

News That Shook the World

On April 25, 2009, El Universal from Mexico published that “Francis Plummer, a scientist with the Canadian government microbiology laboratory stated that the influenza virus attacking the Mexicans is new not only to humans but to the world. Just one week ago...he was asked to analyze some specimens from Mexico...”

“The tests that revealed this new virus were only conducted with the specimens sent by the Mexican authorities, he emphasized regarding the 16 positive cases out of the 50 specimens sent from Mexico...”

Two days later, La Jornada newspaper relates that on the 5th of the same month it had received an information from its reporter in Veracruz, Andres Timoteo, who literally said that “the Health Department had laid an epidemic cordon to La Gloria village, municipality of Perote, because the people there were being affected by a strange outbreak of acute respiratory infections...three children under two years of age had died and 60% of the three thousand population were suffering from respiratory disease.”

La Jornada then adds that “the reporter’s note states that the villagers relate the outbreak of infections to the contamination produced by the pig breeders of the transnational Carroll Farms.

“...dozens of families suddenly fell ill from respiratory diseases.

“Municipal agent Bertha Crisostomo appealed to the health authorities for help, since dozens of families suddenly fell ill from respiratory diseases,” says the reporter.

“The symptoms of the villagers there, according to witnesses, were high temperature, severe coughing and phlegm; they need to stay in bed as if stricken by one of the seasonal infections that appear in winter.”

Actually, the Canadian laboratory of Dr. Plummer was not the first to discover anything. The Atlanta CDC had already done it on April 17. The AH1N1 was a new and potentially very dangerous virus.

But, there is more. On the 11th of that month, the Pan American Health Organization Watch Group, based on the reports of the abovementioned Mexican press, asked the Health Department to check on an alleged outbreak of influenza at La Gloria community in Perote, Veracruz, arguing that it could pose an internationally significant health risk.

Faced with such information, any country would have considered it imperative to undertake an immediate and serious investigation into the matter.

I have always admired Mexico’s achievements in Social Security. It was the most advanced in this continent. After the victory, we found friends there who helped us in the first years of our Revolution.

It hurts to even say it, but actually four or five days would have sufficed to discover that the people were being affected by that virus; it was not necessary to send a specimen to that laboratory in Canada. How can it be explained that such a test was not made anywhere since the onset of the events leading to action by the PAHO Watch Group?

As of April 24, the first information is given to the international community on the epidemic; the news was disquieting. Let’s take a look at some of them:

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Published on FIDEL Soldier of Ideas (<http://www.comandanteenjefe.info>)

May 2: 397 cases, 16 dead.

May 5: 866 cases, 26 dead.

May 9: 1626 cases, 48 dead.

May 12: 2282 cases, 58 dead.

Every day there were reports of other affected countries and almost without exception there was a connection with persons returning from Mexico.

Three days ago it was announced that China, a huge nation with a population of 1.3 billion, had reported a case positive to the AH1N1 virus; in this case it was a Chinese young man studying in the United States. This latter country and Mexico have become the world exporters of the epidemic. Perhaps that sudden and devastating spread of the disease could have been averted. It is not as if the Mexican government was doing a favor to the world as some would have us believe. Now we would have to thank the three partners of the North American Free Trade Agreement. The three were present in Port of Spain on April 18 and 19. Obama had visited Mexico on the 16th and 17th of the same month.

What does one of these epidemics mean to Cuba? Our country is prevented from purchasing any medication, raw material, equipment or components of diagnostic equipment manufactured by the U.S. transnationals on the basis of the extraterritorial laws that the U.S. administration has imposed to the world. Why were we accused of being enemies of the Mexican people when we adopted measures devised in advance to protect our people? Who is now telling China how to protect its population? Why all of this lying? Why talk about such alleged retaliatory measures as the suspension of an already suspended trip? Is it perhaps that money from tourism and the airlines is more important than the life of a compatriot? Why the threats? We are not accountable for the drastic measures that the epidemic forced the Mexican government to take.

When the United States launched its mercenaries through the Bay of Pigs escorted by the Marine Corps, General Lazaro Cardenas, who had won great glory by recovering the Mexican oil, did not threaten us; quite the opposite, he wanted to come to Cuba to fight alongside our people. That is the Mexico whose example we pay tribute to.

Is it possible that on April 16 and 17 nobody in Mexico knew anything about the gift the world would receive from that country six days later? Is it that not even the information experts of the U.S. Intelligence Agencies knew what was about to happen?

Nothing has changed in Mexico in the past eight years, except the virus. In 1918, the influenza killed more people than World War I.

It was news that shook the world! Let's have confidence in science!

Fidel Castro Ruz

May 14, 2009

7:43 am.

Date:

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Published on FIDEL Soldier of Ideas (<http://www.comandanteenjefe.info>)

14/05/2009

Source URL: <http://www.comandanteenjefe.info/en/articulos/news-shook-world?page=0%2C0%2C0%2C0%2C0%2C0%2C0%2C0>