permanently close churches and synagogues if they don’t voluntarily shut their doors. Speaking to religious leaders during his March 27 press conference, he said: “If you go to your synagogue, if you go to your church and attempt to hold services ... our enforcement agents will have no choice but to shut down those services.” Continuing, he warned: “The NYPD, Fire Department, Buildings Department, everyone has been instructed that if they see worship services going on they will go to the officials of that congregation, they’ll inform them they need to stop the services and disperse. If that does not happen, they will take additional action up to the point of fines and potentially closing the building permanently.”

“You have been warned,” he concluded.

In North Carolina, far-left governor Ralph Northam warned his captive citizens that “public and private in-person gatherings of 10 or more individuals are prohibited.” Anyone convicted of breaking this edict faces “confinement in jail for not more than twelve months and a fine of not more than \$2,500, either or both.”

In Wisconsin, shuttered by Democratic Governor Tony Evers, Dane County and the city of Madison — the state capital — put up a website that allowed busybodies to report other citizens for gathering in groups and violating stay-at-home directives. In a bit of good news, according to the Madison-based newspaper *Wisconsin State Journal*, authorities took the site off-line “after the website was flooded with spam, according to health department spokeswoman Sarah Mattes, including ‘people calling us names’ and complaining that the effort constituted Big Brother-like government overreach.”

In Los Angeles, businesses not complying with orders to close were threatened with punitive action by Democratic Mayor Eric Garcetti. “If we see continued noncompliance [we] will step in and shut off their water and power. You know who you are, you need to stop it. This is your chance to step up and shut it down — because if you don’t, we will shut you down,” warned the mayor.

At least at this point, most of the states under lockdown were Sovietized by Democrats who generally prefer Karl Marx to Adam Smith and Vladimir Lenin to Thomas Jefferson. But even at the national level, the zeal for tyranny seems to grow daily. The Justice Department, according to a report by *Politico*,



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“quietly asked Congress for the ability to ask chief judges to detain people indefinitely without trial during emergencies.”

Meanwhile, in Congress, Democrats are using the pandemic to pile-drive their agenda forward. In the spirit of never letting a crisis go to waste, as former Obama administration official Rahm Emanuel once advised, Democratic Majority Whip James Clyburn offered: “The COVID19 bill is a tremendous opportunity to restructure things to fit our vision.”

In addition, federal government technocrats want to use this crisis as an opportunity to further spy on citizens. This would rely on invasive tracking enabled by mobile technology. The *Washington Post* reported on March 17: “The U.S. government is in active talks with Facebook, Google and a wide array of tech companies and health experts about how they can use location data gleaned from Americans’ phones to combat the novel coronavirus, including tracking whether people are keeping one another at safe distances to stem the outbreak.” As NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden has warned, such invasive approaches would probably not be temporary.

Because of the virus, Snowden said, governments might “send an order to every fitness tracker that can get something like pulse or heart rate” demanding access to that information. “Five years later the coronavirus is gone, this data’s still available to them — they start looking for new things,” he said, according to *Business Insider*. “They already know what you’re looking at on the internet, they already know where your phone is moving, now they know what your heart rate is. What happens when they start to intermix these and apply artificial intelligence to them?”

Former Microsoft CEO Bill Gates wants to go even further, with a frightening proposal that takes the concept of “Your Papers Please” totalitarianism to a whole new level. Asked during an “ask me anything” session on Reddit how the economy can function in a future of “social distancing,” Gates responded that people would need to get some sort of digital verification of their health status. “Eventually we will have some digital certificates to show who has recovered or been tested recently or when we have a vaccine who has received it,” Gates answered.

This ties in nicely with Gates’ involvement in developing a biometric ID for vaccine compliance, along with a host of related left-wing schemes to manage and control people.

Gates’ favored biometric ID is tied to the United Nations and called ID 2020, according to *Biometric Update*, a news site published by industry market research firm Biometrics Research Group, Inc. ID 2020 will “leverage immunization as an opportunity to establish digital identity.” The site explains, “Digital identity is a computerized record of who a person is, stored in a registry. It is used, in this case, to keep track of who has received vaccination.”

Also involved with building ID 2020 are corporate giants such as Microsoft and consulting firm Accenture, as well as the nongovernmental organization Gavi, which bills itself as “the vaccine alliance.”

Note that Microsoft is a leading player in business-centric social media as owner of LinkedIn and provider of the Office365 Teams platform, and is the provider also of user-management software Active Directory, used for user authentication and domain management by almost every company, large and small, throughout the world. Note also that under current Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella, the company has launched its “defending democracy” program that includes a program called “ElectionGuard” that “will make voting secure, more accessible, and more efficient anywhere it’s used in the United States or



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in democratic nations around the world,” according to Microsoft. The system was tested for the first time in an election environment in February in Wisconsin with the help of state election officials, according to Microsoft, and San Francisco company VotingWorks. Supposedly non-partisan, the latter outfit is run by Ben Adida, who on his blog has written favorably of “strict gun regulation” and “mandatory gun licensing,” said it was “heartbreaking that Hillary Clinton lost the electoral college,” and admitted his support for President Obama, saying, “I enthusiastically voted for you three times.”

All these things are bundled together in a disturbing cluster of incipient technocratic authoritarianism and control, tied to vaccine authentication and ID in a time of a pandemic that just happened to be modeled in October 2019 at Event 201 by “the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security in partnership with the World Economic Forum and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.” Event 201, a pandemic simulation with eerie similarity to our current real pandemic, by the way, featured a runaway coronavirus as its pandemic of choice. (For more on Event 201, see “Coronavirus as Gateway to ‘Global Health Governance’” on page 36.)

Is There an Alternative to Tyranny?

Anyone doubting these and other statist approaches to COVID-19 is denounced and ridiculed. But despite rampant prop-aganda on behalf of totalitarianism, it is possible to stop the outbreak without resorting to tyranny. This is the experience of South Korea.

In *The Week*, Peter Weber noted that the United States and South Korea had their first cases at the same time, but that “South Korea’s epidemic seems to have already peaked” after beginning an extensive testing campaign. “This testing-backed offensive helped South Korea reduce the number of new cases over a matter of weeks,” Reuters reported. Essentially, South Korea determined that the solution to the spread of the virus was to find and quarantine only those people who had been infected with the virus, rather than to employ widespread, damaging, and detrimental police-state lockdowns.

In an interview with the BBC, South Korean Foreign Minister Kong Kyung-wha described the country’s strategy. “In mid-January, our health authorities quickly conferred with the research institutions here [to develop a test],” she said. “And then they shared that result with the pharmaceutical companies, who then produced the reagent and the equipment needed for the testing.” That testing, she said, was critical. “Testing is central because that leads to early detection,” she noted. “It minimizes further spread.”

Vietnamese-American poet Linh Dinh has chronicled his time in South Korea during the outbreak, describing life in Seoul. The nation, he notes, “has managed to maintain, nationwide, an impressive semblance of normalcy. People go to work. All stores are open and well stocked.”

The lesson of South Korea is that the breathless hyperventilations of statisticians and their enablers in the fear-mongering mainstream media should be ignored. The solution to the pandemic is targeted intervention based on proper testing, not the wholesale liquidation of liberty.



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