

# What If Coronavirus Had Been More Serious?

Whatever may be the outcome of the Chinese coronavirus outbreak, it has most assuredly highlighted multiple weaknesses in U.S. policy on immigration and manufacturing. As alarmism and panic grow, whipped up in part by those hoping to damage the president in an election year, the virus – though certainly serious – appears much less likely to be as devastating as people thought it might be.

But what if it was?

What if this had been a pandemic on the level of the 1918 Spanish Flu that infected nearly one-third of the U.S. population and killed between 500,000 to 675,000. For perspective, the U.S. population at the time was just over 100 million. The equivalent death toll in our present-day population would be 1.5 million at a minimum.

What would be the results if a virus of that potency hit our shores with our porous borders and manufacturing weaknesses? What would be the impact on our healthcare system? Would it be able to withstand the pressure? I don't think so.

As I [have written](#), if the barbaric Chinese Communists should decide to withhold antibiotics and other medications, we are in a precarious position.

With the overwhelming majority of our antibiotics and drug supplies coming from China, juxtapose that with the fact that nearly [50 percent of Americans](#) depend on these medications every day. What would happen if the Communist Chinese decided to weaponize that dependence?

If you think the hysteria over the coronavirus has been overwhelming, imagine how much worse it would be in the face

of a real pandemic with a quickly dwindling supply of antibiotics? Now throw real panic into the mix as drug supplies disappear. Our healthcare system might actually implode under the weight of that pressure.

Almost no one is talking about this, yet they should be. Sixteen years ago, our last plant producing penicillin shut down. A *New York Times* [story](#) highlighted the problem – in 2009. Nobody cared. As the United States shuttered its medicinal manufacturing plants, China, which had been making heavy investments into penicillin fermentation since the early 1980s, stepped in and took a massive market share.

The offshoring of the production of antibiotics and drugs was a combination of two factors: *corporatism*, yes, but also the *regulatory state*.

We've seen the abuses of power that have taken place over the last few years as administrative state actors decided they would use the surveillance state and law enforcement for political purposes to target opponents over policy differences. But here we see that there are other dangers posed to citizens from the overreach of the administrative state: Namely, a regulatory regime that makes domestic production so onerous it drives that production offshore and then undermines our national interests.

But just as coronavirus has demonstrated our weaknesses with regard to antibiotic and drug manufacturing, yet again we are reminded that we do not have an adequate handle on who is coming in and out of our country.

Political pundits should not question the president's motives or heap scorn on his quick decision to restrict the entry of people in to the United States from countries fighting major outbreaks of the Wuhan virus. His decisiveness in January most certainly bought us time.

In fact, Trump could be, and should be, even more aggressive.

The president ought to limit the points of entry to merely five: JFK, LAX, New Orleans, Vancouver, and Buffalo. He should restrict travel to places like Italy and China until this outbreak is a thing of the past. But it also should be a chance for him to remind the American people that in the event of a truly devastating pandemic, our southern border in its current state poses a real hazard to the American people.

While the media is doing its best to undermine Trump's handling of the Wuhan virus, the president can flip the entire narrative on its head. The media wants to induce panic. Fine, we'll play that game if that's the way it's going to be. Let's see Trump turn it against them and take the chance to show Americans the weaknesses this virus has displayed in our unacceptable immigration and manufacturing systems.

We need to bring pharmaceutical production home. Trump should insist on it and make it an issue in the campaign. We need to secure our borders. Again, highlight this need in the coming election while there's even more evidence for it.

There must be a new way forward that frees the United States from dependency on a country that seeks to harm us. We have been given a second chance to correct our foolish faults. We should seize the moment before it's too late.

—

*This [article](#) has been republished with permission from American Greatness.*

[Image Credit: Pixabay]