

Now we are all Prisoners of the Chinese Communist Government

by Phyllis Chesler



I dressed up to sit at my own dining table after being persuaded not to venture out to dine at an excellent Indian restaurant. Instead, I ordered up—and a hilariously countless series of vegetarian dishes appeared at my door: Yellow Dal, Palak Paneer, Vegetable Biryani, samosas, two rice dishes, a large quantity of nan, and Kheer. etc. Following hard on the dishes, my guest of honor, my dear friend Mandy Sanghera, soon appeared. We mimed hugs and kisses and kept our distance. Mandy had traveled here from London for meetings and panels

connected to the UN and to British-Consulate sponsored events.

The UN actually shut down! Commission on the Status of Women events were cancelled. Mandy still found meetings and receptions to attend and people to meet. She described the World Economic Forum in Davos as a meeting of the 1%, "people who will take a helicopter to cross the street;" and women who walk "in six inch heels on the snow and ice." I saw their likes in Cannes last fall—women who wore *their* six inch heels and all their jewelry to breakfast. Saudi women with whom Mandy had worked were exceptionally hospitable and insisted that Mandy allow them to drive her wherever she had to go.

All jolly good as the Brits might say—but the streets of Manhattan are eerily deserted, cities, schools, houses of worship have been locked down, trains and train stations are relatively empty, I am in a high risk category (a senior citizen with a very compromised immune system)—and I now join thousands of others who are prisoners of the Chinese Communist government, am a shut-in, have cancelled an important lecture in Philadelphia because the Chinese failed to impose the slightest hygiene in Wuhan, then failed to lock down the province, inform their people, close their borders, and immediately warn the world in order to contain this plague. Once the whirlwind had been loosed, uninformed country after country took uncertain steps to contain it.

And now here we all are.