

Disclaimer: This is a machine generated PDF of selected content from our databases. This functionality is provided solely for your convenience and is in no way intended to replace original scanned PDF. Neither Cengage Learning nor its licensors make any representations or warranties with respect to the machine generated PDF. The PDF is automatically generated "AS IS" and "AS AVAILABLE" and are not retained in our systems. CENGAGE LEARNING AND ITS LICENSORS SPECIFICALLY DISCLAIM ANY AND ALL EXPRESS OR IMPLIED WARRANTIES, INCLUDING WITHOUT LIMITATION, ANY WARRANTIES FOR AVAILABILITY, ACCURACY, TIMELINESS, COMPLETENESS, NON-INFRINGEMENT, MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE. Your use of the machine generated PDF is subject to all use restrictions contained in The Cengage Learning Subscription and License Agreement and/or the Gale Academic OneFile Terms and Conditions and by using the machine generated PDF functionality you agree to forgo any and all claims against Cengage Learning or its licensors for your use of the machine generated PDF functionality and any output derived therefrom.

Trump made us No. 1 -- in the spread of a deadly disease.

Author: Jennifer Rubin

Date: Mar. 27, 2020

From: Washingtonpost.com

Publisher: The Washington Post

Document Type: Article

Length: 744 words

Lexile Measure: 1370L

Full Text:

Byline: Jennifer Rubin

The United States reached two grim milestones on Thursday: Fatalities from covid-19 topped 1,000, and it became the country with the most confirmed cases of coronavirus, surpassing China with more than 82,000. (Keep in mind, there is reason to doubt that China's tally is accurate, absent a free media or independent verification from an international organization.)

We are only at the beginning of the deadly pandemic that President Trump once promised would "completely disappear." Trump once promised that 15 initial cases would go down to zero but, of course, that was either a deliberate untruth or ignorance magnified by denial. (The apex in New York City won't be here for about three weeks, according to the state's governor.)

Despite at least two months warning, Trump's disastrous missteps and willful blindness have stripped away our defenses and set us back in mitigation efforts. The New York Times recounts, "A series of missteps and lost opportunities dogged the nation's response. Among them: a failure to take the pandemic seriously even as it engulfed China, a deeply flawed effort to provide broad testing for the virus that left the country blind to the extent of the crisis, and a dire shortage of masks and protective gear to protect doctors and nurses on the front lines, as well as ventilators to keep the critically ill alive."

Politicians resistant to universal health-care coverage never tire of telling us that we have the world's greatest medical system. Even in normal times, the claim is questionable; now it is absurd. "The United States, which should have been ready, was not," the Times report noted.

Trump's failures are personal (e.g., lying; relying on Chinese President Xi Jinping's assurances) but also entail the failure to install competent people in key positions or to follow established protocols his predecessor provided to him. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's director, Robert Redfield, bollixed testing. The administration ignored the advice of the outgoing Obama team that had gained experience with Ebola and Zika. (The Times reported, "In 2016, the Obama administration produced a comprehensive report on the lessons learned by the government from battling Ebola. In January 2017, outgoing Obama administration officials ran an extensive exercise on responding to a pandemic for incoming senior officials of the Trump administration.")

Moreover, in an administration in which credible and competent people do not survive and only weak yes-men remain, it was impossible to get Trump's attention when it mattered. Now defensive, he refuses to stop peddling false and dangerous information or to fully take charge of the response, shifting as much responsibility as he can onto the states.

The Post reports, "Washington Gov. Jay Inslee (D) clashed with President Trump during a conference call with governors on Thursday, pleading with him to take more dramatic action to secure medical supplies for his state as it suffers from the coronavirus pandemic, according to four people familiar with the call." Trump vaguely threatens that governors need to be "nice" to him to get what they want. It seems the effort to extort a foreign country, Ukraine, to drum up a fake scandal involving his potential 2020 opponent was a warm-up for an effort to treat our country like a mob boss's territory. Nice state you have there. Would be a shame if anything happened to it.

Trump fundamentally sees himself as president only of his supporters. However, as the pandemic spreads to Florida, Louisiana and other states he considers on "his" side, the full impact of an incompetent and uncaring president may finally hit home. The virus does not differentiate between blue and red states; the former are simply sequentially ahead of the latter.

At some point -- When unemployment hits 30 percent? When deaths double and double again? -- even Trump's cultists may come to

wonder how this could have happened to them. The answer is that the president they enabled was not up to the job of protecting the country against a deadly pandemic.

Read more:

Ann Telnaes cartoon: So much winning

Josh Rogin: America's \$2 trillion coronavirus stimulus package ignores the rest of the world

Megan McArdle: Yes, we need people to stop working. But we don't need them to become unemployed.

Fareed Zakaria: The U.S. is still exceptional -- but now for its incompetence

Catherine Rampell: States and cities should brace themselves for a downward spiral

Henry Olsen: The coronavirus is hurting millions of people. But there's one person who could benefit.

Copyright: COPYRIGHT 2020 The Washington Post

Source Citation (MLA 8th Edition)

Rubin, Jennifer. "Trump made us No. 1 -- in the spread of a deadly disease." *Washingtonpost.com*, 27 Mar. 2020, p. NA. *Gale Academic OneFile*, https://link-gale-com.aurarialibrary.idm.oclc.org/apps/doc/A618746961/AONE?u=auraria_main&sid=AONE&xid=3d3a7c07. Accessed 31 Mar. 2020.

Gale Document Number: GALE|A618746961