

America diagnoses Japan as diseased

By David Lee

“When an epidemic of physical disease starts to spread, the community approves and joins in a quarantine of the patients in order to protect the health of the community against the spread of the disease.”

Franklin D. Roosevelt, Chicago, 1937.

President Roosevelt aimed these words at Japan, Germany and Italy before the outbreak of World War II. On May 24, 2021 the United States State Department imposed a “Level 4: Do not travel” advisory on Japan, the highest level used to advise US travelers against traveling—in effect, a quarantine.

A “Level 4” advisory, according to the State Department, means a “greater likelihood of life-threatening risks”. One country currently at “Level 4” is Haiti. It is at “Level 4” because of “civil unrest,” “kidnapping or hostage taking,” and widespread violent or organized crime”. The State Department says that there is a “high level of COVID-19” in Haiti as well. However, Haiti has a long history of serious public health as well as social issues. According to the WHO, Haiti is the poorest country in the Western hemisphere. Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) is the “leading cause of death for both adolescents and adults”. Tuberculosis is the “sixth most important cause of death.” Finally, “access to water for human consumption is a major problem.”¹ There are other violent countries with horrible public health conditions at “Level 4,” such as Columbia, Venezuela, Azerbaijan, Cambodia, Afghanistan, and Burma. The US State Department has pretty much declared that Japan is at the level of other international basket cases with dire internal security and health problems.

The ostensible reason for Japan’s “Level 4” designation is that Japan’s number of COVID-19 cases is “very high,” according to the US Center for Disease Control (CDC)—the State Department relies on the CDC’s data to make travel advisories. How high is “very high”? It is obvious that “very high” is in the eye of the beholder. For example, on May 25, Japan had about half as many COVID-19 cases per capita as the US. A look at other countries’ COVID-19 cases per capita will show the worthlessness of the “very high” label. There are a number of European countries and Canada, in addition to Japan, at “Level 4”. On May 25, Germany had twice as many cases as Japan. Canada and Spain had almost three times as many cases. France had over four times as many cases. On May 25, about 35% of UK citizens were fully vaccinated. Even though about 2% of Japanese citizens were fully vaccinated on May 25, Japan had the same number of cases per capita as that of the UK.² Having been hit with a “Level 4” designation, the Japanese government, at a time when it had a similar number of cases as the UK and fewer cases than the US, even though the US and the UK were aggressively vaccinated their citizens,

¹ <https://www.who.int/hac/crises/hti/background/profile/en/>

² On June 1, there were twice as many cases per capita in the UK as there were in Japan. At the same time, the number of cases in Japan dropped by one-half from the peak in mid-May and only 3% of the population were fully vaccinated.

could have taken the time to reflect on its own COVID-19 vaccination strategy—or even the need for it.

Whenever the media claims that there is an increase, a spike or an explosion in COVID-19 cases, airplane crashes, poisoned fish, or anything else, one should always ask, “compared to what and compared to when?” It helps to put the numbers into context and to see trends, if any, over time. The media is relying on the average person’s weak short-term memory and uncertainty for his attention. With respect to COVID-19 control, Japan is doing much better than most places, including the US.

The May 24 “Level 4” designation effectively dissuades tourists and business travelers from visiting Japan and could be considered an economic sanction. Insurance rates for American travelers headed to “Level 4” countries will increase and because of this, travelers may cancel their trip—or they may cancel anyway, even without insurance. The US has shut down a significant portion of Japan’s economy, overseas tourism, because of their claim that there is a “likelihood of life-threatening risk.” Based on cases per capita, it appears that one is more likely to catch the coronavirus in the US rather than in Japan. Rather than “the science,” it appears that the US designation (the US designated almost most of the world as “Level 4”) was based on fear.

While the US action was deplorable, even more infuriating was the lack of response by the current Japanese government. Not only has the US, an “ally,” condemned Japan to Third-World status, but ordered what amounts to an embargo on Japan. According to NHK, in response to the May 24 declaration, Chief Cabinet Secretary Kato Katsumobu stated that he “is regularly in close contact with the US government,” and “intends to continue to collect information and take appropriate action.” This hardly gives a sense that the current Japanese government is in control. Countries that were hit with economic sanction or embargos, such as China and North Korea, protested loudly and repeatedly to an international audience. Perhaps the Japanese government views the significant loss of revenue from overseas visitors as nothing to worry about.

What should have been the response of the Japanese government: Why this sudden imposition of a “Level 4” travel advisory when in fact there are fewer COVID-19 cases per capita in Japan than in the US? The Japanese government should have fired back: The Government of Japan will advise Japanese citizens to refrain from traveling to the US because of endemic anti-Asian violence, especially by black Americans, and “racist, trigger happy police”. The Japanese government will in due course determine whether or not the US has eliminated its Anti-Asian violence and “racist police” problems before allowing Japanese travelers to the US. It should be noted that Japanese tourists are significant sources of state income, particularly for Hawaii.

Also, the Japanese government should have called out the US CDC on its assertion: “Because of the current situation in Japan even fully vaccinated travelers may be at risk for getting and spreading COVID-19 variants and should avoid all travel to Japan.” If such is the case, then what protective value do the currently available vaccines have against COVID-19? The aim of the vaccination campaign in the West was to fully

protect citizens from COVID-19 infection—something akin to the series of childhood vaccines for various diseases in the West. Instead, it sounds like people will need to be vaccinated multiple times against numerous coronavirus “variants” for the rest of their lives.

One of the fears motivating the CDC to impose “Level 4” advisories everywhere on earth is the belief that the coronavirus easily spreads from “asymptomatic” people to healthy people. In this scenario, a person carrying the virus, but shows no signs of illness, could infect dozens of other people before the carrier shows any signs of illness. However, in a survey of Wuhan done last year by a team led by Dr. Cao Shiyi, Tonji Medical College, 300 “asymptomatic” COVID-19 cases were identified out of 9,899,828 people, by using real-time reverse transcriptase-polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR).³ The samples from the 300 cases then underwent culturing to identify the COVID-19 virus—none of the samples contained “viable virus”. Furthermore, people who were quarantined for two weeks with asymptomatic cases did not themselves show signs of illness or evidence of coronavirus via RT-PCR. The authors concluded that persons who are asymptomatic “positive” (positive on RT-PCR testing) are “unlikely to be infectious”.

We have recently seen how the CDC and the US National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) have backtracked on medical advice concerning COVID-19.⁴ There are also dark signs that the NIAID could have played a role in initiating the COVID-19 pandemic.⁵ Rather than call out the CDC for its fear-based travel advisory system, the Japanese government meekly abided—as it usually does in other situations.

In any event, based on the Suga Administration’s limp response to the American sanction, it is clear that the current Japanese government does not really have the interests of the people it claims to represent at heart.

³ Cao, S., et al. (2020). Post-lockdown SARS-CoV-2 nucleic acid screening in nearly ten million residents of Wuhan, China. *Nat. Comm.* 11: 5917.

⁴ <https://www.sltrib.com/news/2021/05/13/andy-larsen-biggest/>

⁵ <https://thebulletin.org/2021/05/the-origin-of-covid-did-people-or-nature-open-pandoras-box-at-wuhan/>